IAP Report

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U.R.IMPACT
Prioritising Social Impact in Urban Regeneration

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U.R. Impact is a project co-funded by the URBACT IV European program of which the Municipality of Cinisello Balsamo is the lead partner.

The goal is to create an Integrated Action Plan that provides an evaluation of the social impact of urban regeneration programs on the territory.

The Plan will be realized and implemented with an integrated approach, which will involve the cooperation and participation of several local actors (stakeholders). Stakeholders will be involved to contribute to the definition of what can be considered indicators of positive social impact of urban regeneration projects, modeled on the different territories of the partnership.

By prioritizing social impact, with a focus on community involvement, urban regeneration actions are rethought by placing citizens and their social, economic and environmental wellbeing at the center of the processes. It also allows for an increased sense of belonging and civic participation.

Project duration:
from 01/06/2023 to 31/12/2025

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SECTION 1

Introduction:
The U.R. Impact Mission

This report synthesizes the collective experience of the partner cities within the URBACT IV U.R. Impact network. Over the course of their collaboration, these diverse European municipalities have worked to develop Integrated Action Plans (IAPs) designed to navigate the complex challenges of urban regeneration. The purpose of this document is to reflect on that process, analyzing how the network's shared mission—prioritizing social impact—was translated into tangible, context-specific strategies aimed at fostering sustainable, equitable, and resilient communities.

The core goal of the U.R. Impact network is to prioritize social impact and community-based practices by reimagining how urban regeneration is conducted. This mission entails placing citizens and their social and ecological well-being at the core of the strategy, defining a methodology for collective decision-making, and embedding civic participation in the development of local urban regeneration plans.

To guide this work, the network adopted a clear definition of social impact, as highlighted in its Baseline Study. This framework is characterized by three key features that provide a common language for planning and assessment:

• **Intentionality:** This refers to the explicit desire to incorporate solutions to community problems and generate positive social outcomes directly into the design of a policy or project. It requires local authorities to define desired social goals at the beginning of the regeneration process, ensuring that interventions are purposefully aligned with community needs.

• **Measurability:** This feature emphasizes the need to measure the proposed social solution in both quantitative and qualitative terms. It requires cities to systematically evaluate the potential social consequences of projects before implementation by defining relevant indicators, collecting data, and analyzing potential impacts.

• **Additionality:** This principle encourages action in areas where market mechanisms have failed or are only partially effective. In practice, it calls for promoting inclusive, bottom-up participatory planning processes that actively engage citizens and stakeholders, thereby fostering community ownership and social cohesion.

The partner cities that collaborated to apply these principles to their local contexts are:

• Bielsko-Biała, Poland
• Bovec, Slovenia
• Broumov, Czech Republic
• Cinisello Balsamo, Italy (Lead Partner)
• Hannut, Belgium

• Kamza, Albania
• Longford, Ireland
• Mértola, Portugal
• Murcia, Spain

This report will first explore how the network's broad thematic focus was translated into specific, localized Integrated Action Plans, each tailored to the unique challenges and aspirations of its city.

SECTION 2

Localizing the Vision: Partner IAP Focus and Network Alignment

While the U.R. Impact network shares a common goal, its strength lies in how each partner city adapted this mission to address unique local challenges. The process of developing an Integrated Action Plan was not a one-size-fits-all exercise; rather, it was a process of localization. This section analyzes the specific focus of each city's IAP, demonstrating the direct link between the network's overarching themes and the tangible, place-based problems that partners aimed to solve.

2.1   IAP Focus Across the U.R. Impact Network

PARTNER CITY	CORE LOCAL CHALLENGE(S)	SPECIFIC IAP FOCUS
Broumov, *Czech Republic*	Severe depopulation, an aging demographic, a dying city center, and profound citizen mistrust toward local authorities and participatory projects.	To revitalize the Main Square with visible, small-scale interventions designed to rebuild community confidence and foster trust in the co-production process.
Cinisello Balsamo, *Italy*	Fragmentation of urban projects, a lack of coherent long-term strategy, and no systematic evaluation of the social impact of public interventions.	To create a structured and replicable methodology for social impact assessment, tested within the urban regeneration of the Crocetta district.
Bielsko-Biała, *Poland*	Persistent socio-economic decline and depopulation in the historic center of Biała, despite previous revitalization efforts.	To achieve a socio-economic revival of the city center by introducing new functions, such as a university campus, to attract new residents and users.
Hannut, *Belgium*	Erosion of local commerce, an aging population, and a gradual loss of attractiveness in the city center.	To build a new multifunctional complex (business center, library, cultural hall) to serve as a new hub, fostering social cohesion and connecting key city areas via soft mobility.
Bovec, *Slovenia*	Brain drain, overtourism, acute housing shortages for locals, and a lack of employment and social opportunities for young people.	To increase youth inclusion and create a sustainable, year-round living environment by fostering entrepreneurship, co-working spaces, and youth-led activities.

PARTNER CITY	CORE LOCAL CHALLENGE(S)	SPECIFIC IAP FOCUS
Mértola, *Portugal*	Demographic decline, vulnerability to climate change and desertification, and the need to preserve heritage in its historic center.	To implement a sustainable urban development strategy focused on social inclusion, housing, environmental resilience, and balancing tourism with local identity.
Longford (Ballymahon), *Ireland*	High levels of deprivation in the town core, a lack of social infrastructure, and a need to establish community ownership of new facilities.	To support the "Pobal le Cheile" project by establishing a strong governance model for new community facilities for youth and older people.
Murcia, *Spain*	Historical urban division caused by physical barriers (railway tracks and the Segura River), leading to fragmentation and social inequities.	To implement the "South Connection" project, improving accessibility, mobility, and public space to integrate the southern neighborhoods with the city center.
Kamza, *Albania*	Rapid, unplanned population growth following the fall of communism, resulting in a severe lack of green and public spaces.	To create a "Multifunctional Park" along the Tirana River as a pilot project for sustainable regeneration and community-focused public space development.

2.2 Analysis of Challenge Archetypes

The diverse local challenges addressed by the partner cities can be synthesized into three primary archetypes. This framework allows for a clearer understanding of the patterns of urban stress and the strategic responses developed within the network.

1 Archetype

COMBATING SHRINKAGE AND/OR DECLINE
This group includes cities like Broumov, Bielsko-Biała, and Hannut, which are fighting depopulation (with the exception of Hannut), aging demographics, and economic erosion in their historic centers. Their IAPs focus on revitalizing central public spaces and introducing new functions to restore vibrancy and attract new users.

2 Archetype

MANAGING GROWTH & INTEGRATION
This archetype is represented by cities like Kamza and Murcia. They are grappling with the physical and social infrastructure gaps caused by rapid, unplanned population growth (Kamza) or deep-seated historical divisions (Murcia). Their strategies prioritize creating new public spaces and improving physical connectivity to foster social cohesion.

3 Archetype

SYSTEMATIZING PROCESS & IMPACT
Cities such as Cinisello Balsamo and Longford fall into this category. Their primary challenge is not a single physical or demographic issue but a procedural one. Their IAPs are focused on creating new, replicable methodologies for social impact assessment (Cinisello Balsamo) and establishing robust governance models for community facilities (Longford) to ensure long-term sustainability and accountability.

The analysis will now shift from what the cities planned to how they approached the crucial challenge of integration in their strategies.

2.3 Common Themes and Shared Solutions

Across the nine IAPs, several strategic themes emerge that demonstrate the network's collective learning and shared vision:

REVITALIZING PUBLIC SPACES AS COMMUNITY ANCHORS

Nearly every city prioritizes the transformation of underutilized or degraded spaces into vibrant community hubs. Kamza's Multifunctional Park, Murcia's 200,000 square meters of freed land from the South Connection project, and Broumov's revitalized central square all exemplify how physical spaces can catalyze social cohesion and economic activity.

BRIDGING DIVIDES AND FOSTERING INCLUSION

The IAPs address various forms of urban fragmentation—physical, social, and economic. Murcia seeks to eliminate the barrier created by railway tracks, Cinisello Balsamo works to integrate the isolated Crocetta district, and Longford (Ballymahon) aims to serve its highly diverse population of 20 nationalities. Each plan demonstrates that genuine inclusion requires both infrastructure and intentional social programming.

EMPOWERING YOUTH AND PREVENTING BRAIN DRAIN

Recognizing that young people are essential to urban vitality, cities like Bovec, Broumov, Longford, and Mértola have developed specific strategies to create opportunities and spaces for youth. From coworking spaces and youth cafés to cultural programming and participatory design processes, these initiatives aim to give young people reasons to stay and invest in their communities.

BUILDING NEW GOVERNANCE MODELS

A critical insight across the network is that physical regeneration alone is insufficient. Cities are establishing new structures for citizen participation, cross-departmental collaboration, and long-term governance. Cinisello Balsamo's Social Impact Assessment Working Group, Longford's community governance model for Pobal le Cheile, and Broumov's efforts to rebuild trust through transparent, participatory processes all recognize that how decisions are made is as important as what decisions are made.

INTEGRATING HARD AND SOFT INVESTMENTS

The IAPs consistently demonstrate the integration of physical infrastructure (hard investments) with social programming and services (soft investments). Bielsko-Biała combines the Medical University development with community activation initiatives, Hannut links its multifunctional complex to cultural programming and mobility networks, and Mértola balances heritage conservation with climate resilience and community engagement.

SECTION 3
Weaving the Integrated Approach

A core principle of the URBACT method is the necessity of an integrated approach to urban development. This concept moves beyond siloed, single-sector planning to embrace a holistic perspective that acknowledges the interconnectedness of urban challenges. This section deconstructs what integration means in practice for the U.R. Impact network and evaluates how partner cities navigated the complex task of weaving together different policy areas, governance levels, and investment types.

3.1 Dimensions of Integration

According to URBACT guidance, integration in urban planning is a multi-dimensional concept. It can be understood through four broad types:
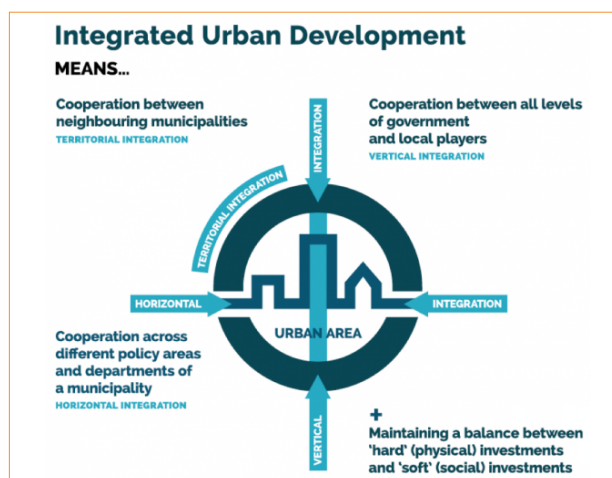
- **Vertical integration:** Cooperation and coherence between different levels of government, from local and district bodies to regional, national, and European authorities.
- **Horizontal integration:** Cooperation across different policy areas and municipal departments, such as housing, transport, economic development, and social services.
- **Territorial integration:** Cooperation between neighboring municipalities and authorities to address challenges that cross administrative boundaries.
- **Integration between 'hard' and 'soft' investments:** Balancing physical or infrastructural projects (e.g., building restoration) with investments in human capital and community well-being (e.g., skills training, social programs).

3.2 Application and Challenges

Within the network, cities demonstrated both successes and ongoing challenges in applying these principles. For instance, **Bielsko-Biała** established a "Regeneration Operator" to serve as a coordinator for activities, ensuring that initiatives were aligned and complementary. Similarly, **Cinisello Balsamo** strategically aligned its IAP with the existing Entangled project—a major regeneration initiative in its target neighborhood—to ensure coherence and build upon ongoing investments. However, achieving seamless integration remains a significant hurdle. The IAP for **Mértola** explicitly identifies the "lack of coordination between various stakeholders" and "fragmented initiatives" as a primary challenge to be overcome. In **Murcia**, the plan acknowledges the inherent complexity of coordinating efforts across numerous departments in a large municipality, highlighting the need for strong leadership and clear communication channels to break down organizational silos. **Longford** Included a page in the IAP dedicated to integration and to specific elements of it.

The Integrated Action Plans also focused on integrating strategies across the four broad types of integration defined by the URBACT method:

1. Horizontal Integration (Across Policy Areas and Departments)

Horizontal integration focused on collaboration across different policy sectors within the municipality. In **Cinisello Balsamo**, the central goal was to embed impact assessment into the entire administration. This mandated the establishment of a Social Impact Assessment Working Group intended to include at least one representative, preferably a department head, from each sector of the administration to ensure the new methodology was consistently applied across areas like Public Works, Social Services, and Strategy.

Murcia's South Connection project, which involves reclaiming vast public space after undergrounding the railway, demands coherence across numerous municipal departments, including Urbanism, Transport, Culture, and Parks and Recreation, to deliver on goals of aesthetics, mobility, and citizen participation. In **Bromouv**, the departments needed to be involved in order to connect public spaces, commerce and mobility - only condition for a holistic transformation of the main square.

2. Vertical Integration (Across Levels of Government)

This dimension ensured cooperation between local authorities and higher levels of government, including regional, national, and EU bodies. For **Kamza**, a necessary precondition for implementing the IAP's main action (the Multifunctional Park) was the Transfer of ownership of the area from the central state authorities (State Cadastre Agency) to the Municipality, aligning local development needs with state-level administrative procedures.

Mértola ensured vertical coherence by involving the national General Directorate of Territory (DGT) in its ULG, confirming that the local strategy was aligned with national territorial planning and positioned to leverage EU funding frameworks like Portugal 2030.

3. Territorial Integration (Spatial and Geographic Coherence)

Territorial integration ensures coherence across geographic scales, sometimes extending to surrounding areas or focusing on marginalized neighborhoods. **Murcia**'s South Connection project is, at its core, a massive exercise in territorial integration, aiming to eliminate the physical divide caused by the railway tracks and the river, thereby creating a "more integrated, barrier-free and expanded city centre" that incorporates the historically disconnected southern neighborhoods. **Hannut** extended its regeneration vision beyond the city center by planning a soft mobility network (for pedestrians and cyclists) connecting the site of the new multifunctional complex to the city center and the 17 surrounding villages, reflecting a polycentric model.

4. Integration of Hard (Physical) and Soft (Social) Investments

This critical domain ensures that infrastructure projects (hard) are deliberately combined with human capital and social measures (soft) to achieve social impact. **Longford** (Ballymahon) centered its plan on delivering the Pobal le Cheile regeneration project. This involves the hard redevelopment of vacant buildings (the former convent and old boys' school) to accommodate soft community and social services, specifically supporting youth (Youth Café/Reach facility) and the elderly (Day Care Centre, Men's Shed). **Bielsko-Biała** integrated hard changes, such as the revitalization of Plac Fabryczny for the Medical University of Silesia branch and the creation of the Creative cultural space, with soft measures intended to activate the local community, such as supporting new businesses through the Business IncuBBator and conducting integration activities to build local identity. **Kamza**'s vision transformed underutilized state-owned riverbanks into a hard infrastructure (the Multifunctional Park) designed to fulfill the soft goal of increasing social capital, strengthening community cohesion, and providing recreational and cultural spaces for diverse populations, including the local Roma and Egyptian communities. In **Bovec**, the spaces thought for the coworking space, city living room and youth are part of a larger community activation process to keep the spaces alive and relevant.

SECTION 4

The URBACT Local Group (ULG) as a Core Vehicle

The foundational structure for co-production in all partner cities is the URBACT Local Group (ULG). The ULG serves as the primary forum for stakeholder dialogue, problem analysis, and the co-design of actions. While the ULG was a universal feature, its composition and formation strategy varied significantly across the network, reflecting different local contexts and objectives.

4.1 *ULG Approach and Role in Implementation*

The role of the ULG generally involves transitioning from a consultative body during the planning phase to a delivery-focused working group, monitoring actions and ensuring community alignment.

PARTNER CITY	PRIMARY APPROACH AND ROLE
Cinisello Balsamo	The approach is primarily methodological, focusing on establishing a system for social impact assessment (SIA). The ULG is central to this, participating actively in the co-design of impact indicators and the participatory monitoring of urban interventions (like the Entangled project). The continuation of the expanded ULG post-project ensures it remains a key platform for dialogue and co-design.
Bielsko-Biała	The approach is "Revitalization with people and for people". The ULG's technical expertise is leveraged to define social impact indicators and methods. They engage in pilot actions to test community agency and ownership, such as designing a pocket park or consulting on architectural concepts via an "Urban Agora".
Broumov	The ULG prioritized visible, small-scale pilot activities (like installing tables/chairs and a coffee stand on the square) early on to quickly build confidence and trust among the local population, tackling the widespread mistrust between citizens and authorities. The group focuses on ensuring the resulting Integrated Action Plan (IAP) is a "living guide" rather than just a document.
Mértola	The ULG will evolve into a Delivery-Oriented ULG (DO-ULG) to focus on implementation, monitoring, and providing feedback to the IAP Implementation Task Force. Their engagement methods include organizing informal dialogue platforms like "Conversas no Pátio" and biannual public forums to facilitate continuous citizen feedback.

PARTNER CITY	PRIMARY APPROACH AND ROLE
Murcia	The ULG ensures collective decision-making guides the repurposing of vast newly freed land (South Connection project). Their approach involves high-visibility participation actions, such as the traveling "South Connection Exhibition" which includes citizen engagement agora labs and a suggestion box to gather real-time proposals. After the project, a Project Coordination Taskforce (a ULG sub-group) will oversee cross-sector coordination.
Hannut	The governance structure is highly participatory. The ULG monitored the project quarterly and its primary approach centers on structuring the vision for a multifunctional complex and a soft mobility network. They plan to extend their involvement by creating a dedicated task force post-URBACT.
Bovec	The ULG serves as a crucial mechanism for transferring knowledge from international exchanges to the local community. They ensure the participatory approach is maintained by providing the voice for citizens and supporting the activities of the planned Coworking Space and Civic Center Buška Izba.
Kamza	The ULG was vital in the initial participatory process, identifying the urgent need for green public spaces. Post-implementation, the ULG will function as a Monitoring Committee to evaluate the progress and social impact of the Multifunctional Park intervention.

4.2 ULG Success and Challenges

Beyond the structure of the ULG, cities employed a range of engagement methods with varying degrees of success. These experiences offer valuable lessons on what works in practice when fostering genuine co-production.

- **Success Story (Murcia):** The city utilized **urban mapping exercises** with its ULG to great effect. This hands-on, visual tool allowed stakeholders to collaboratively identify and codify neighborhood-specific priorities for the ambitious "South Connection" project, translating local knowledge into actionable insights for the IAP.

- **Learning Opportunity (Longford):** The experience in Ballymahon demonstrated the limitations of traditional engagement methods. Formal public meetings were "poorly attended," underscoring a critical need for more **innovative and targeted communication strategies** to reach and involve the wider community beyond the core ULG members.

- **Building Trust (Broumov):** Facing deep-seated mistrust between citizens and authorities, the ULG reached a strategic consensus to **focus on a highly specific and visible project**. Their goal was explicit: to "build the confidence of the local population" and prove the value of participatory processes **through tangible, short-term results**.

These co-production processes were not improvised; they were facilitated by a variety of specific tools and frameworks designed to structure dialogue and planning.

SECTION 5

A Toolkit for Collaboration: Instruments for Co-Production

Effective co-production does not happen by chance; it relies on a well-chosen set of tools and methodologies to structure dialogue, diagnose problems, and design solutions. This section catalogs the key instruments used across the U.R. Impact network and evaluates their role in facilitating a collaborative and evidence-based approach to developing the Integrated Action Plans.

5.1 *Key innovative tools*

The toolkit employed by the partner cities can be organized into three primary categories:
Core Strategic Frameworks: These tools provided the overarching structure for the planning process.

- **Theory of Change:** This method was used by cities like Hannut to map the logical pathway from problems to impact. It helped stakeholders articulate how specific actions would lead to desired outputs, intermediate outcomes, and the ultimate long-term vision for the city. As part of the knowledge uptake - the network produced a final product based on the work done with the Theory of Change tool. Each city drew a Theory of change, aligned with the integrated action plan and the plans were then transformed into visual posters.

The posters were exhibited in the final conference and are part of the catalogue containing also some theoretical reference of what it means to plan for impact, the European dimension and the practical use of the tool.

- **Night at the market (Mértola):** A participatory design initiative actively involving the community. People were invited to join communal dinners at the municipal market of Mértola, creating convivial moments of social gathering. This occasion not only provided the opportunity to participate in enjoyable moments but also served as a platform for discussions and listening to the changes and needs of the city. The project has already been presented as a good practice to partners in U.R.Impact.

- **Urban DNA and the birth of Urban Acupuncture Therapy (Murcia):** Citizen engagement programs, part of Urbact Interactive City project, involve target neighbours interactively online and offline, fostering dialogue and developing urban solutions based on local needs.

5.2 The 'Testing Action': A Tailor-Made Tool

A unique and innovative tool central to the URBACT method is the "Testing Action." Its purpose is to allow cities to pilot ideas on a small scale, test assumptions, learn from the results, and build momentum before committing to large-scale investment. The U.R. Impact network provided diverse examples of this tool's versatility. The Testing Action Report gives a detailed description of all the actions. Here is a short summary:

TOOL / METHOD	DESCRIPTION
Traveling "South Connection Exhibition" and Agora Labs *Murcia*	A traveling visual exhibition housed in the Artillery Barracks (and later rotating across affected neighborhoods) showcased the urban regeneration project. It incorporated citizen engagement agora labs and a suggestion box to gather real-time proposals and feedback on the new free spaces. The exhibition adhered to New European Bauhaus criteria, using recycled materials and digital alternatives (like QR codes) to reduce paper waste.
Urban Agora/Consultation Point in Point 11 *Bielsko-Biała*	The city plans to use a cultural centre (Point 11) to host an exhibition of architectural concepts for regeneration projects. This acts as an Urban Agora where stakeholders can visualize infrastructure activities and submit suggestions, acting as a crucial consultation point.
Co-Designed Pocket Park *Bielsko-Biała*	A pilot action focused on identifying a small urban area to be developed as a pocket park according to the vision of residents and users. This involved design workshops in a "Lab" setting (Point 11) where residents collaborated with students of landscape architecture, directly fostering a sense of agency and ownership over the space.
Colored Stencils and Symbolic Bridge Event *Cinisello Balsamo*	A testing action designed to communicate local services and foster community bonding. Participants (working groups of different "colors") created colored stencils on the floor to inform about services, culminating in a group photo on the Crocetta bridge where the "colors" mixed to symbolize cohesion and integration.
Conversas no Pátio (Conversations in the Courtyard) *Mértola*	An initiative launched to create an informal community dialogue platform. Residents and visitors gather in private and public courtyards (Pátios) to discuss social, cultural, and urban topics while sharing traditional food, strengthening community ties.
Youth Creative Exploration *Mértola*	A pilot testing action that engaged local youth in creative methods (photography, writing, drawing) to explore the Historic Center and express their visions for a car-free, aesthetically pleasing space.
Door-to-Door Surveys and Working Groups *Kamza*	For the Multifunctional Park Management Plan, Kamza will engage stakeholders through door-to-door surveys, public consultations, and direct involvement in working groups during the design phase to ensure the annual activity plan meets the needs of direct beneficiaries.
Mobility Survey and Directional Signage *Hannut*	The city conducted a mobility survey (at Christmas markets and events) to gauge pedestrian flow and the need for clear signage. This directly informed the "Tom Thumb" strategy (enlivening the pedestrian path), complemented by installing directional signage which successfully increased footfall.

SECTION 6

URBACT
Added Value

The URBACT programme provided significant value to the U.R. Impact network, transforming how partner cities approach urban regeneration. The impact extended beyond technical knowledge transfer to fundamental shifts in mindset, capacity, and collaborative practice.

1. **A NEW MINDSET**
Shift toward citizen-centered regeneration instead of only physical renewal (Hannut, Cinisello). Awareness that impact must be intentional, measurable, and part of strategy, not an afterthought.

2. **GREATER LOCAL COHESION & DIALOGUE**
More communication across groups (Bovec). Spaces for dialogue between youth, councillors, officials (Kamza, Bovec).

3. **CAPACITY BUILDING & SKILLS**
Municipal staff discovered new tools, approaches, and concepts they had not used before (Cinisello, Kamza). Exchange with peers from other countries helped them grow professionally.

4. **INTEGRATED AND CROSS-DEPARTMENTAL WORKING**
Several cities noted that URBACT helped break silos inside city hall: political vision aligned with administration, multiple departments collaborating (Cinisello, Kamza).

5. **COURAGE TO EXPERIMENT**
Small "testing actions" gave cities confidence to try, fail, and learn—something not possible in standard project frameworks.

6. **EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE & VALIDATION**
Being part of a European network gave legitimacy and momentum: "we are not alone in these challenges, others are trying too."

SECTION 7

IAP Integrated Action Plan summaries

Cinisello Balsamo
Italy (Lead Partner)

Cinisello Balsamo is in the Milan metropolitan area, characterized by a complex socio-economic transition following the closure of major factories in the 1990s. The city has the lowest average per capita income and the highest unemployment rate in the area (28% for youth). The population is aging (over 70% are adults), and the city hosts spatially and socially marginalized immigrant communities, particularly in the Crocetta district, where 65% of residents are non-EU nationals and the area is physically isolated by roads.

Challenges and Strategies

Key challenges include fragmented urban development lacking a cohesive strategy, the geographical and social isolation of neighborhoods like Crocetta, and a pervasive lack of a systematic approach to evaluating the long-term social impact of public interventions.
Strategy (Vision): To develop a formalized and binding system for evaluating the social impact of urban regeneration projects. This methodological focus aims to overcome fragmentation and connect current initiatives (like the Entangled project in Crocetta) with future priorities.

Testing Actions

The proposed testing action involves organizing a large event, starting with working groups creating colored stencils on the floor to inform about services (e.g., language courses, school activities). The event culminates on the Crocetta bridge where participants of different "colors" (groups) mix, symbolizing cohesion and belonging. This seeks to strengthen communication about services and improve the perception of authorities.

Focus of the IAP

The focus is primarily methodological: defining and implementing a structured, replicable model for assessing the social impact of urban regeneration. This model should support learning, coherence, and accountability across all phases of public action.

Three areas of intervention:
- Governance Model
- Impact Measurement Pilots in the City (using interventions like the Entangled project)
- Impact Measurement Approach for Public Procurement

INTENTION FOR CHANGE (INTENTIONALITY)
The primary goal is methodological: to establish the city as an advanced model where social impact assessment (SIA) is the cornerstone of planning, thereby improving citizens' lives and rebuilding trust with institutions.

MEASUREMENT (MEASURABILITY)
The city intends to define a structured, replicable process for SIA, rather than a fixed set of indicators. A key goal is developing and implementing a SIA system by 2028, defining measurable indicators covering inclusivity, environmental sustainability, social cohesion, and quality of life.
Indicators track outputs (e.g., number of municipal employees trained, number of evaluation toolkits developed) and outcomes (e.g., percentage of municipal decisions influenced by SIA data).

PARTICIPATORY APPROACH (ADDITIONALITY)
The approach places strong emphasis on involving stakeholders (municipal departments, local actors) in both the design and implementation of the evaluation process. Key actions include Co-Designing Impact Indicators through structured meetings with local stakeholders and implementing Participatory Monitoring of urban interventions under the Entangled project. The goal is to consolidate and grow a stable ecosystem of civic collaboration.

Future Objectives and Actions

KEY SMART GOALS

- Training staff and promoting the adoption of a social impact assessment system across all departments (by 2030)
- Developing and implementing a social impact assessment system with measurable indicators for urban regeneration projects (by 2028)
- Formally adopting and making mandatory the social impact assessment system for all urban regeneration projects (by 2028)

KEY FUTURE ACTIONS:

- Establishing a Social Impact Assessment Working Group
- Developing an Impact Assessment Toolkit
- Conducting participatory monitoring of the Entangled project interventions (Hybrida center, Anna Frank school, public park)
- Integrating social impact criteria into public procurement processes (training and guidelines)

Bielsko-Biała
Poland

Bielsko-Biała struggles with depopulation and a systematic loss of commercial and investment attractiveness in the city center (Biała's centre). This small area (0.4% of the city area) concentrates negative socio-economic and environmental phenomena. The area suffers from above-average poverty concentration, and due to historic building ownership structure, the city only owns 40% of buildings, complicating revitalization.

Challenges and Strategies

Key challenges include the structural nature of unemployment in downtown Biała and the fact that past revitalization efforts failed to reverse depopulation or improve residents' socio-economic status.

Strategy (Vision): The socio-economic revival of Biała's centre, defined as "Revitalization with people and for people". This involves introducing new functions, such as developing the area's academic character via a planned Medical University of Silesia branch in post-factory buildings. The focus is shifting from infrastructure to activities based on local community needs.

Testing Actions

The city considered two main testing ideas:
- Establishing an Urban Agora/consultation point in Point 11 (a cultural centre) to exhibit architectural concepts and gather public opinions on regeneration activities.
- Identifying a small area to be developed as a pocket park according to residents' visions, emphasizing co-design workshops at Point 11 to foster community sense of belonging and responsibility.

Focus of the IAP

The focus is on the socio-economic revival of the centre of Biała through activities emphasizing the social sphere, aiming to build stronger local identity and improve the quality of life. The plan seeks to implement a monitoring and evaluation system to measure how activities boost resident well-being.

Areas of Intervention:
- Housing
- Economy
- Space
- Local Community

INTENTION FOR CHANGE (INTENTIONALITY)
The vision is the socio-economic revival of the centre of Biała, making it a thriving socioeconomic hub by 2030. The main motto is "Revitalization with people and for people". This involves overcoming depopulation and decline by introducing new functions, developing an academic character (Medical University branch), and fostering socio-cultural activities.

MEASUREMENT (MEASURABILITY)
A dedicated monitoring and evaluation system will measure the impact of activities on the local community's well-being. Output indicators track renovations (e.g., number of renovated buildings/ flats, new RES installations) and support services (e.g., number of people trained, value of subsidies for entrepreneurs). Data collection utilizes project implementation reports, surveys, and statistical data.

PARTICIPATORY APPROACH (ADDITIONALITY)
The methodology for regeneration involves collective decision-making and civic participation. Stakeholders (including ULG members) are involved in planning, co-implementing actions, and monitoring achieved effects. Planned actions include creating an Urban Agora/consultation point for residents to visualize infrastructure activities and submit suggestions. They will also implement a pilot project involving residents in designing a small public space to foster a sense of agency and ownership.

Future Objectives and Actions

KEY SMART GOALS

- Modernizing 6 residential premises and adapting 5 vacant properties by 2030 (Housing)
- Implementing 5 initiatives supporting active/future entrepreneurs by 2026 (Economy)
- Establishing the Medical University branch and a new cultural space by 2030 (Space)
- Building local identity through activation/ integration activities by 2030 (Community)

KEY FUTURE ACTIONS:

- Business IncuBBator
- Revitalization of Plac Fabryczny for the Medical University
- Developing the Creative Laundry cultural functions
- Community activities such as "The permeation of the city" (activation/ integration)
- Creating local integration places via the "Let's plan our common space" action (pocket parks)

Bovec
Slovenia

Bovec is a small mountainous region known for its stunning natural landscape, located in the Julian Alps near the Italian border. Despite its beauty, it is distant from urban centers and faces interlinked challenges such as overtourism, limited educational opportunities, housing shortages (unaffordable for locals), and a lack of qualified jobs. The population is small (just over 3,000) and aging.

Challenges and Strategies

Key Challenges include reversing negative demographic trends, preventing brain drain, ensuring affordable living conditions, and addressing a lack of community engagement and cohesion. Strategy (Vision): Focus on increasing youth participation in politics, promoting intergenerational cooperation, and defining suitable spaces for all demographic groups. The goal is to create a New, Encouraging Work and Educational Environment and a Space for Quality Social Interaction for Young People, building on existing projects like the Buška Izba (town's living room).

Testing Actions

Testing actions are already in progress to test the needs and usage of the planned Coworking space (Action 1). For the Set of Activities for Youth (Action 2), the municipality is conducting regular surveys among attendees to gather data for planning future activities.

Focus of the IAP

The IAP focuses on creating local opportunities, fostering social inclusion, and eliminating the seasonality of businesses.

Areas of Intervention:
- Entrepreneurship (Coworking Space)
- Youth Empowerment and Social Inclusion of Youth (Set of Activities)
- Civic Center Buška Izba (Sustainable intergenerational space)

INTENTION FOR CHANGE (INTENTIONALITY)
To Create a New, Encouraging Work and Educational Environment, and a Space for Quality Social Interaction for Young People, counteracting brain drain and seasonality. The vision involves increasing youth participation, promoting intergenerational cooperation, and identifying suitable spaces for all demographic groups.

MEASUREMENT (MEASURABILITY)
Measurement focuses primarily on participation rates and usage of the new spaces. For the Coworking Goal, the target is defined as achieving 3 long-term users and/or 2 short-term or occasional users (seasonal migrants) by the end of 2025. For the Civic Center Buška Izba, measurability is determined by the participation and re-participation of users and the number of collaborations with institutions and associations.

PARTICIPATORY APPROACH (ADDITIONALITY)
The municipality utilizes participatory planning through consultations and a participatory budgeting process where citizens vote on ideas for funding. The existing ULG will continue after the project, serving as a connection and voice for citizens to the municipality and helping to engage various social groups. Youth empowerment is central, achieved by encouraging young people to co-design and implement activities set for them.

Future Objectives and Actions

KEY SMART GOALS

- Establish a Coworking space (eliminating seasonality and providing modern work opportunities) by the end of 2025
- Involve young people in co-designing and participating in a Set of Activities for Youth by the end of 2025
- Establish the Civic Center Buška Izba as a sustainable intergenerational space by the end of 2025

KEY FUTURE ACTIONS:

- Securing funding and developing content/ support services for entrepreneurs (Coworking)
- Organizing meetings with youth to define needs and expectations for activities
- Establishing regular funding, equipping the space, and hiring a coordinator for the Civic Center Buška Izba

Broumov
Czech Republic

Broumov is a city facing high poverty and unemployment, a large Roma community (over 10% of the population), low education rates, and a lack of social housing. The central square has lost its vibrancy due to the closure of many shops and bars, with only two cafes remaining in the entire city. This central depopulation negatively affects the local economy.
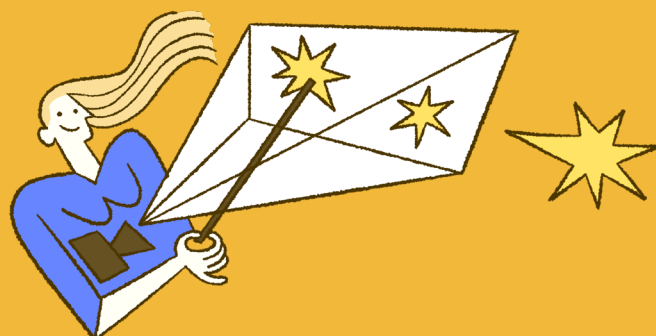
Challenges and Strategies

Key Challenges include low attractiveness, especially for young people to stay in the city; a declining city centre and dying local commerce; and mistrust between the city authority and citizens.

Strategy (Vision): Enhance the city's appeal, increase the length of stay for locals/tourists, promote local consumption, and make the centre pedestrian-friendly. The overarching vision is to create "Broumov - a good place to live". Existing documents include the Strategic Development Plan until 2029 (considered "outdated"), the Integrated Strategy for Urban Development (2020) aimed at reviving business and social life, and the Broumovian Standards (2022) to improve public space appearance.

Testing Actions

The city prioritized smaller, inexpensive activities to pilot during the project duration to quickly build confidence and trust locally. These included:

- Purchasing and placing tables and chairs on the square (to increase attractiveness)
- Positioning a coffee stand in the square (to provide afternoon refreshments)
- Implementing changes for "A city for people, not cars" such as a new parking system and increased fees
- Organizing more culture and joint events with local entrepreneurs

Focus of the IAP

The focus is on developing actions related to the revitalization of the city centre. The major internal challenge is the limited capacity of the city management to implement and evaluate strategies.

Areas of Intervention:
- Services and Businesses & City Administration
- Spatial changes
- Activities and community life

INTENTION FOR CHANGE (INTENTIONALITY)
To create a "Broumov - a good place to live" by transforming into a vibrant, people-centered city center. The mission is to respond to demographic decline, social exclusion, and weak civic participation by empowering residents. This involves addressing challenges like the declining city centre and mistrust between authority and citizens.

MEASUREMENT (MEASURABILITY)
Measurement focuses on tangible signs of revitalisation and engagement. Key indicators include: Number of new businesses established in the city center, Percentage reduction in vacant commercial spaces, Number of cultural events hosted annually, and Level of citizen participation in urban planning. Data is collected through business registration records, event attendance records, and surveys/public feedback.

PARTICIPATORY APPROACH (ADDITIONALITY)
The city aims to enhance participatory methodology and develop bottom-up practices. Participation interventions include organizing regular public consultations, establishing a citizen advisory committee, and implementing participatory budgeting. The goal is to show the local population that the IAP is a "living guide" and to build trust in participatory processes among city officials.

Future Objectives and Actions

KEY SMART GOALS

- Increasing local business engagement (e.g., opening 1 new shop with regional products by end of 2028)
- Enhancing citizen participation by 50% (by end of 2027)
- Reducing car traffic in the centre by 40% (by end of 2028)
- Creating and approving a new Strategic Development Plan (2027-2040) by the end of 2027

KEY FUTURE ACTIONS:

- Establishing a coordinator for the city centre
- Launching a "Vacant Space Activation" initiative
- Hiring a city architect
- Developing new pedestrian-friendly zones
- Establishing a regular cultural events program

Hannut
Belgium

Hannut is historically a dynamic commercial hub strategically located at major regional road intersections. It currently faces a set of challenges including the erosion of commerce, changing consumption patterns, an aging population, and a general loss of attractiveness, notably worsened by the Covid crisis.

Challenges and Strategies

Key Challenges identified are the loss of attractiveness and commercial vacancies.
Strategy (Vision): An ambitious 15-year urban renewal plan focusing on constructing a multifunctional complex (business center, library, cultural center, concert hall, housing) on a key plot. This plan emphasizes connecting the complex to the city center and 17 villages via a soft mobility network (pedestrians/cyclists), aligning with the "15-minute city" approach. The ultimate impact sought is restoring Hannut's role as a regional driving force and strengthening community pride.

Testing Actions

The city carried out several testing actions to understand local dynamics and enhance attractiveness:
* A mobility survey (using Christmas markets and other events) to understand flow between the city center and the future complex site
* Decorating vacant storefronts to raise awareness and enhance the festive atmosphere
* Setting up Instagram photo booths in the park to encourage walking
* Implementing directional signage to increase foot traffic to nearby businesses

Focus of the IAP

The IAP focuses on structuring and implementing the vision of a dynamic, livable city.
Key concepts include designing attractive access points and achieving retail-event synergy.

Areas of Intervention:
- Culture and business
- Communication
- Mobility and green transition
- Tourism
- Architecture
- Participatory governance

INTENTION FOR CHANGE (INTENTIONALITY)
To reverse the city center's loss of appeal and ensure the centre remains vibrant despite the decrease in retail function. The city aims to be a dynamic, liveable "15-minute city" by creating a multifunctional complex and a soft mobility network connecting villages to the center. The ultimate impact is restoring Hannut's role as a regional driving force and strengthening community pride.

MEASUREMENT (MEASURABILITY)
Key indicators are focused on verifying renewed dynamism and satisfaction: Attendance at the center and events, citizen participation, media coverage, and resident satisfaction. Results are measured quantitatively and qualitatively. Specific testing actions involved surveying Christmas market attendees and the Village Gonflé event to understand pedestrian flow and the need for clear signage between the future multifunctional hall and the city center.

PARTICIPATORY APPROACH (ADDITIONALITY)
Participatory governance is based on workshops, regular meetings, citizen surveys, and detailed monitoring, involving the multidisciplinary URBACT Local Committee (ULG) (elected officials, merchants, citizens, experts). The city intends to extend the ULG's involvement by creating a dedicated task force after URBACT ends. Actions prioritize engaging retailers in event synergy.

Future Objectives and Actions

KEY SMART GOALS

- Completing the multifunctional complex by 2028
- Completing the slow mobility network by 2026/2027
- Retailers (50% involvement in event promotion by 2027)
- Redesigning public spaces (by 2027)

KEY FUTURE ACTIONS:

- Launching an architectural competition for the complex
- Designing attractive access points (pedestrian/cycle paths, signage)
- Creating murals along cycle paths
- Initiating a "Tom Thumb" strategy to enliven the pedestrian path

Kamza
Albania

**Kamza experienced rapid demographic growth due to internal migration, rising from 12,500 residents in 1991 to 45,000 by 1996. It is strategically located near Tirana and the International Airport. Until 2022, the city lacked a detailed General Local Plan (GLP).
The population is relatively young.**

Challenges and Strategies

Key Challenges include the urgent need to strengthen local governance, a critical lack of public and green spaces near the city center, and the underutilized state-owned land along the Tirana and Tërkuza Rivers.
Strategy (Vision): Developing a sustainable, inclusive, and smart city, prioritizing the expansion of green spaces in line with the GLP 2022. The IAP aims to transform the entire riverbanks into accessible, multifunctional public spaces, serving as a replicable model.

Testing Actions

A testing activity titled "Creating Green Spaces to Empower Communities and Advance Sustainable Growth" was conducted. Its aim was to engage youth and municipal officials in dialogue, emphasize the importance of urban green spaces, and introduce the concept of an integrated approach to policy planning and decision-making.

Focus of the IAP

The central focus is the regeneration of a designated "Green Area" along the banks of the Tirana River by creating a Multifunctional Park. This project is intended to blend green spaces with cultural and sports activities to increase social capital and ensure inclusivity.

Areas of Intervention:
- Sustainable Urban Planning
- Community and Social Spaces
- Promotion and Local Economic Development

INTENTION FOR CHANGE (INTENTIONALITY)
To transform Kamza into a sustainable, inclusive, and smart city. The core action is the regeneration of a riverbank area into a Multifunctional Park that blends green spaces with cultural and sports activities, serving as a replicable model for future interventions. The overall aim is to leverage rapid population growth for sustainable development.

MEASUREMENT (MEASURABILITY)
The objective is measurable both quantitatively (e.g., increased green space area, additional cultural facilities) and qualitatively (e.g., assessing the increase in social inclusion). Progress is measured by the number of annual activities (Target: At least 12 sports, artistic, and cultural activities per year). Economic measurability includes the expectation that at least 10 new businesses will be established around the area.

PARTICIPATORY APPROACH (ADDITIONALITY)
The IAP formulation was based on a participatory process involving key local stakeholders, including the Local Youth Council and residents. Engagement is vital for the ongoing management plan. Stakeholders will be actively involved in co-designing the Management Plan through door-to-door surveys, public consultations, and direct involvement in working groups. The needs analysis conducted during the feasibility study informs the annual activity plan.

Future Objectives and Actions

KEY SMART GOALS

- Transforming the unused area into the Multifunctional Park blending green, cultural, and sports spaces (1-3 years)
- Promoting social development to strengthen social capital (measurable by annual activities)
- Creating opportunities to encourage the establishment of at least 10 new service-oriented businesses around the park (1-2 years)

KEY FUTURE ACTIONS:

- Transferring ownership of the land from central authorities to the Municipality
- Conducting a feasibility study and realizing the Architectural Project
- Creating a Management Plan prioritizing social activities
- Developing an annual program of activities
- Designing a collaborative platform to support economic activities rooted in the Sustainable and Circular Economy

Longford (Ballymahon)
Ireland

The IAP focuses on the town of Ballymahon, identified as a Self-Sustaining Town with high population growth but a weak employment base. Approximately 40% of the 2,674 residents are non-Irish nationals, representing about 20 different nationalities in local schools. The town faces a high level of deprivation and services for social support (Family Resource Centre, Day Care Centre) are housed in aging buildings that are no longer fit for purpose.

Challenges and Strategies

Key Challenges include a generational cycle of unemployment and lack of opportunity, rapid growth in demand for social services (mental health services demand grew over 500%), and the need to establish a sustainable governance model for the future operation of renovated community facilities.

Strategy (Vision): Focus on delivering the Pobal le Cheile regeneration project, which redevelops the former convent and old boys' school into a Family Resource Centre, Day Care Centre, Youth Reach facility, and enterprise space. The overall vision is to create a connected supported community that people are proud to live in.

Testing Actions

The ULG tested three actions:
- Men's Shed: Investigating the feasibility of re-activating a Men's Shed through public meetings and visits to existing sheds.
- Facilities for Young People: Exploring models for dedicated youth facilities (e.g., youth café) and services through visits to existing facilities and meetings with youth workers.
- Governance: Planning to examine good practice models for local management of facilities, though progression was delayed.

Focus of the IAP

The core aim is to embed social impact in the delivery of the capital urban regeneration project (Pobal le Cheile). The plan prioritizes delivering enhanced services, particularly for youth and retired people, and ensuring a strong governance structure for the renovated facilities.

Areas of Intervention:
- Governance
- Men's Shed
- Youth Cafe

INTENTION FOR CHANGE (INTENTIONALITY)
The overarching vision is to create a place that people feel part of and are proud to live in, developing a connected supported community while respecting heritage. The focus is on supporting the older community, providing safe and engaging spaces for youth, and strengthening the community through new inclusive governance structures. This is achieved primarily through the Pobal le Cheile project (redevelopment of vacant buildings for social services).

MEASUREMENT (MEASURABILITY)
Measurement focuses on facility usage and organizational capacity. Indicators track the Number of people who use the community space (data maintained by the caretaker/governing organization), the Area of buildings renovated and made available for community uses, and the Number of community representatives on the board of directors of the new facility.

PARTICIPATORY APPROACH (ADDITIONALITY)
Community engagement is core to delivery, achieved by "listening to what the people living in Ballymahon need". A key action is establishing a strong Governance Model (including a Memorandum of Understanding) before construction completion, involving intended end users and stakeholders. Planned activities include holding public meetings to consult on the draft Memorandum of Understanding and establishing a facilities advisory committee consisting of users of the restored facilities. Testing actions focused on co-designing Men's Shed and Youth Café facilities.

Future Objectives and Actions

KEY SMART GOALS

- Establishing a strong governance structure for the Pobal le Cheile facility before construction completion
- Designing and making operational a youth café that encourages young people from minority/disadvantaged groups (by end of 2027)
- Providing space for the Men's Shed/Hen's Shed within two years

KEY FUTURE ACTIONS:

- Engaging a facilitator to review existing governance models and prepare a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the management of renovated buildings
- Hosting a public meeting with the Irish Men's Shed Association to promote the Men's Shed
- Investigating the necessary framework for youth support services, including meetings with funding bodies and exploring good practice models for youth facilities

Mértola
Portugal

Mértola's historic center is a unique asset with rich cultural heritage, located near the Spanish border. It faces significant demographic decline and an aging population, largely due to youth emigration. The economy lacks diversification, relying on agriculture, tourism, and small-scale retail. It is highly vulnerable to climate change and desertification.

Challenges and Strategies

Key Challenges include demographic decline, housing speculation driving up costs and limiting affordable options, inadequate healthcare/social support for the elderly, and a paradox of tourism dependency risking the erosion of local identity.

Strategy (Vision): Focus on preserving and revitalizing the historic center as a resilient, inclusive, and sustainable community. The vision is underpinned by five elements: resilience, inclusivity, cultural heritage, sustainable development, and equitable opportunities.

Testing Actions

A pilot testing action involved engaging local youth in creative exploration (photography, writing, drawing). Youth advocated for a car-free historic center and aesthetically pleasing spaces. Conversely, shopkeepers and residents emphasized practical issues like energy efficiency, high maintenance costs for façades, and improved accessibility/parking.

Focus of the IAP

The IAP aims for a comprehensive regeneration strategy fostering inclusivity while preserving cultural heritage. The interventions integrate preservation, community empowerment, and climate resilience.

Areas of Intervention:
- Urban Regeneration and Heritage Conservation
- Community Engagement and Social Inclusion
- Economic Revitalization and Sustainable Tourism
- Environmental Sustainability and Climate Resilience
- Mobility and Accessibility Improvements

INTENTION FOR CHANGE (INTENTIONALITY)
To preserve and revitalize the historic center as a resilient, inclusive, and sustainable community, balancing heritage conservation with social inclusion and progress. The plan seeks to mitigate demographic decline, climate risks, and social exclusion.

MEASUREMENT (MEASURABILITY)
Key result indicators measure direct outcomes: a 20% increase in local residents participating in decision-making by 2026 and a 30% increase in business activity in the Historic Center by 2027. Output indicators track restoration projects (Target: at least 2 historic buildings and 3 public spaces improved by 2028) and the organization of 12 cultural events by 2028. Data collection uses surveys, site visits, and automated data collection (e.g., sensors/energy meters in renovated buildings).

PARTICIPATORY APPROACH (ADDITIONALITY)
Fostering community engagement and social inclusion is a primary focus area. The ULG will evolve into a Delivery-Oriented ULG (DO-ULG) focused on supporting implementation, monitoring, and providing feedback to the IAP Implementation Task Force. Engagement methods include: thematic workshops and capacity-building sessions, organizing Biannual Public Forums, and community events like "Conversas no Pátio" to facilitate informal dialogue.

Future Objectives and Actions

KEY SMART GOALS

- Restoring at least 2 historic buildings (e.g., Hammam and Tea House, Market) and 1 public space by 2027
- Increasing community participation by 20% (e.g., through 4+ community events annually) by 2026
- Reducing urban heat impact by 10% through major climate adaptation projects by 2028
- Increasing local business activity by 30% by 2027

KEY FUTURE ACTIONS:

- Organizing the Mértola Islamic Festival
- Launching the Conversas no Pátio community dialogue initiative
- Rehabilitating a municipal building for affordable housing
- Developing a landscape architecture project for the riverside area
- Implementing pavement interventions to create adapted paths for people with reduced mobility

Murcia
Spain

Murcia is a large city (465,000 inhabitants). The city's northern and southern sectors were historically divided by the Segura River and, critically, by railway tracks, leading to fragmentation and limiting accessibility to services/employment in the southern neighborhoods. The ongoing South Connection project involves moving the railway tracks underground, freeing up over 200,000 square meters of public space.

Challenges and Strategies

Key Challenges revolve around urban fragmentation, traffic congestion, and repurposing the vast newly freed land in alignment with citizen needs.
Strategy (Vision): Focus on holistic transformation to achieve equal access, opportunities, and a high quality of life. The South Connection aims to enhance accessibility, optimize mobility, elevate quality of life, and regenerate repurposed land with green spaces and cultural venues. Collective decision-making and civic participation are foundational to the strategy.

Testing Actions

The key action arranged to renew citizen participation (previously hampered by COVID-19) is the South Connection Exhibition. This traveling exhibition, housed initially in the Artillery Barracks, uses recycled materials and digital alternatives (aligning with the New European Bauhaus). It includes citizen engagement agora labs and a suggestion box to gather real-time feedback and citizen proposals for the new free spaces.

Focus of the IAP

The IAP focuses on realizing the spatial transformation promised by the undergrounding of the railway and ensuring citizen input guides the use of the new public land.

Areas of Intervention:
• Aesthetics and green transformation (New European Bauhaus alignment)
• Transport and mobility (enhancing connectivity)
• Culture and leisure (improving sense of belonging)
• Citizen participation (ensuring alignment with community needs)

INTENTION FOR CHANGE (INTENTIONALITY)
To transcend historical barriers imposed by railway tracks ("South Connection"), enhancing accessibility, optimizing mobility, and elevating quality of life. The goal is a holistic transformation that results in equal access to resources and opportunities for the previously divided northern and southern sectors of the city.

MEASUREMENT (MEASURABILITY)
Indicators are highly detailed and linked to SMART goals. Key targets include: opening 25 green & recreational spaces by 2027, achieving a 20% reduction in central traffic congestion, and increasing Resident satisfaction with new green spaces to ≥ 80%. For cultural offerings, the city targets 50 cultural events per year in the South Connection areas and a minimum of 5,000 visitors to the exhibition over 6 months.

PARTICIPATORY APPROACH (ADDITIONALITY)
Collective decision-making and civic participation are fundamental to empowering residents. The city plans a major online and offline citizen participation process to evaluate proposals for new uses of free spaces. This is delivered via the traveling "South Connection Exhibition", which incorporates citizen engagement agora labs and a suggestion box. Measurability in participation includes tracking the Total proposals received from citizens (Target: ≥ 200) and the Implementation rate of citizen proposals (Target: ≥ 25%).

Future Objectives and Actions

KEY SMART GOALS

• Opening 25 green and recreational spaces in the South by 2027
• Moving and joining the Bus Station with the new Train Station (creating the main mobility hub) within two years
• Carrying out at least 50 cultural events annually in South Connection areas
• Conducting an online/offline citizen participation process over 6 months to evaluate proposals for the new free spaces

KEY FUTURE ACTIONS:

• Planting 5,000 native shrub species
• Installing intelligent/sensored lighting along green paths
• Relocating the City Bus Station and integrating it with the new Train Station
• Organizing 10 citizen agora labs
• Carrying out local improvements by Mixed Employment and Training Program students

SECTION 9

Conclusion: Key Reflections on the IAP Co-Production Process

9.1 *Synthesis of Network Experience*

The journey undertaken by the cities of the U.R. Impact network offers a compelling narrative of collaborative urban problem-solving. By placing social impact at the forefront of their regeneration strategies, the partners have not only developed actionable plans for their communities but have also generated critical insights into the process of co-production itself.

This report has traced their path from a shared vision to localized action, revealing a set of powerful lessons applicable to cities across Europe.

9.2 *Critical Lessons Learned*

Distilling the collective experience of the network, three critical lessons emerge:

1 Lesson

The Power of a Shared Framework: The network's common focus on social impact—defined by the principles of Intentionality, Measurability, and Additionality—provided a unifying language and purpose. This shared framework was not a rigid constraint but an enabling structure. It allowed cities as different as post-industrial Bielsko-Biała and tourism-pressured Bovec to ground their unique local challenges within a coherent set of values, ensuring that while the problems and solutions were local, the underlying mission was universal.

2 Lesson

Process Over Prescription: The success of the IAPs depended less on a prescribed template and more on a flexible, iterative co-production process. The URBACT Local Group (ULG) stood out as the core vehicle for this process, but its effectiveness was amplified by a diverse toolkit of engagement methods—from urban mapping in Murcia to feasibility studies in Longford. This demonstrates that the how of urban planning (the collaborative process) is as important as the what (the final plan).

3 Lesson

Building Trust is the First Action: Across vastly different contexts—from Broumov's depopulating center to Longford's diverse community—the foundational challenge was often building or rebuilding trust between authorities and citizens. The most successful approaches recognized that participation is not automatic; it must be earned. As Broumov's strategy to use small, visible pilots shows, the development of an effective Integrated Action Plan often begins not with a grand vision, but with small, tangible actions and genuine listening that prove the value of participation.

Ultimately, the experience of the U.R. Impact network reaffirms the value of the URBACT method. It provides a robust yet adaptable framework for fostering integrated, sustainable, and socially impactful urban development. By empowering cities to learn from one another and co-create with their communities, it paves the way for a more inclusive and resilient urban future across Europe.

URBACT — Co-funded by the European Union — Interreg

COMUNE DI CiniselloBalsamo

City of Bielsko-Biała

Občina Bovec

BROUMOV

hannut est à vous

Kamza

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Ayuntamiento de Murcia