

Cities After Dark

Genoa

Integrated Action Plan



English Summary Integrated Action Plan Genoa

Introduction

The Integrated Action Plan (IAP) is the main outcome of the work carried out by the Genoa URBACT Local Group (ULG) within the Cities After Dark network.

The URBACT approach is based on promoting cooperation and the exchange of ideas between cities, strengthening the skills of local actors in the design and implementation of integrated and participatory policies. Integrated development is a holistic approach that combines the physical, economic, and social dimensions of urban development with a view to sustainability.

The IAP can help promote greater horizontal connection between existing initiatives and projects. Adopting an integrated approach means promoting the continuous involvement of *stakeholders*, moving beyond a one-off *engagement* approach.

The goal of this IAP is to transform the night-time economy into a lever for growth, sustainability, and recovery, guaranteeing everyone the right to enjoy the city even after sunset and establishing collaborative governance systems.

The ULG is a group composed by stakeholders relevant to the city's challenges. The group, coordinated by DISPI (Department of Political and International Sciences of the University of Genoa), held two online and eight face-to-face meetings, defining the vision, objectives, actions, and implementation framework of the IAP.

The exchange with the 10 partners of the URBACT network (Braga, Budva, Malaga, Nicosia, Paris, Piraeus, Tallinn, Varna, Zadar) was fundamental to the development of Genoa's IAP, enriching the local approach with knowledge and good practices.

Genoa and the night-time economy

Genoa is a city in transition, seeking a balance between its industrial and commercial heritage and its development as a tourist destination. The city needs to promote coexistence and create opportunities and services for different categories of users: residents, tourists, and students.

Genoa's nightlife is rich, lively, and varied. The city has 17 theatres and 54 nightspots (bars, discos, clubs). It is also famous for being the Italian capital of song writing. However, there is currently a limitation: cultural offerings at night are concentrated in a small area of the historic centre, with greater spatial dispersion towards coastal areas only in summer.

The night-time economy cuts across areas and issues such as mobility, hospitality, security, logistics and emergency services. An urban system is active 24 hours a day, ensuring essential services, for example. At European and global level, many cities are already experimenting with measures that emphasize the role of night-time hours in social, cultural and economic growth.

The Vision of the Night

The ULG's work began by identifying the opportunities and limitations that characterize the night-time economy in order to develop a shared vision that will guide future actions.

The vision of the night in Genoa, developed by the ULG, is based on three key concepts:

1. Plurality: The night is multifaceted and diverse;

2. Identity: The night is representative of Genoa's identity;
3. Inclusiveness: Nightlife must be inclusive and a right for everyone.

Plurality of the night does not have the same meaning for everyone. For some, it is just a time for rest or something residual compared to the day, while for others it is a time for freedom, meeting people, discovery, relaxation, sports, culture and music.

The identity of Genoa's nightlife is consistent with its complex urban structure, which goes beyond the simple distinction between the centre and the suburbs.

Inclusiveness and Safety Regardless of what the night represents for different segments of the population (young people, the elderly, workers, women), it is essential that it can be experienced according to one's needs and aspirations. To be truly inclusive, the night must be safe. However, safety should not only mean control and prohibitions, but is the result of a social construct.

The Challenges

Reorganizing the city on a 24-hour basis is a challenge in itself, as the urban structure and services are mainly designed for the daytime city. The cross-cutting challenge is to shape a night-time economy that takes into account the plurality of actors and activities, reconciling their different souls.

A key issue is the diversification of activities and their distribution across different neighbourhoods. Today, there is a strong concentration of night-time activities:

- At the territorial level: concentrated in the historic centre.
- Seasonally: greater supply during summer.
- At the weekly level: strong concentration at weekends.

This concentration has negative effects such as hyper-concentration in some areas and a total lack of opportunities in others. The 15-minute city model—, which allows access to services without having to leave one's neighbourhood—can inspire reflection on the night-time economy, with a view to equity and sustainability.

The main weakness is that the current level of integration on the issue of nightlife is relatively low and needs improvement. The main challenge is to involve stakeholders in long-term planning and implementation.

The IAP has been developed taking into account three cross-cutting themes promoted by URBACT:

A. Gender Equality:

This issue has emerged as a priority, characterizing various lines of action. The right of women to live at night in safety and in conditions of freedom and equality. This concerns the promotion of a culture of rights and the fight against violence, but also the extension of services, starting with the availability of effective and safe public transport. In July 2024, the "Safe Point" project was launched, which provides for the presence of safe spaces dedicated to women in bars and nightclubs, with services tailored to their needs and ensuring their safe return home.

B. Green Transition:

This issue was addressed in relation to public mobility strategies (introduction of electric buses and upgrading of the metro). It is also important to enhance city parks and green areas as places that can also be used at night, for example by offering climate shelters against the night-time heat and optimizing the use of space.

C. Digital Transition:

It's expressed in the possibility of using technology to respond to needs in innovative ways. Apps and digital features can be used to facilitate information and connection, and the digitization of the public administration can improve communication with citizens.

Strategic objectives

Starting from the shared vision, the ULG has identified three Strategic Objectives, divided into six Areas of Intervention. These objectives converge in shaping the shared vision of Genoa's nightlife.

1: *Diversify and redevelop nightlife spaces*

The objective is to reduce the current concentration of events in the centre and, in summer, on the eastern seafront. Promoting the diversification of spaces helps to solve the problems of overcrowding and, at the same time, revitalize peripheral areas.

A comprehensive intervention on spaces requires a distinctive view of night-time compared to daytime, considering the social uses for different *targets*: residents, tourists, young people, the elderly, and workers. Regulating the use of night-time spaces can encourage activities that meet the needs of citizens and allow for a better balance between the different needs of the public. The implementation of this objective implies particular attention to the provision of public mobility.

2: *Promoting the culture of night*

Harmonious coexistence between different approaches to night-time (rest, leisure, work) requires shared rules and responsible behaviour. This objective aims to promote such responsibility through awareness-raising and training campaigns. A culture not based on consumption: the goal is to establish a night-time culture that values relationships, solidarity, and respect for differences, promoting inclusion and active participation by all.

Night-time culture (Vibrancy): the aim is to increase and diversify cultural offerings (music, cinema, theatres, exhibitions, cultural itineraries, guided tours) to contribute to the establishment of a new night time culture.

3: *Strengthening services, protecting rights*

A city that is active 24 hours a day cannot consider the night to be secondary to the day. Night workers and users have the right to use services. The goal is to guarantee everyone's right to enjoy the night in freedom and safety, by extending services for those who work and live in the night and adopting specific measures to ensure mobility and safety. These are the two central pillars for rethinking 24-hour services.

The expansion of night-time services can be supported by collaboration between public, private, and third sector actors, and by experimenting with social innovation practices.

Areas of Intervention

The three Strategic Objectives are divided into six Areas of Intervention that define the integrated approach. Although each action is framed within a specific area, it is conceived in dialogue and intersection with the others, defining an holistic approach.

Area of Intervention	Specific Objective
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| 1.1: Decentralization and Diversification | Bring night-time activities and services to peripheral areas and spaces |
| 1.2: Enhancement and regeneration | Recovery and innovative use of unused or little-known spaces, to make them accessible |
| 1.3: Harmonization of functions | Resolve coexistence issues with residents by reconciling the uses of spaces and designing different activities based on time schedules |
| 2.1: Training | Promoting nightlife culture, responsible behaviour, and safety training for operators and users |
| 2.2: Cultural vibrancy | Increase the cultural offering at night (e.g., libraries, exhibitions..). |
| 2.3: Communication and Participation | Consolidate shared governance and effectively communicate <i>after-dark</i> events. |
| 3.1: Extension of <i>after-dark</i> services | Implementing essential services |
| 3.2: Safety | Create support networks and night time <i>safe points</i> |

Integration with existing policies

The approach of the Municipality of Genoa is based on a multi-level strategy. The IAP aims to strengthen synergy with ongoing projects, which is Genoa's main strength in terms of the night-time economy.

Many ongoing projects are closely linked to the objectives of *Cities After Dark*.

Urban regeneration and coexistence

- Strategic Plan for the Historic Center – Caruggi Plan: Pursues the restoration and enhancement of the historic center, improving the quality of life for residents and usability for visitors and operators. Urban redevelopment actions aim to promote sustainable and integrated urban development, making spaces safer and more usable for economic, social, and cultural activities.
- Collaboration Agreements: These involve agreements with citizens for the shared management of urban spaces.

Responsible Nightlife and Services

- The "La Movida che Vogliamo" (The Nightlife We Want) Plan: Aims to promote a "healthy," "smart," and "responsible" nightlife. It provides for the animation of public spaces for different age groups, awareness campaigns on alcohol abuse, incentives for venues for soundproofing and outdoor furniture, and the relocation of *nightlife* to large spaces and non-residential contexts.
- The "Conscious Drinking" Project: Promotes a culture of quality drinking, with information *desks* and specialization courses.
- Children's White Nights: An initiative that promotes urban regeneration and social cohesion through shows and workshops for children, acting as a model for the diversification of activities and social inclusion.
- Evening Nursery: The night nursery experiment, already funded by the Compagnia di San Paolo Foundation, can be enhanced and integrated into the actions planned by the IAP.

Safety Actions

Improving road safety and reducing drug-related harm are key issues. Awareness-raising and training actions are accompanied by measures to increase safety through territorial control.

- Integrated patrols: In Genoa, army patrols work alongside the police to ensure safety in the historic center and in high-risk areas (such as railway stations).

- Safe public transport: A 2023 agreement provides for the presence of law enforcement personnel on evening buses, the extension of video surveillance, and the establishment of checkpoints in critical areas.

Mobility Actions

Mobility is identified as a priority by the ULG.

- AMT Service: Public transport runs until midnight (with reduced service from 9 p.m.).
- Summer Night Buses: during summer, two night bus lines operate in the coastal area, providing a useful service for clubbers and workers. This trial is a starting point for expansion.
- Drinbus: An on-demand bus service connecting poorly served neighbourhoods between 9:00 p.m. and midnight.

The Pilot Action

The purpose of the testing action was to give concrete form to the vision of the night shared by the ULG and to test the three strategic objectives and areas of intervention in a synergistic manner. It was co-designed and organized by the members of the ULG.

9.1 Objectives and Guiding Principles

The event took place on November 30, 2024. The overall objective was to understand how to create a diverse, pluralistic, inclusive, unexplored, and representative nightlife in Genoa.

Strategic Objectives of the Pilot Action:

1. Reconnecting the Centre and the Periphery: encourage evening and night time reconnection between two parts of the city
2. Edutainment and Heritage: Create forms of *edutainment* (education and entertainment) for diverse beneficiaries, enhancing underutilized historical and cultural resources.
3. Safer Mobility: Enabling safer evening and night-time mobility, especially for returning home.

The pilot action put in connection an event in the centre (an aperitif to experience an inclusive and diverse night) with an event in a peripheral area traditionally lacking in social life: Villa Bombrini (west side of the city).

The route reversed the usual logic, starting from the centre and moving towards the suburbs. The event in the suburbs included a *DJ set* (recreational activity) and a night visit to Villa Bombrini (cultural activity).

Key principles tested:

1. Spatial Dislocation: Promote the decentralization of the night time economy by bringing activities and services to the city's peripheral areas.
2. Public Transport: Promote the strengthening of nighttime public transport, with the use of electric buses provided by AMT to connect the two spaces.
3. Night-time Safe point: Experiment with "night time safe point" managed by associations, which serve as reference points for safety, harm reduction, and information gathering through questionnaires.

The medium- to long-term goal is to replicate this model, creating a space in each neighbourhood that promotes culture and socialization for a diverse audience and serves as a reference for enjoying the nightlife.

The actions

10 actions + 1 were selected for implementation:

Action 0: Increase in night time public transport services

Although indicated as a priority, this action is not detailed immediately due to the profound transformation that the Genoa public transport system is undergoing, due to the design and construction of new infrastructure.

- Objective: To increase public transport services in the evening hours in general, focusing not only on the coastal line but also on the valley lines.
 - Area of intervention: Refers to strategic objective OS3. Enhancement of services, protection of rights, specifically to area 3.1: Extension of services after sunset.
 - Timing: Not specified for detailed implementation.
 - Partners: Genoa's public transport system is managed by AMT.
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Action 1: Events in historic villas

The action involves the organization of three entertainment events, to be held in Genoa's historic villas (e.g., Villa Bombrini) located in suburban areas.

- Objectives: The primary objective is to decentralize 'nightlife' and diversify the cultural offering. Secondly, the aim is to enhance the historical heritage spread across the territory, cultural vitality, and the extension of services after sunset.
 - Area of Intervention: The action falls mainly under strategic objective OS1. Diversify and redevelop night-time spaces, with key area 1.1: Decentralization and diversification. It also concerns Enhancement and regeneration (1.2), Cultural vitality (2.2) and Extension of services after sunset (3.1).
 - Partners: The manager will be identified through a call for tenders. Internal ULG partners include the Communication and Major Events Department of the Municipality of Genoa, the Youth Department, AMT, RST Events, Erasmus Group, MOG, and the Chamber of Commerce. External partners include villa management companies, the Cornigliano Society, the Youth Council, the Culture Department of the Municipality of Genoa, and the relevant municipalities.
 - Timing: The action is classified as medium priority and short term (up to 18 months). The total estimated time for implementation is 18 months.
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Action 2: Night safety points

The action aims to establish a network of night-time safety points in the historic centre, managed by trained professionals and volunteers. These fixed and recognisable locations will operate during evening and night hours, offering support and assistance to people in need.

- Objectives: The main objective is to create safe and accessible places where individuals can find

support during evening and night-time hours. Particular attention is given to women, ensuring spaces where they can feel protected, welcomed and listened to. The action also aims to provide information, first assistance and referral to mobility, social, health or harm reduction services, contributing to a safer and more inclusive night-time environment.

- **Area of Intervention:** The action contributes to strategic objective OS3: Strengthening services and protecting rights, with a focus on area 3.2: Promoting safety. It also supports the extension of services after sunset (3.1).
 - **Partners:** The action is managed by Il Ce.Sto Cooperative and UDI – Italian Women’s Union. Internal ULG partners include AFET Aquilone Onlus, the Youth Department, the Chamber of Commerce, ConfCommercio, ConfEsercenti, the Mascherona Anti-Violence Centre, the Municipal Police, Agorà, AMT and the Erasmus Group. External partners include the University, SPI-CGIL and Progetto Caruggi.
 - **Timeline:** The action is classified as high priority and short-term (up to 18 months), with a total estimated implementation time of 18 months.
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Action 3: Local activities across the city

This action involves the organization of 10 community events across the city.

- **Objectives:** The main objective is to diversify the night-time cultural and social offer by extending it beyond the historic city centre and bringing activities to less central and more peripheral areas of the city, in order to ensure broader and more inclusive access for all citizens of Genoa. The action also aims to decentralise nightlife, enrich local cultural opportunities and encourage the extension of services after sunset, such as the evening opening of shops.
 - **Area of intervention:** The main strategic objective is OS1: Diversify and redevelop night-time spaces, with a specific focus on area 1.1: Decentralisation and diversification. The action also contributes to Enhancement and regeneration (1.2), Cultural vitality (2.2) and Extension of services after sunset (3.1).
 - **Partners:** The Chamber of Commerce is responsible for the action. Internal ULG partners include the Department of Commerce, ConfCommercio, ConfEsercenti and AMT. External partners include the Integrated Street Centres (CIV), the Urban Library System, Teatro di Strada Nuova and the Municipalities.
 - **Timing:** The action is classified as medium priority and medium-term (between 19 and 36 months), with a total estimated duration of 28 months.
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Action 4: Communication of *Genoa After Dark* activities

The action involves the activation of social media communication channels to disseminate information about evening events, cultural initiatives and projects taking place across the city.

- **Objectives:** The objective is to provide comprehensive and inclusive communication of the city’s after-dark offer, promoting a wide range of events and projects, including small-scale and neighbourhood-based initiatives. The action aims to enhance visibility and participation in activities distributed throughout all city districts, not only in the historic centre, encouraging a more balanced and decentralized use of nighttime initiatives.
- **Area of Intervention:** The main strategic objective is OS2: Promotion of nighttime culture, with a

focus on area 2.3: Communication and Participation. It also contributes to Decentralization and Diversification (1.1).

- **Partners:** The project manager is the Master's Degree Course in Information and Publishing (InfoEd – Department of Political and International Sciences). Internal ULG partners include the Communication and Major Events Department, ConfCommercio, SILB, SIFE, ConfEsercenti, and the Youth Projects and Services Office of the Municipality of Genoa. External partners include the Youth Council, PartyNowGenova, the Culture Department of the Municipality of Genoa, VisitGenova, GenovaToday, MenteLocale, CircuitoCinema Genova, GenovaTeatro, and the Digital Humanities Degree Program.
 - **Timeline:** Classified as medium priority and medium term (between 19 and 36 months). The total estimated time for implementation is 30 months.
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Action 5: Night Council

The action involves the activation of a Night Council, a structure that will consolidate the experience of the URBACT Local Group (ULG).

- **Objectives:** The action aims to consolidate and strengthen the network of actors and practices created with the ULG and to promote long-term collaboration (between the municipality, economic actors, and civil society) for the development of strategies and the implementation of actions related to the promotion of the night-time economy. It aims to facilitate communication, promote citizen participation in the definition of night-time policies, and ensure the adoption of an integrated approach.
 - **Area of Intervention:** The action falls under strategic objective OS2. Promotion of nighttime culture, focusing on area 2.3: Communication and Participation. The Night Council will serve as a framework for the monitoring and continuous updating of all IAP actions.
 - **Partners:** The lead partner is the Department of Political and International Sciences (UniGe). The internal ULG partners are all ULG participants. The external partners will be all parties potentially interested in contributing to *the governance* of the night-time economy, to be identified through a call for proposals.
 - **Timeline:** Classified as high priority and medium term (between 19 and 36 months). The total estimated time is 27 months.
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Action 6: Youth training

The action consists of providing training for young people who independently engage in nightlife.

- **Objectives:** To promote a culture of nightlife awareness and a responsible approach to entertainment. In addition, the aim is to identify areas for action in order to develop an integrated plan to spread a culture of safe and aware nightlife among all users.
- **Area of intervention:** This falls under strategic objective OS2. Promotion of nightlife culture, with a focus on area 2.1: Training. It also involves the promotion of safety (3.2).
- **Partners:** Il Ce.Sto and AFET Aquilone are responsible. Internal ULG partners include the Communication and Major Events Department, ConfCommercio, SILB, SIFE, ConfEsercenti,

and Agorà. External partners are the Youth Council, the Regional Education Office, local schools, the Ministry of Health, Alisa, the Liguria Region, and the University of Genoa.

- Timeline: Classified as high priority and medium term (between 19 and 36 months). The total estimated time is 22 months.

Action 7: MyZena-Nightlife Hub

The action involves the creation of a nightlife *hub*, a space located away from residential areas, which integrates *food & beverage* and cultural offerings.

- Objectives: To decentralize nightlife from the historic center; to resolve issues of coexistence between nightlife and residents; to promote a quality nightlife offering based on sustainability; to establish a healthy approach to entertainment and promote innovative practices.
- Area of intervention: The main strategic objective is OS1. Diversify and redevelop nightlife spaces, with a focus on area 1.1: Decentralization and diversification. The action also concerns Planning - Harmonization of functions (1.3) and Cultural vitality (2.2).
- Partners: The managers are Pierpaolo Cozzolino - Bar Kowalski and Giovanni Chiarella - Future Vox. Internal ULG partners include the Chamber of Commerce, ConfCommercio, ConfEsercenti, the Communication and Major Events Department, AMT, AMIU, and Porto Antico di Genova. External partners are the University of Genoa, the Galata Museo del Mare, the Liguria Region, and bars/nightclubs in the historic center (through the creation of their own spin-off).
- Timeline: Classified as medium priority and long term (over 36 months). The total estimated time is 40 months. This is an entrepreneurial project with an initial investment of €750,000.

Action 8: Night Operator Training

This action focuses on providing training to nightlife operators (discos, bars, restaurants) on risk, safety, and harm reduction issues.

- Objectives: To increase safety skills (relating to both the management of activities and problems arising from users) and to share tools for the development of a responsible nightlife culture. It also aims to implement a network of nightclubs that act as safe points.
- Area of intervention: The main strategic objective is OS2. Promotion of nightlife culture, with a focus on area 2.1: Training. The action is also linked to the promotion of safety (3.2).
- Partners: ConfCommercio, SILB, and SIFE are responsible for the project. Internal ULG partners include Agorà, Il Ce.sto, Afet Aquilone, the Chamber of Commerce, Confesercenti, the Local Police, and UDI. External partners are the University of Genoa, the Ministry of Health, and the Liguria Region.
- Timeline: Classified as high priority and medium term (between 19 and 36 months). The total estimated time is 27 months.

Action 9: Map of city spaces and times

The action aims to map the use of urban spaces in relation to time.

- Objectives: To provide a reference tool for the planning and harmonization of urban functions in space and time. To provide a knowledge base for the implementation of the Integrated Action Plan, promote a diversified night-time economy, and implement enhancement and regeneration strategies.
- Area of intervention: This falls under strategic objective OS1. Diversify and redevelop night-time spaces, with a focus on area 1.3: Planning - Harmonization of functions. The action also includes Enhancement and regeneration (1.2).
- Partners: Confesercenti is the lead partner. Internal ULG partners include the Local Police, the Erasmus network, and AMT. The external partner is the University of Genoa.
- Timing: Classified as high priority and medium term (between 19 and 36 months). The total estimated time is 24 months.

Action 10: Library Night

The action involves the evening opening - until midnight - of municipal libraries in different areas of the city. The libraries potentially involved are DE AMICIS, BROCCCHI, SAFFI, GALLINO, and BENZI.

- Objectives: To provide young people with alternative spaces for study and leisure close to their homes; to encourage opportunities for intergenerational integration and inclusion; to allow workers to use the services at unusual times; to create opportunities for children to play and develop a love of books; and to strengthen the cultural identity of the neighborhood.
- Area of Intervention: The main strategic objective is OS2. Promotion of nighttime culture, focusing on area 2.2: Cultural vitality. It also falls under Decentralization and diversification (1.1) and Extension of services after sunset (3.1).
- Partners: The Culture Department - Museums and Libraries Sector of the Municipality of Genoa is responsible. Internal ULG partners include the Culture Department, the Erasmus network, and the Chamber of Commerce. External partners include the municipalities concerned, local schools, and neighborhood associations.
- Timing: Classified as medium priority and medium term (between 19 and 36 months). The total estimated time is 28 months.

The implementation of the Integrated Action Plan

The Night Council will ensure continuity and guidance in the implementation of actions, providing:

- Ongoing support: It will support the implementation and monitoring of the IAP, ensuring its further development and refinement as a living document.
- Network consolidation: It will strengthen long-term collaboration between the municipality, economic actors, and civil society organizations.
- Communication and integration: It will facilitate communication, promote citizen participation, and ensure the adoption of an integrated approach.

The Night Council will interact with the municipal administration through a councilor or assessor specifically responsible for the nighttime economy. To ensure maximum involvement, a *call* for expressions of interest will be opened, with a focus on including categories that are difficult to involve in the ULG, starting with young people.

Monitoring of the IAP will be a continuous and integrated process, evaluating both the actions and the implementation process itself. The Night Council will provide the framework for monitoring actions, with regular evaluations (twice a year).

Several actions are planned for the communication and local dissemination of the IAP:

- Production of a simplified version of the IAP (with particular attention to *the graphic layout*).
- Sending the simplified version to municipal departments, the local press, schools, and universities.
- Dedicated public presentations, creation of a page on the municipal website, and dissemination via *social media* channels.

At the national level, the IAP will be presented at a public event, inviting delegates from other Italian cities that have developed a nighttime plan.

The objectives and actions outlined in the IAP Cities After Dark represent Genoa's concrete commitment to a nightlife that is an expression of diversity, identity, and inclusivity, improving the quality of life, economy, and safety for all citizens.