

CITIES@HEART

TOWARDS A BALANCED CITY CENTRE

Integrated Action Plan report



URBACT



Co-funded by
the European Union
Interreg



About this report

This report presents both the Integrated Action Plans developed within the Cities@Heart network and the working methodology that guided their co-creation. It examines the shared action-planning process, focusing on the approaches, tools, collaborative practices and peer-learning activities that supported cities throughout the project. The document brings together key insights and reflections generated through transnational cooperation, highlighting the knowledge, experience and collective learning built over the lifetime of the network.

December 2025

Network: <https://urbact.eu/networks/citiesheart>

URBACT: <https://urbact.eu/>

Document: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19107651>

Index

1. Introduction	4
1.1. What is Cities@Heart	5
1.2. Why this IAP report?	5
2. The Cities@Heart Approach	8
2.1. A common challenge and vision	9
2.2. Five levers to revitalise city centres	10
2.3. Linking local action to wider municipal and regional strategies	12
2.4. A co-produced, action-oriented methodology	12
2.5. The role of data, indicators and evaluation	14
2.6. From pilot actions to long-term urban transformation	16
3. The Integrated Action Plans	20
4. Co-producing the Action Plans	44
4.1. The intersection between transnational and local knowledge	45
4.2. How has integration been addressed?	50
4.3. The role of the URBACT Local Groups	54
4.4. Participation and co-creation methods	56
5. How we scale up the knowledge	60
5.1. The playbook	61
5.2. The toolkit	62
5.3. The pathway	63
6. Conclusion	66

Introduction

Cities@Heart is a European network of ten urban areas united by a common ambition: to revitalise city centres and make them more liveable, inclusive, and resilient.

1.1. What is Cities@heart?

Across Europe, city centres are facing profound changes, as shifting retail patterns, new mobility habits, evolving ways of living and working, and the pressures of the climate crisis are reshaping the urban landscape.

In response to these challenges, Cities@Heart brings together cities of different sizes, histories, and urban realities to share experiences, knowledge, and solutions. Since June 2023, through the URBACT programme, the network has developed a collaborative framework for city centre revitalisation. This includes local, place-based practices, innovative management approaches, cross-sector planning, and practical tools for decision-making that involve multiple stakeholders and governance levels.

By fostering collaboration and learning, Cities@Heart aims to inspire other towns and cities to create vibrant, balanced urban centres that meet the needs of both their communities and their territories.

1.2. Why this IAP Report?

The Cities@Heart Integrated Action Plan report captures the collective journey of partner cities addressing shared challenges related to the vitality, accessibility, and resilience of European city centres.

Rather than summarising individual local action plans, it focuses on the process through which they were conceived, developed, and refined. It illustrates how cities translated common ambitions into context-specific strategies through collaborative and participatory approaches.

While each city operates within a distinct socio-economic, cultural, and spatial context, their plans converge around shared principles. The report highlights how these principles informed diverse local responses while maintaining a coherent network-wide approach.

It also demonstrates how transnational cooperation and co-production strengthened the quality, relevance, and adaptability of the Integrated Action Plans, enabling partners to test ideas, learn from both successes and setbacks, and continuously refine their strategies.

By documenting this integrated and participatory planning journey, the report provides practical insights for cities facing similar urban challenges. It also contributes to the wider URBACT knowledge base by showing how collaborative, local, and transnational approaches can support long-term urban transformation.

01 **Pentágono Urbano** (Portugal)

02 **Cesena** (Italy)

03 **Fleurus** (Belgium)

04 **Granada** (Spain)

05 **Celje** (Slovenia)

06 **Krakow Metropolis** (Poland)

07 **Lamia** (Greece)

08 **Osijek** (Croatia)

09 **Sligo** (Ireland)

10 **Greater Paris Metropolis** (France)



01



10



03



06



05



08



02



07



04

The Cities@Heart Approach

After years of focusing on urban expansion, attention is shifting towards revitalising existing centres. These areas can serve as laboratories for innovative practices that nurture community bonds, support ecological transition, and foster social and economic prosperity, offering a model for the entire city.

2.1. The common challenge and vision

City centres are probably the most complex places for urban management. This complexity results from historical heritage (which superimposes legacies) or their role of centrality within the surrounding territory. They serve residents and build their identity, while also supporting city-wide and metropolitan functions, often competing uses.

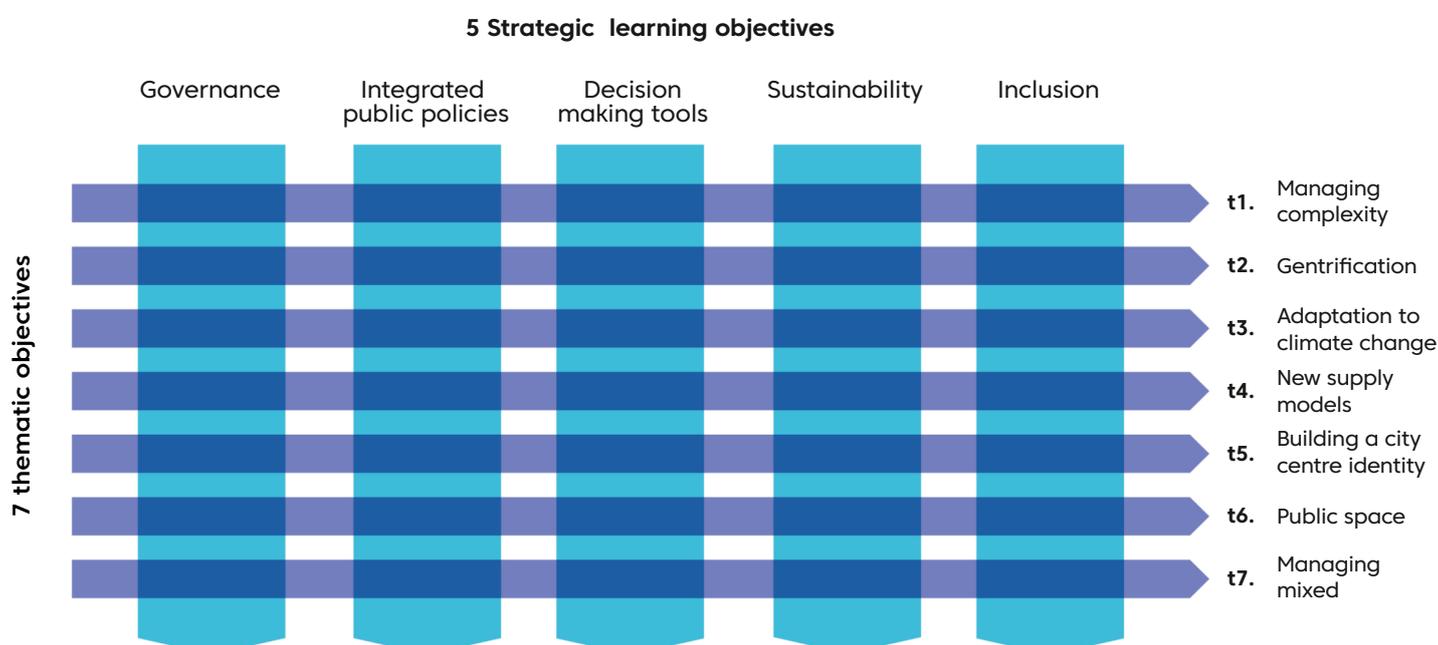
Today, city centres must provide affordable and inclusive housing for diverse populations while ensuring accessible public spaces that enrich communal bonds, promote well-being and a sense of belonging.

A high quality of urban life also relies on healthy environments, efficient infrastructure, easy access to amenities, and opportunities for economic activity.

Yet, the many uses and populations that intermingle and concentrate in city centres are the main cause of many conflicts, where old and new functions coexist in permanent tension. The new integrates with the old, and the local with the global.

Problems such as environmental quality (air pollution, noise), mobility management, public space saturation, and urban tourism are visible consequences of these dynamics.

Thematic–Strategic Learning Matrix



This unique nature of urban centres - where challenges are deeply interconnected - requires the coordinated deployment of urban planning and complementary public policies, multi-level stakeholder engagement, and an approach based on decision-making tools (supported by data technologies).

From these intertwined challenges emerges the need for a shared analytical and operational framework capable of guiding collective action. The network has built a common working methodology based on a shared taxonomy of urban centre dynamics, identified during the first cycles of meetings and city visits.

This taxonomy allows cities to interpret their specific realities through a common language, facilitating comparison, mutual learning and coordinated responses. It is underpinned by a unifying vision of what a balanced and thriving city centre should be: **“all things, to all people, at all times.”**

This vision reflects the ambition to concentrate a rich mix of uses, users and services within a clearly defined and accessible urban core, capable of welcoming all social groups while preserving local identity. By seeking balance between residential life, economic activity, social inclusion, cultural vibrancy and environmental quality, this approach ensures that interventions directly contribute to improved quality of life, stronger social cohesion and sustainable economic vitality.

2.2. Five levers to revitalise city centres

Translating this shared vision into concrete action requires structured and strategic tools. In response, **Cities@Heart has identified five complementary levers that activate these opportunities and provide a practical framework for transforming common challenges into coherent strategies for city centres.**

Each lever targets specific aspects of urban life - from fostering local economic activity and thriving communities, to strengthening residential life, public spaces, urban identity, and collaborative governance - providing a structured framework to transform city centres into vibrant, resilient, and inclusive places.

The five levers

01 Sustain your Local Commerce

Revitalising local commerce strengthens city-centre vitality by boosting diversity, social life, innovation, inclusive public spaces and a vibrant 24-hour economy.

02 Reinforce Residential Life

Enhancing diverse and affordable housing fosters vibrant, inclusive city centres while promoting reuse, resilience and a strong sense of place.

03 Promote Inclusive Environments

Inclusive city centres ensure equal access and wellbeing for all, strengthening social life, climate resilience and safe, people-centred public spaces.

04 Build your City Centre Identity

Cities can strengthen centre identity by weaving physical, cultural and social elements into a shared narrative that fosters belonging, attractiveness and economic vitality.

05 Create a shared Governance

Building shared governance in city centres fosters collaborative, transparent and inclusive decision-making, enabling coordinated action and empowered communities.

2.3. Linking local action to wider municipal and regional strategies

The work of revitalizing a city centre should connect to the bigger picture of the city and the region. Cities@Heart made a clear effort to ensure its action plans did not stand alone, but were built upon what cities were already doing.

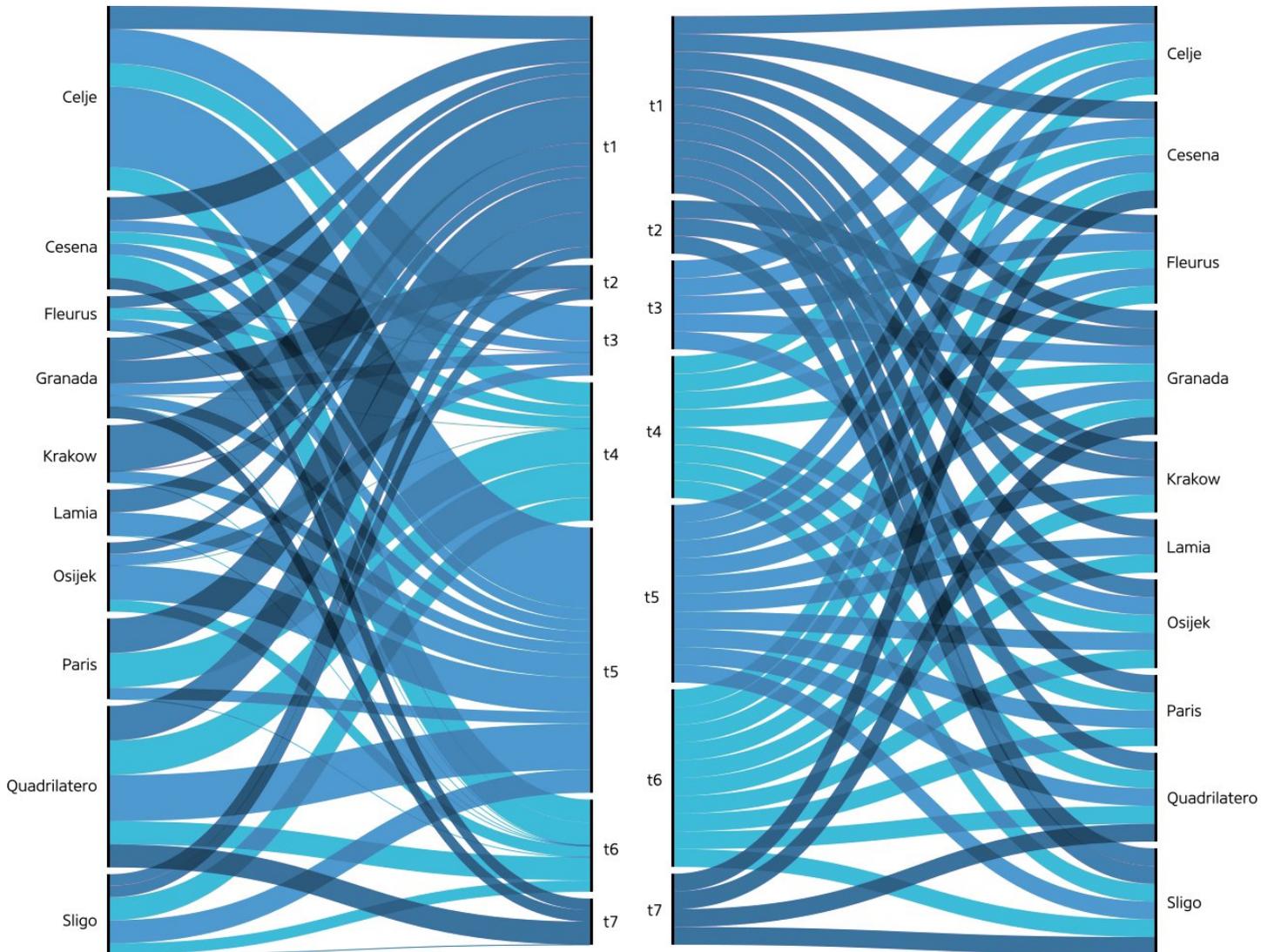
The network encouraged partners **to map and acknowledge existing local initiatives**, so that new actions could complement and strengthen them. The examples and ideas shared across the partnership helped link specific projects, like activating a square or regulating short-term rentals, to wider municipal strategies on housing, mobility, climate, and economic development.

By doing this, the city centre becomes a living testing ground for ideas that can inform larger-scale plans. This approach ensures that local actions support regional goals, create greater impact, and attract sustained political and financial support beyond the project timeline.

2.4. A co-produced, action-oriented methodology

The Cities@Heart approach is built on a co-produced, action-oriented methodology, fostering a dynamic exchange of knowledge directly from the practitioners shaping urban centres. Throughout the network's journey, each partner city actively shared its own successes and challenges, presenting over 60 internal best practices across thematic webinars and meetings — from Granada's regulatory innovations to Celje's housing grants and Sligo's night-time economy strategy.

This internal exchange was consistently enriched by external experts who introduced relevant case studies on specific topics, deepening the collective understanding. This rich repository of shared, concrete experiences ensures that strategies are not theoretical but proven, providing direct inspiration and adaptable models for the development of each city's Integrated Action Plan (IAP).



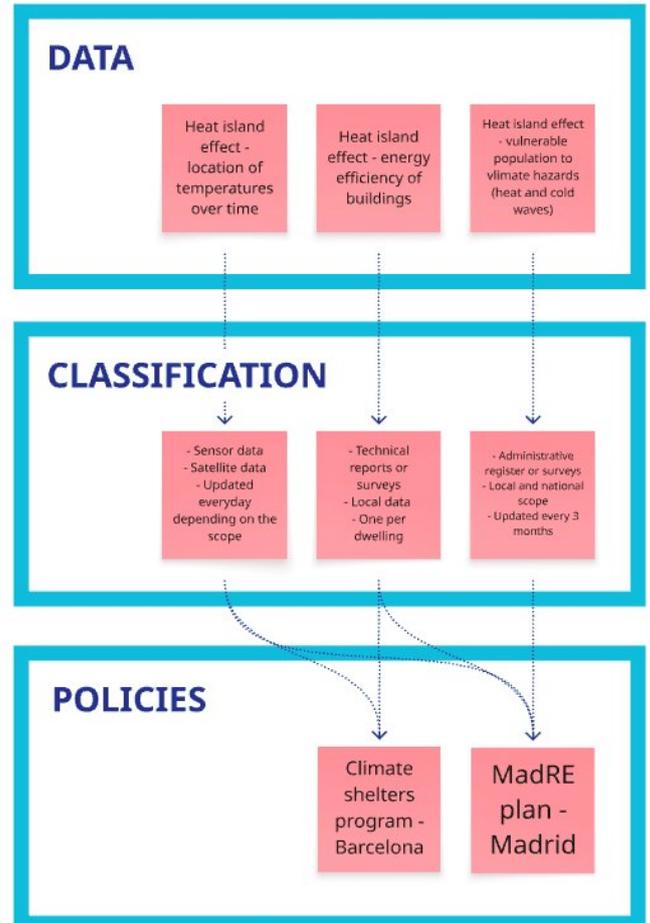
Synthesis diagram of contributions and learnings

- t1. Managing complexity
- t2. Gentrification
- t3. Adaptation to climate change
- t4. New supply models
- t5. Building a city centre identity
- t6. Public space
- t7. Managing mixed uses

2.5. The role of data, indicators and evaluation

The Cities@Heart framework is fundamentally built on the principle that effective and equitable urban revitalisation must be guided by evidence. Recognising that data is not merely a technical asset but a strategic tool for democratic governance, the network established a comprehensive and collaborative process to navigate the entire decision-making cycle: from defining what to measure and gathering diverse data streams, to analysing information, drafting informed policies, and implementing robust monitoring systems.

This methodological pillar was advanced through dedicated working sessions, including in-person workshops (in Granada, Celje and Krakow) and a complementary webinar. These forums facilitated a hands-on exchange where city practitioners collectively mapped their existing data landscapes, identified critical gaps, and co-developed a shared set of indicators relevant to the diverse challenges of European city centres (that has been included in the Cities@Heart Playbook). The structured dialogue moved from auditing current data sources to classifying information and, ultimately, to forging common metrics that could track progress across the network's five key levers of transformation.





2.6. From pilot actions to long-term urban transformations

Recognizing that ambitious strategies must first be tested on the ground, the **Cities@Heart network actively embraced the URBACT methodology of Small Scale Actions (SSAs)**. These modest, experimental interventions served as vital “trial runs,” allowing cities to prototype solutions, engage local stakeholders through concrete action, and de-risk future investments before scaling them into long-term plans.

At the same time, they served as a source of inspiration and learning among partners, encouraging the transfer and adaptation of ideas across different local contexts. By concentrating on targeted interventions in city centres, which typically require lower initial investment than city-wide programmes, partners were able to launch pilots that established proof of concept, demonstrated visible benefits, and created momentum for further stakeholder engagement.

Across the network, all partners implemented tailored pilots, ranging from Cesena’s installation of street furniture and an open-air gallery to foster walkability, to Lamia’s participatory workshops with schoolchildren reimagining their central square, and Krakow Metropolis’s smart traffic reorganisation around a primary school to improve safety.

These actions were not isolated projects, but deliberate experiments designed to validate ideas, gather local feedback, and allow residents, businesses and institutions to directly experience the value of change. By embedding this culture of prototyping into the planning process, Cities@Heart enabled cities to move confidently from experimentation to strategic commitment, using small and affordable actions as catalysts for long-term transformation.

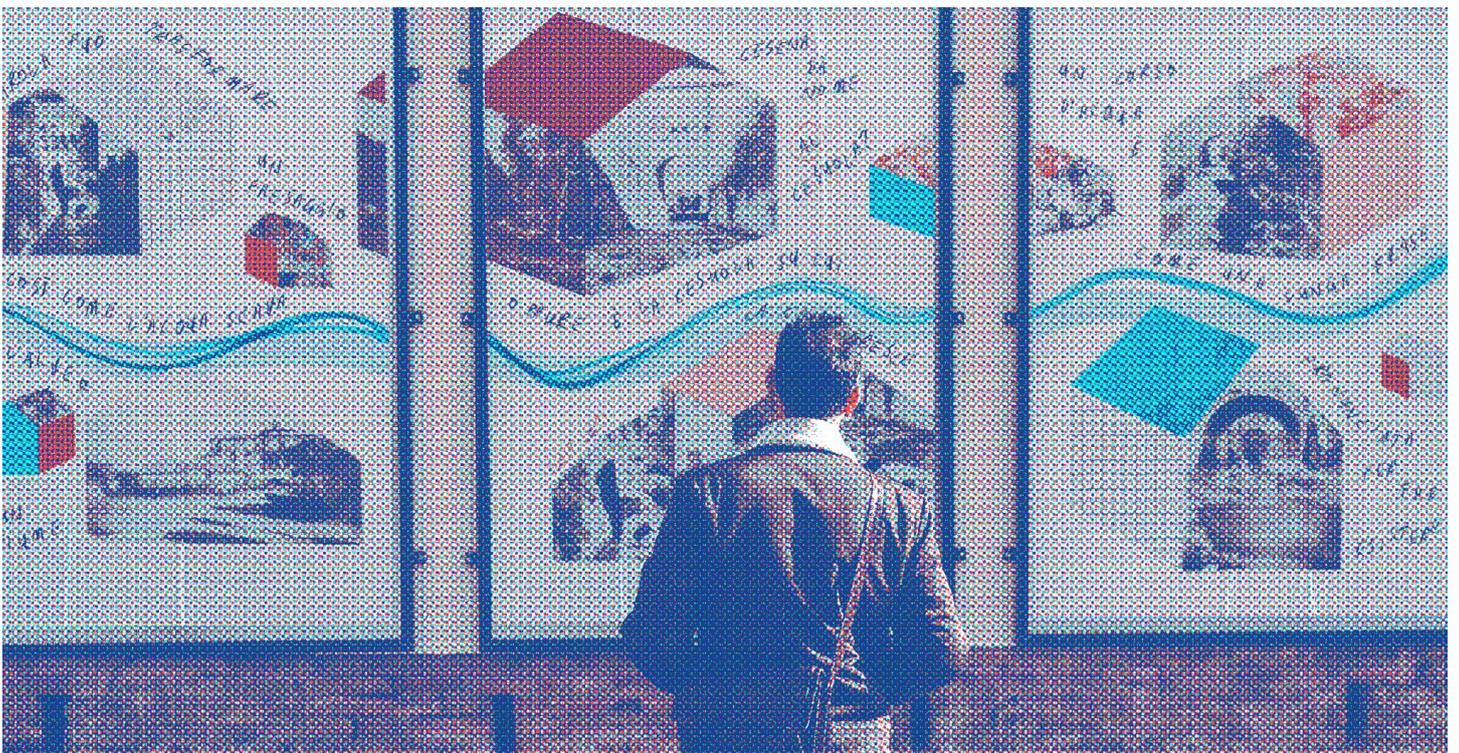
Osijek showcased its urban regeneration plans at the EU Projects Open Day, engaging local students in shaping the city’s future.



♥ 2. The Cities@Heart Approach

Cesena included seating and an Open-Air Art Gallery along a key walkway, aiming to encourage walkability and social interaction.

Krakov Metropolis's SSA consisted in the redesign of a commuting oval providing access to one elementary school in the city centre.





The Integrated Action Plans

All partner cities have completed their Integrated Action Plans, each outlining a locally tailored strategy to address shared urban challenges and strengthen the vitality, accessibility, and liveability of their city centres.

01 Pentágono Urbano

The IAP focuses on creating a data-driven, participatory governance system through a Competence Centre for Urban Innovation to improve decision-making.

02 Cesena

The IAP focuses on improving accessibility, liveability, and economic diversity in the historic city centre.

03 Fleurus

The IAP focuses on revitalising the city centre through integrated urban renewal, cultural activation, and support for local commerce.

04 Granada

The IAP focuses on rebalancing the historic centre by improving public spaces, mobility, housing, and community cohesion.

05 Celje

The IAP focuses on reactivating vacant commercial spaces to strengthen economic vitality and city-centre attractiveness.

06 Krakow Metropolis

The IAP focuses on improving public spaces, mobility, and participation to manage growth and enhance quality of life in the town centre.

07 Lamia

The IAP focuses on regenerating Parkou Square through green, smart, and inclusive public-space interventions.

08 Osijek

The IAP aims to make Osijek's city centre vibrant, people-centered, and climate-resilient through improved public spaces, mobility, and cultural engagement.

09 Sligo

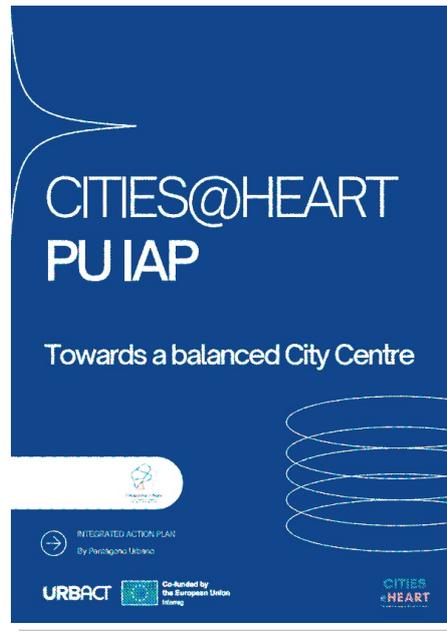
The IAP focuses on revitalizing the city centre by increasing housing, activating vacant spaces, and enhancing the economic and social impact of public events.

10 Greater Paris Metropolis

The IAP aims to revitalise city centres by embedding citizen dialogue at the heart of local policies, strengthening participatory governance, and empowering Town Centre Managers.

Cover pages of the IAP network's reports

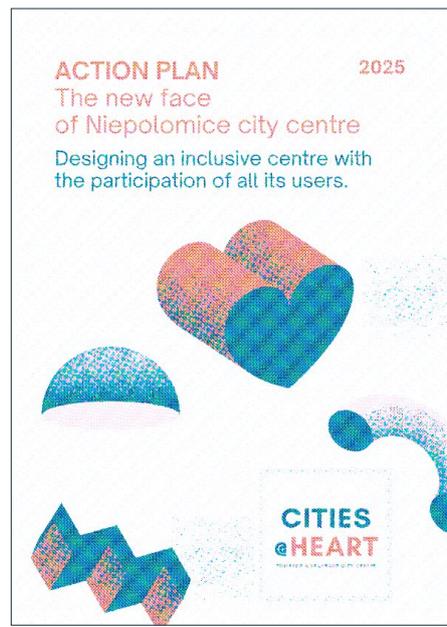
01. Pentágono Urbano



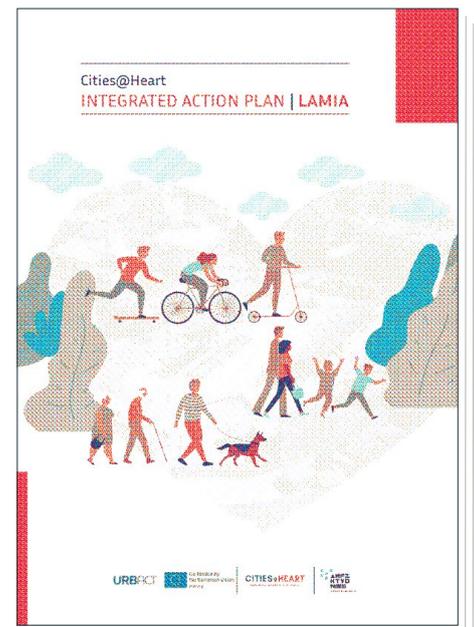
02. Cesena



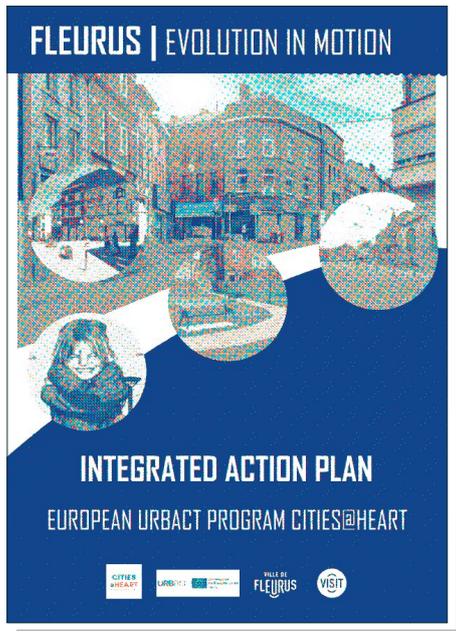
06. Krakow Metropolis



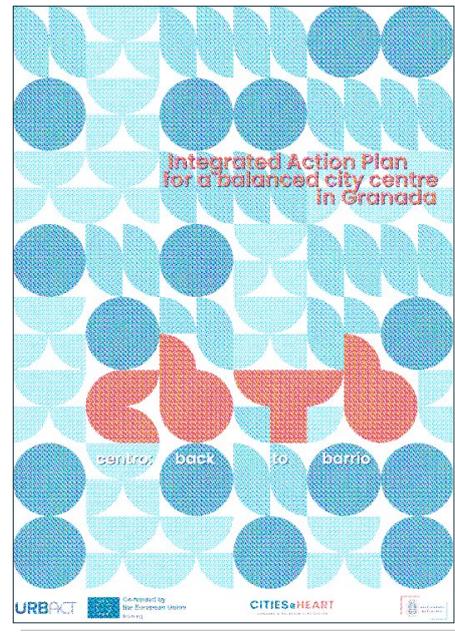
07. Lamia



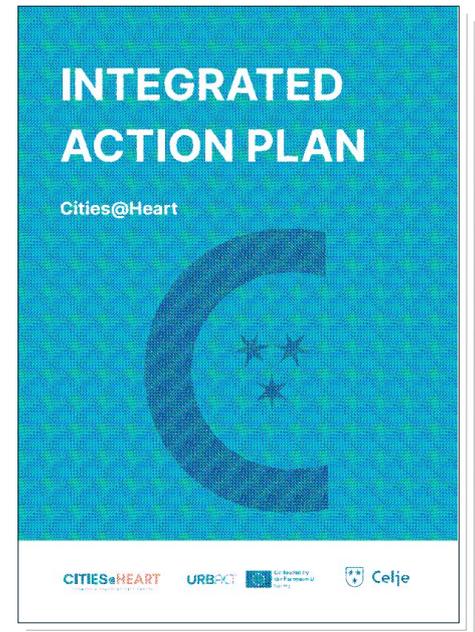
03. Fleurus



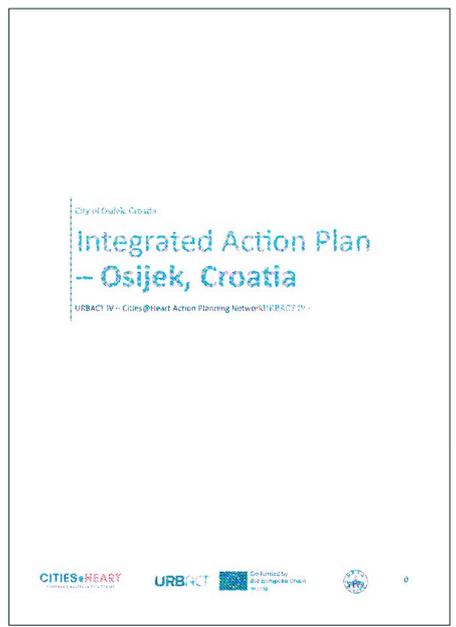
04. Granada



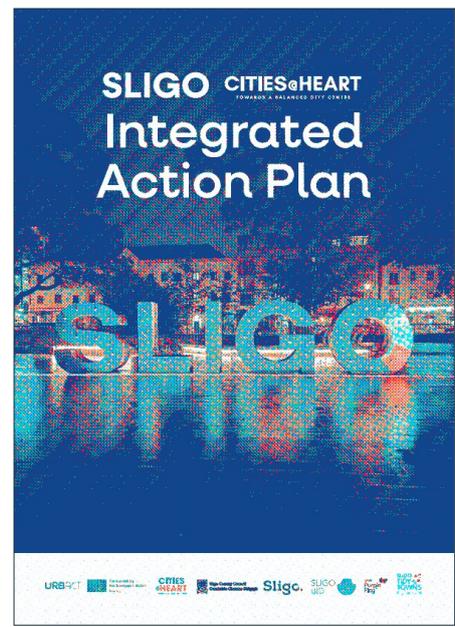
05. Celje



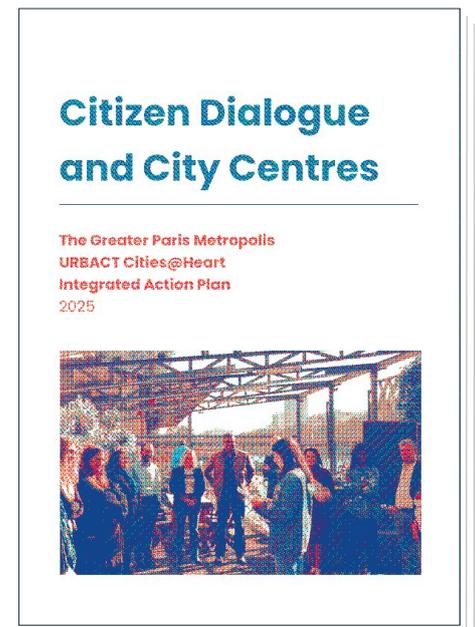
08. Osijek



09. Sligo



10. Greater Paris Metropolis



01. Associação de Municípios Pentágono Urbano's Integrated Action

Country: Portugal

Population: 600.000 inhabitants

Density: 597,5 inhabitants/km²

Co-created vision

Pentágono Urbano has an effective system of data-driven, participatory governance that allows for high quality decision-making on the path to a more balanced, inclusive and prosperous urban environment.

Main local challenge

Pentágono Urbano faces several interlinked challenges that affect its social and economic development. The region is experiencing an ageing population and demographic shifts, alongside economic disparities and income levels below the national average. Housing shortages and rising prices are increasing pressure on residents, while public spaces often struggle with inclusivity and accessibility. Additionally, conflicts between pedestrian and vehicular traffic highlight the need for safer and more integrated urban mobility solutions to support a competitive, innovative, and livable urban area.

Key actions and expected impact

Building on the strategic objectives of sustainability, economic innovation, social inclusion, cultural vitality, and quality of life, Pentágono Urbano has developed a comprehensive set of actions through the Competence Centre for Urban Innovation, the first and essential action.

The Centre will focus on four main actions: the Urban Traction Observer to track trends in housing, mobility, and climate; Urban Research Agendas to support collaborative research; Municipality Actors & Agents Empowerment to build the skills of staff and stakeholders; and the Urban Innovation Living Lab to test and co-create practical solutions with citizens and businesses. Together, these actions aim to improve public spaces, stimulate economic activity, foster social inclusion, and make the urban centres more attractive, sustainable and liveable for all.

Governance and key actors

By implementing these four strategic actions, the PU Competence Centre for Urban Innovation positions itself as the operational heart of the Integrated Action Plan. It becomes a dynamic platform that not only coordinates projects but drives a culture of experimentation, learning, and transformation. It anchors urban development in shared data, research-based policy, empowered local actors, and real-world testing, ensuring that change is both meaningful and measurable.

Financial resources

The plan relies on a mix of funding sources, including national and EU programs such as Portugal 2030, the EU Green Deal, Horizon Europe, and Urban Innovative Actions. Municipal budgets will support pilot projects and structural reforms, while private stakeholders are encouraged to co-invest in initiatives. Public-private partnerships will also be explored to deliver infrastructure and services efficiently.

How we will monitor change

The PU Urban Traction Observer action emphasizes the need for data-driven governance. By using data dashboards and real-time urban monitoring, the Observer will support evidence-based policy decisions.

02. Cesena's Integrated Action Plan

Country: Italy

Population: 96.541 inhabitants

Density: 287,2 inhabitants/km²



Co-created vision

To make the centre of Cesena a common heritage for residents and city users of every age, gender, and background, by promoting accessibility from an urban/environmental, economic, and social perspective, starting from the north-south axis that connects the railway station with the Portaccia, the historic gateway to the city centre.

Main local challenge

The local URBACT group (ULG) together with the city council identified access as the main challenge for the city's central area, encompassing urban, economic, and social dimensions. Improving connections, public transport, and active mobility is key, alongside offering diverse, inclusive economic activities to make the historic center a shared space for all.

Key actions and expected impact

Starting from the plan's focus on accessibility to the city centre across environmental, economic, and social dimensions, the URBACT working group has developed an integrated set of actions to achieve three strategic objectives:

Facilitate access to the centre for residents and users by providing efficient alternatives to the car, contributing to climate change mitigation.

Make central spaces more attractive by improving street furniture and the public environment, making them more liveable and welcoming.

Diversify activities in the centre to attract a wider range of citizens (young people, children, the elderly, women, foreigners), reducing the dominance of bars and restaurants.

These objectives are implemented through three interventions: ARRIVE, improving intermodal, pedestrian, and cycling access; STAY, creating inclusive and engaging spaces; and ENJOY, promoting diverse economic activities.

Governance and key actors

To ensure the plan's continuity, strong public leadership and a flexible structure are essential. The Cities@Heart project, coordinated by the Economic Development Sector, formalised in March 2024 a collaboration with four trade associations through the "Tavolo InCesena." This permanent forum brings together the administration, businesses, and other stakeholders to balance economic, social, and environmental goals in the historic city centre and will monitor the implementation of the IAP.

Financial resources

The IAP of Cesena will use a mix of financial resources to carry out its actions quickly. These include the time and effort of local organizations and associations, the municipal budget, and funding from regional, national, and European programs.

How we will monitor change

The impact of the transformation will be evaluated by implementing ten actions and tracking the identified indicators across three main lines of intervention.

03. Fleurus's Integrated Action Plan

Country: Belgium

Population: 22.923 inhabitants

Density: 385 inhabitants/km²



Co-created vision

Fleurus celebrates local identity and social cohesion in a globalised world, reimagining public spaces and heritage through a holistic approach. Its vision rests on five axes: enhancing public space and heritage, revitalising the local economy, improving mobility, expanding quality housing, and developing inclusive facilities and services.

Main local challenge

Over the decades, the historic centre of Fleurus has undergone two major transformations: the gradual desertification of city-centre commerce in favour of peripheral areas, and the disappearance of historic shops, often replaced by low-quality housing. These dynamics have progressively weakened the vitality of the urban core, a situation further exacerbated by the dissolution of the traders' association, which had long played a key role in driving attractiveness and economic activity.

Key actions and expected impact

The Fleurus Integrated Action Plan (IAP) is built around nine interdependent pillars that together form a comprehensive framework for city-centre transformation. These pillars address the physical, economic, social, and cultural dimensions of urban life, ensuring that actions in one area reinforce others—such as urban rehabilitation supporting cultural activities, local businesses, and tourism. This integrated approach improves infrastructure, enhances public spaces, stimulates economic activity, and strengthens social cohesion.

The pillars include urban rehabilitation, public-private partnerships, tourism promotion, cultural and artistic activities, support for local businesses, housing promotion, green space creation, safety improvements, and citizen participation, all aimed at creating a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable city centre.

Governance and key actors

To tackle the challenges facing the city centre, Fleurus has adopted a human-scale approach, beginning with the creation of the City Centre Manager position by the Municipal Council. A dedicated office in the heart of the city enhances the visibility of this strategy and fosters dialogue with residents, shopkeepers, and local associations such as Local Shop'in Fleurus. Complementing the City Centre Manager, the Association for City Centre Management (AMCV) plays a key role, bringing over 25 years of experience in supporting Belgian cities with urban governance, public space improvement, and the revitalization of city centres.

Financial resources

The financial resources for the IAP of Fleurus will be based on a mix of funding sources to support its initiatives. Local municipal funds will provide a core contribution, while additional support comes from national, regional, and European programs. Partnerships with private actors are also encouraged, creating a diversified and sustainable framework that allows the city to implement projects effectively over time.

How we will monitor change

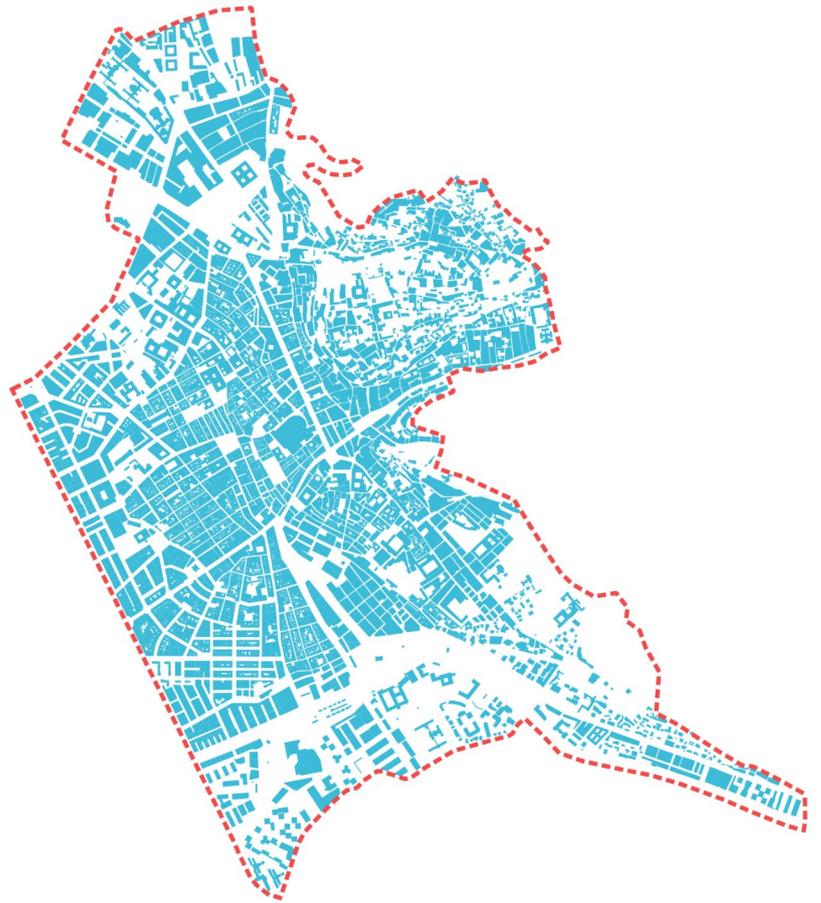
A monitoring committee, including representatives of the City, artists and citizens, will be established to assess project progress and ensure its long-term sustainability.

04. Granada's Integrated Action Plan

Country: Spain

Population: 231.777 inhabitants

Density: 2.633 inhabitants/km²



Co-created vision

To achieve a balanced Centro (part of the city centre of Granada), attractive to visitors and friendly to residents, through strategies focused on improving public spaces, mobility, and community engagement.

Main local challenge

Granada's city centre faces challenges from tourism, demographic shifts, and economic changes. Rising tourist apartments and hotels have displaced residents, increased housing costs, and weakened social cohesion. Narrow streets, limited public spaces, heavy traffic, and overcrowding hinder mobility, while tourism-focused commerce and few local facilities limit resident opportunities. The historic centre is also vulnerable to heatwaves, flash floods, and inefficient buildings.

Key actions and expected impact

Granada's Integrated Action Plan targets three strategic objectives: enhancing public spaces, strengthening social cohesion and city identity, and supporting residents and local commerce. Public spaces are improved through citizen co-design, pop-up stores, planting projects, and sustainable mobility measures, creating safe, accessible, and lively areas.

City identity is reinforced via neighborhood branding, cultural events, playground upgrades, and traffic management, fostering belonging and inclusivity.

Support for residents and commerce focuses on monitoring vacant spaces, regulating tourist apartments, promoting local businesses, and engaging citizens through the Granada Decide platform, helping reduce displacement and sustain a vibrant city centre.

Governance and key actors

Granada's IAP is guided by a governance structure ensuring coordination, accountability, and stakeholder involvement. The General Coordination team manages implementation, funding, and progress monitoring, while municipal departments and partners handle daily operations. A Technical and Scientific Advisory Group and support from public companies, business associations, NGOs, and educational organisations provide expertise. This collaborative approach fosters transparency, shared responsibility, and long-term continuity in transforming the city centre.

Financial resources

Granada's IAP will use municipal resources alongside external funding. Smaller actions such as regulatory measures, citizen participation, public space upgrades, and Smart City initiatives rely on local budgets and coordination. Larger projects draw on national, regional, and European funds, as well as cross border cooperation, while private and community contributions support façade improvements, cultural events, and temporary use of public spaces.

How we will monitor change

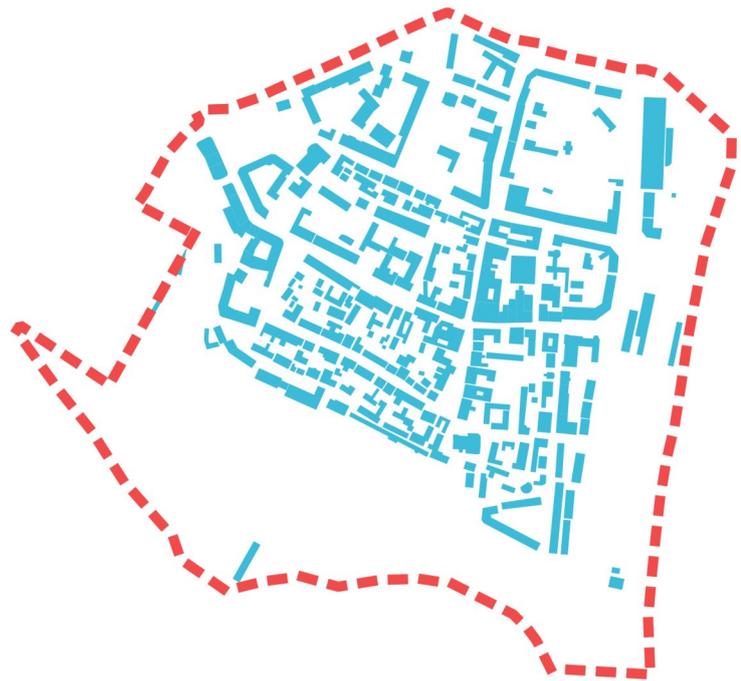
Granada's IAP will be monitored through a multi year framework linking actions to governance. Baseline data from initiatives like Mobility Week, Low Emission Zone preparations, and Smart City tools will guide progress, tracked via updates, pilot lessons, and stakeholder feedback for continuous improvement.

05. Celje's Integrated Action Plan

Country: Slovenia

Population: 48.776 inhabitants

Density: 513,4 inhabitants/km²



Co-created vision

Celje's vision is to transform the city centre into a vibrant urban oasis. A preferred place to live, work, visit, and conduct business at all times.

Main local challenge

Celje's city centre faces declining economic and social vibrancy due to high retail vacancies, an aging population, fewer young residents, and competition from shopping malls. Ongoing parking, accessibility, and governance issues, along with underused public spaces, reduce its attractiveness, highlighting the need for targeted revitalization, improved public spaces, and stronger data-driven management.

Key actions and expected impact

The Integrated Action Plan advances sustainability, gender inclusivity, and digitisation through four objectives: boosting community engagement, supporting economic activity, attracting and retaining residents, and enabling data-driven policy. Actions focus on commerce, public space, and governance, where the City of Celje has the most influence.

Financial and mentoring support prioritises diverse, inclusive business ideas, fostering new enterprises and a dynamic economy. Digitalisation guides evidence-based decisions using pedestrian counts and data analytics to optimise public space and resources. Businesses are encouraged to create outdoor and collaborative activities reflecting local culture, while coordinated marketing and urban renewal promote visibility, sustainability, and heritage preservation. A dedicated role attracts enterprises that enhance the city centre's economic, social, and cultural life.

Governance and key actors

The governance of Celje's IAP combines strategic oversight with operational delivery. The URBACT Local Group, chaired by the City Manager and including representatives from the Celeia Celje Institute, Economic Development Department, and local business and resident organizations, provides guidance, mobilizes resources, and aligns actions with city strategies like the 2026–2027 city centre plan. Operational work is carried out by a Steering Committee supported by thematic working groups on Commerce, Public Space, and Attractivity, which deliver outputs, report progress, and recommend adjustments to keep the IAP responsive to local needs.

Financial resources

Financing will combine municipal budgets with private sector contributions, crowdfunding, sponsorships, collaborations, and foundations. National ministries and EU programs such as ERDF, ESF Plus, Horizon Europe, and cultural initiatives provide targeted support for entrepreneurship, urban regeneration, mobility, culture, digitalisation, and smart city solutions, making the IAP well resourced and innovative.

How we will monitor change

Success will be evaluated using quantitative and qualitative tools, including pedestrian counts, surveys, and a vitality index, an annual assessment of the city centre integrated into the new strategy.

06. Krakow Metropoli's Integrated Action Plan

Country: Poland

Population: 1.1 million inhabitants

Density: 883,2 inhabitants/km²



Co-created vision

**Niepolomice: A modern center rooted in
history, community and sustainability.**

Main local challenge

The IAP focuses on Niepołomice but offers lessons for other Krakow Metropolis municipalities. Rapid population growth puts pressure on public services and quality public spaces, requiring stronger participatory processes and data-driven governance to meet the needs of a diverse community.

Key actions and expected impact

The Niepołomice IAP aims to revitalize the town centre through public space improvement, mobility upgrades, and community engagement. Public spaces will be enhanced with Market Square upgrades, a pedestrian bridge to the Niepołomice Meadows, and development of the Meadows and City Park with green areas, running tracks, and rain gardens.

Mobility measures include reorganizing traffic near schools, updating parking, rebuilding the bus station, and expanding bicycle paths to reduce car use and improve safety. Community activities like mobility classes, participatory consultations, and sustainable travel campaigns will foster engagement and shared responsibility. Together, these actions make the centre safer, more accessible, and attractive while supporting sustainable growth and quality of life.

Governance and key actors

Niepołomice's IAP will be led by the municipality, supported by a steering committee coordinating departments, monitoring progress, and managing risks.

Key actors include municipal services, the Krakow Metropolitan Area, the Institute of Urban and Regional Development, local schools, NGOs, and community groups, providing expertise, public engagement, and consensus building. Transparent communication, financial oversight, and technical guidance will ensure safe, accessible, and high-quality urban spaces.

Financial resources

The IAP in Niepołomice will be funded through a combination of municipal budgets, regional and national programs, and targeted external support. Municipal resources will cover regulatory measures, small-scale interventions, and ongoing public engagement, while larger investments, such as the pedestrian bridge, park development, and mobility improvements, will rely on regional funds and co-investments from public-private partnerships. A strategic approach to resourcing ensures that actions are phased according to funding availability, with contingency plans and multiple funding streams in place to mitigate the risk of shortfalls.

How we will monitor change

The experience of the Small Scale Action has served as a reference for implementing the full IAP in Niepołomice. Surveys and on-site research conducted during and after the pilot will inform broader interventions, providing data on mobility patterns, public space use, and resident satisfaction.

07. Amfiktyonies's Integrated Action Plan

Country: Greece

Population: 80.000 inhabitants

Density: 193,5 inhabitants/km²



Co-created vision

Lamia's city centre will become a green, inclusive, and vibrant heart of the city – a place for people of all ages and backgrounds to meet, move, create, and thrive, combining historical richness with contemporary quality of life.

Main local challenge

Lamia must revitalize its city center amid population loss, aging demographics, and youth outmigration. Limited access to services and low participation weaken social cohesion, while the economy relies on low-income agriculture and underdeveloped tourism and commerce. Deteriorating buildings, few green spaces, heavy traffic, and unsafe public areas reduce quality of life and the city's social, cultural, and economic vitality.

Key actions and expected impact

Lamia's Integrated Action Plan focuses on Parkou Square, the city's historic and social hub, as a starting point for revitalizing the centre.

Five strategic pillars guide its transformation: upgrading infrastructure, safety, and accessibility; promoting citizen engagement; enhancing green spaces and sustainability; supporting tourism and local commerce; and encouraging active mobility.

These measures aim to improve quality of life, attract visitors, strengthen social cohesion, boost the local economy, and make Parkou Square a model of inclusive, sustainable, and vibrant public space, driving wider city centre regeneration across Lamia's city center.

Governance and key actors

The redevelopment of Parkou Square is based on coordinated governance among municipal, national, and local stakeholders.

The Municipality of Lamia oversees planning and implementation, while police authorities ensure public safety. Key partners — including AMFIKYONIES S.A., local businesses, schools, NGOs, the University of Thessaly, and tourism stakeholders — support project delivery, citizen engagement, and the promotion of Lamia, ensuring integrated and sustainable urban development.

Financial resources

Lamia's Integrated Action Plan (IAP) combines human, financial, physical, and institutional resources.

Funding comes from municipal, national, and European sources, with public-private partnerships and crowdfunding supplementing. Aligned with European priorities, the IAP fosters citizen-led projects, sustainability, inclusion, and resilience in the city center.

How we will monitor change

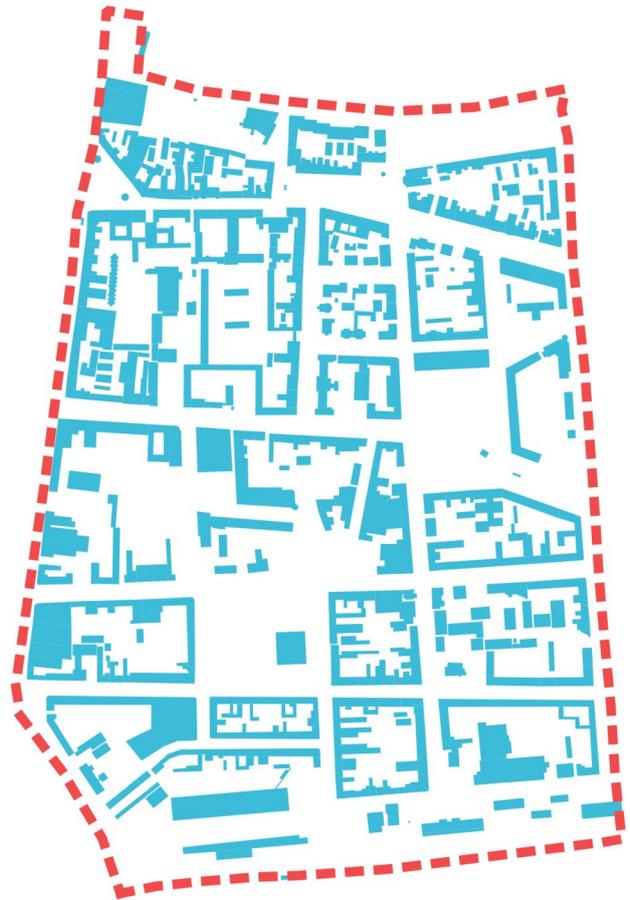
The impact of the IAP will be tracked using a combination of smart sensors, citizen input, and expert analysis. Sensors will collect real-time data on traffic, safety, and air quality, while residents and local businesses will provide feedback through surveys and discussions.

08. Osijek's Integrated Action Plan

Country: Croatia

Population: 96.313 inhabitants

Density: 553,9 inhabitants/km²



Co-created vision

**Resilient Oasis that attracts citizens and visitors
of all generations**

Main local challenge

Osijek aims to revitalize its city center to make it more attractive, livable, and economically vibrant. Despite recent gains in employment, housing, and services, the center still suffers from vacant commercial spaces, limited amenities, and low foot traffic, as urban sprawl and poor access to the center push businesses and shoppers to the outskirts.

Key actions and expected impact

Osijek's Integrated Action Plan seeks to make the city centre people-centred, inclusive, and resilient, boosting quality of life, sustainability, and economic vitality. It focuses on improving accessibility and sustainable mobility through expanded shared eBikes and eScooters, mobility data collection, and pedestrianising parts of Županijska Street.

The plan also revitalizes public spaces and enhances climate resilience with green interventions like tree planting, shaded seating, and multifunctional furniture, especially in Ante Starčević Square, improving comfort, aesthetics, and microclimates.

The plan also seeks to stimulate cultural life, social interaction, and local economic activity by activating underused spaces through pop-up events, outdoor exhibitions, and partnerships with local creatives. Across all actions, participatory processes and stakeholder collaboration ensure inclusion, local ownership, and alignment with the principles of the New European Bauhaus.

Governance and key actors

Osijek's city center regeneration relies on collaborative governance. The City of Osijek leads planning and implementation, while the police ensure safety and compliance. Key partners include local businesses, NGOs, schools, the University of Osijek, tourism operators, and community groups, all contributing to project delivery, citizen engagement, and sustainable urban development.

Financial resources

Osijek's Integrated Action Plan (IAP) can be financed through a mix of local, national, and European sources. Small-scale initiatives rely on city co-financing, local communities, sponsors, or crowdfunding, while medium and large-scale projects can access funds from banks, public-private partnerships, and EU programmes such as URBACT, Erasmus+, Horizon Europe, Creative Europe, LIFE, and the European Urban Initiative.

How we will monitor change

Osijek will track the progress of its IAP through a dedicated monitoring dashboard and annual City Centre report, covering key indicators such as mobility, public space improvements, citizen participation, and cultural events. The effectiveness of monitoring will be measured by the regularity of report publication and the completeness of the collected data, ensuring transparent and evidence-based decision-making.

09. Sligo's Integrated Action Plan

Country: Ireland

Population: 20.608 inhabitants

Density: 1.649 inhabitants/km²



Co-created vision

To deliver a more balanced city centre,
improving the life of our citizens and visitors, in
a sustainable manner

Main local challenge

Sligo's city centre faces high commercial vacancy and a shortage of housing, limiting vitality, footfall, and economic activity. The city aims to align policies with real-time data and integrated management tools for sustainable growth, while maximising public spaces like Queen Maeve Square through events and strategic activation to revitalise the centre.

Key actions and expected impact

To tackle vacancy and underuse in Sligo, the city will act across housing, urban planning, and public realm activation. Under Urban Planning, vacant properties will be repurposed through the Vacant Property Refurbishment Scheme, supported by data collection and policy recommendations to increase residential stock, population density, and local economic activity. Real-time data and participatory planning will ensure responsiveness to trends and community needs.

Under Community and Economic Impact, the city will track spending, jobs, tourism, and business performance during events to support local enterprises, boost engagement, and foster a resilient, vibrant urban environment.

Governance and key actors

The Sligo Cities@Heart Integrated Action Plan is guided by a collaborative governance model that brings together local and national stakeholders to drive urban regeneration and public space

activation. Sligo County Council coordinates the plan in partnership with Sligo BID, managing Queen Maeve Square, with support from Fáilte Ireland. Key actors also include government departments, property owners, businesses, and community groups. This collaboration ensures aligned policies, evidence-based decisions, and integrated delivery of housing and economic initiatives.

Financial resources

The Integrated Action Plan is funded through national schemes, local budgets, and public-private partnerships. Key initiatives include enhancing the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant for upper-floor conversions and joint funding by Sligo County Council and Fáilte Ireland to activate Queen Maeve Square year-round. This multi-source model supports sustainable projects with clear social, economic, and regeneration benefits.

How we will monitor change

Sligo will track the impact of its initiatives using a structured framework that measures outcomes for public spaces, economic activity, and community use. Regular evaluations and stakeholder input will guide adjustments, ensuring interventions remain effective and responsive to local needs.

10. Greater Paris Metropoli's Integrated Action Plan

Country: France

Population: 7 million of inhabitants

Density: 8.703 inhabitants/km²

Co-created vision

The Greater Paris Metropolis proposes a strategy to better integrate citizen dialogue in city centre policies and action plans. The Lively Downtowns Programme will support this approach and work to redesign its policy to encourage definition and monitoring of citizen dialogue in city centre projects.

Main local challenge

Revitalizing city centres in the Greater Paris Metropolis is a complex challenge, requiring the restoration of commercial vitality and the creation of inclusive, multi-use public spaces. Efforts are hindered by territorial fragmentation, car dependency, and unequal public transport. A major barrier is limited participatory governance, as local actors often lack the tools or support to gather and use citizen input, reducing community ownership and support for renewal initiatives.

Key actions and expected impact

To strengthen stakeholder involvement in its Lively Downtowns programme, the Greater Paris Metropolis will coordinate actions across policy, public space, and capacity. Under Encouraging a Culture of Involvement and Monitoring, the Metropolis will track citizen dialogue, update the Town Centre and Commerce Barometer, and run a metropolitan survey via the “I participate” platform. These actions create a data-driven framework to align interventions with the needs of 7.2 million residents.

Under Integrating Dialogue and Building Capacity, a placemaking programme will fund participatory public space activation, while Town Centre Managers receive training, a handbook, and a toolbox. These measures foster local ownership, enhance city centre vibrancy, and bridge the gap between metropolitan policy and local implementation.

Governance and key actors

Implementation is led by a collaborative, multi-level governance structure. The Greater Paris Metropolis Lively Downtowns team coordinates policy and capacity building, while Town Centre Managers in member cities carry out local implementation with targeted training and tools. Strategic guidance comes from the ULG, and the citizen-based Metropolis Development Council ensures alignment with public needs. Key partners, including the Paris Region Institute, APUR, Centre Ville en Mouvement, and the Chamber of Commerce, provide expertise, research, and networks to support delivery.

Financial resources

Most actions are funded through existing Metropolis budgets, covering studies, handbooks, and training. The main new expense is the placemaking programme, for which the Metropolis will seek European funding from Horizon Europe - NEB and other European projects calls. The strategy focuses on leveraging current resources and partnerships while pursuing EU grants for larger innovations.

How we will monitor change

Change will be monitored using indicators for citizen dialogue, trust in policies, public space vibrancy, and commerce relevance. These will feed into the Lively Downtowns evaluation cycle and the annual Town Centre and Commerce Barometer. Feedback from training and manager surveys will assess participatory tool use, keeping the plan responsive and results-focused.

Co-producing the Action Plans

Through transnational exchange and local collaboration, the Cities@Heart network co-produced IAP's by combining shared knowledge, participatory processes, and integrated approaches to deliver locally tailored urban strategies.

4.1 The intersection between transnational and local knowledge

Knowledge transfer between the network and the local level has been a central pillar of the Cities@Heart methodology. This exchange has taken place primarily through **transnational meetings**, where host cities directly presented their good practices and local stakeholders actively engaged in collective discussions. Members of the Urban Local Groups (ULGs) of the host cities participated in these meetings, enabling first-hand exposure to diverse approaches, tools and solutions.

To support the systematic transfer of this knowledge back to the local level, **structured summary documents were produced after each transnational meeting**. These documents compiled the key success stories presented, distilled the main lessons learned, and outlined the next steps of the network, allowing knowledge to be shared in a clear, accessible and operational way with ULG members and local stakeholders.

In parallel, a targeted effort was made to promote horizontal exchange and collaborative learning among partner cities through a **dedicated peer review held in Celje**. This process created a focused space for cities to share experiences, provide feedback and collectively reflect on challenges and solutions.

Each city contributed not only technical knowledge but also critical perspectives, fostering constructive dialogue that enriched local strategies and strengthened the collective intelligence of the network.

This exchange supported the translation of shared experiences into locally adapted actions, ensuring that learning processes remained dynamic, iterative and embedded within local governance structures.

♥ 4. Co-producing the Action Plans

Case studies presentations and walks in
Cesena, Granada and Quadrilatero





♥ 4. Co-producing the Action Plans

Walking in Celje and presentations in
Krakow



Discovering Sligo's best practices and exploring the Greater Paris Metropolis



4.2 How integration has been addressed?

The Cities@Heart network provides a revealing example of how cities can apply an integrated approach in practice in different local contexts. The integrated approach lies at the heart of the challenge of how to revitalise city centres. As highlighted in key network outputs, having a truly healthy and thriving city centre requires accessibility & connectivity, mobility, retail, public spaces, housing, culture, participation, green spaces, security, skills and more.

A city centre that is accessible but has no retail will be stagnant. A centre that has retail, but no culture will be empty more often than it is full. A centre that has inadequate public spaces will be exclusionary. One that has no green spaces will be unhealthy and unattractive and so on. Healthy, thriving city centres require adequate performance on all of these dimensions.

However, that does not mean that plans and interventions foreseen under the Integrated Action Plans developed in the context of the Cities@Heart network need to work on all of these aspects to the same degree. Rather, implementing the integrated approach means identifying areas of weakness – the weakest points of the chain – and improving performance in those areas.

Thus, we see that – within the range of aspects that make up an integrated approach to revitalising city centres – different partner cities focus on different aspects. For example:

- 01 Commerce**
is the principal area of focus of Celje (particularly to tackle the vicious cycle of vacant buildings and closing shops).
- 02 Accessibility**
is the primary challenge addressed by Cesena (focused on improving access along the axis from the station to the city centre).
- 03 Improving public spaces**
is the priority of Lamia (with specific efforts to rethink the main square as a place for people, rather than simply a place of movement).
- 04 Participatory governance**
is the primary focus of the Greater Paris Metropolis (particularly in terms of promoting citizen dialogue and engagement in neighbourhoods across the Greater Paris Metropolis).

This does not mean that these cities are not also taking action on other areas – for example, Celje foresees three actions on public spaces and one on attractiveness, in addition to its seven actions on commerce. But delivering an integrated solution to a healthy city centre means tackling the most critical challenge area.

At the same time, not all of the IAPs show such clear targeting. **An example of a more balanced IAP** across the different dimensions of creating a healthy city centre is provided by Fleurus. It shows less targeted prioritisation, but a broad set of actions across 9 ‘pillars’ of an integrated approach: regeneration of physical infrastructure; public-private partnerships; tourism; culture; local enterprises; housing; green spaces; security; and citizen participation.

Looking at the 12+ aspects of integration identified by the URBACT IAP 2 study, we see that during the life of the network, particular attention and priority was given to the following aspects:

♥ 4. Co-producing the Action Plans

Type of integration

Level of priority given by the Cities@Heart Network

Stakeholder involvement in planning

Participatory approaches are fundamental to the approach of all partner cities.

Sectoral integration

A key feature of the network is how cities attempt to integrate approaches to housing, retail, culture, mobility etc.

Spatial integration

Actions focus on creating a cohesive, interconnected urban environment where different areas, functions, and communities are effectively linked.

Stakeholder involvement in implementation

The network partners clearly recognise that healthy city centres require long-term citizen engagement – not just during the project.

Coherence with existing strategies

Each plan aimed to identify and seek consistency with existing strategies in place at local or higher levels.

Economic + social + environmental

Plans recognised the importance of integrating economic opportunities, social activities and clean urban environments for creating healthy, thriving city centres.

Hard and soft investments

To varying degrees, plans included physical infrastructure investments alongside interventions focused on human capital.

Integration over time

Plans generally set out a strategic approach to implementing actions in a logical order to maximise impact over time.

Type of integration

Level of priority given by the Cities@Heart Network

Integration of all funding sources

Plans considered how specific diverse funding sources from different levels and types could be mobilised to fund the planned actions.

Cross-cutting theme: Climate

Climate issues received clearer attention in some plans than others – notably in the context of developing green spaces, promoting clean urban environments and resilience to climate change.

Cross-cutting theme: Digital

Some digital solutions were included, but not a key focus of attention.

Cross-cutting theme: Gender

Gender aspects were sometimes identified, but not an important area of focus.

Multi-level governance

Cooperation with regional or national authorities is not an important area of attention.

Territorial integration

Cooperation with neighbouring municipalities is not a focus.

Cross-cutting theme: Procurement

Procurement issues are not a focus of the network.

♥ 4. Co-producing the Action Plans

4.3 Role of the URBACT Local Groups

The co-production of each city's Integrated Action Plan (IAP) was fundamentally driven by its own uniquely composed URBACT Local Group (ULG), which served as the central participatory engine for the entire planning process. While each ULG reflected its local governance culture, from Lamia's compact multi sectoral forum bridging municipal departments with academia and youth, to Krakow Metropolis' structured multi level model and Sligo's dual issue specific task forces, they all shared a core function: transforming stakeholder dialogue into actionable strategy.

Through a series of workshops, study walks, and deliberative meetings, these groups moved beyond consultation to genuine co-creation. Members contributed local data, validated challenges, prioritized actions, and in cases like Osijek and Cesena, even helped gather the evidence base for the plan itself. This structured yet adaptable process ensured that every IAP was not an imported blueprint, but a locally owned, consensus-based roadmap, forged by the very actors committed to its future implementation.

Fleurus and Lamia's URBACT Local Group Meetings



♥ 4. Co-producing the Action Plans

4.4. Participation and co-creation methods

Cities@Heart embedded participation and co-creation at every stage of its work, using a dynamic mix of methods designed to turn stakeholder input into actionable strategy. Grounded in the URBACT Method and supported by the URBACT Toolbox, the network's approach was both structured and adaptable.

Collaborative tools such as Miro have been used both in online and in-person workshops to collect, structure and synthesise stakeholder contributions. These tools enabled active participation, co-creation, and systematic integration of diverse perspectives into the network's work.

For example, the workshop held in Granada on adaptation to climate change and gentrification in city centres brought participants together to jointly develop a shared set of indicators and explore data collection methodologies, following a structured process of analysing, classifying, and translating data into actionable insights.

Other workshops, such as the one held in Krakow on storytelling, adopted a more playful approach, engaging participants in creative exercises including a video pitch challenge, a comic strip challenge, and creating before-and-after images of their cities.

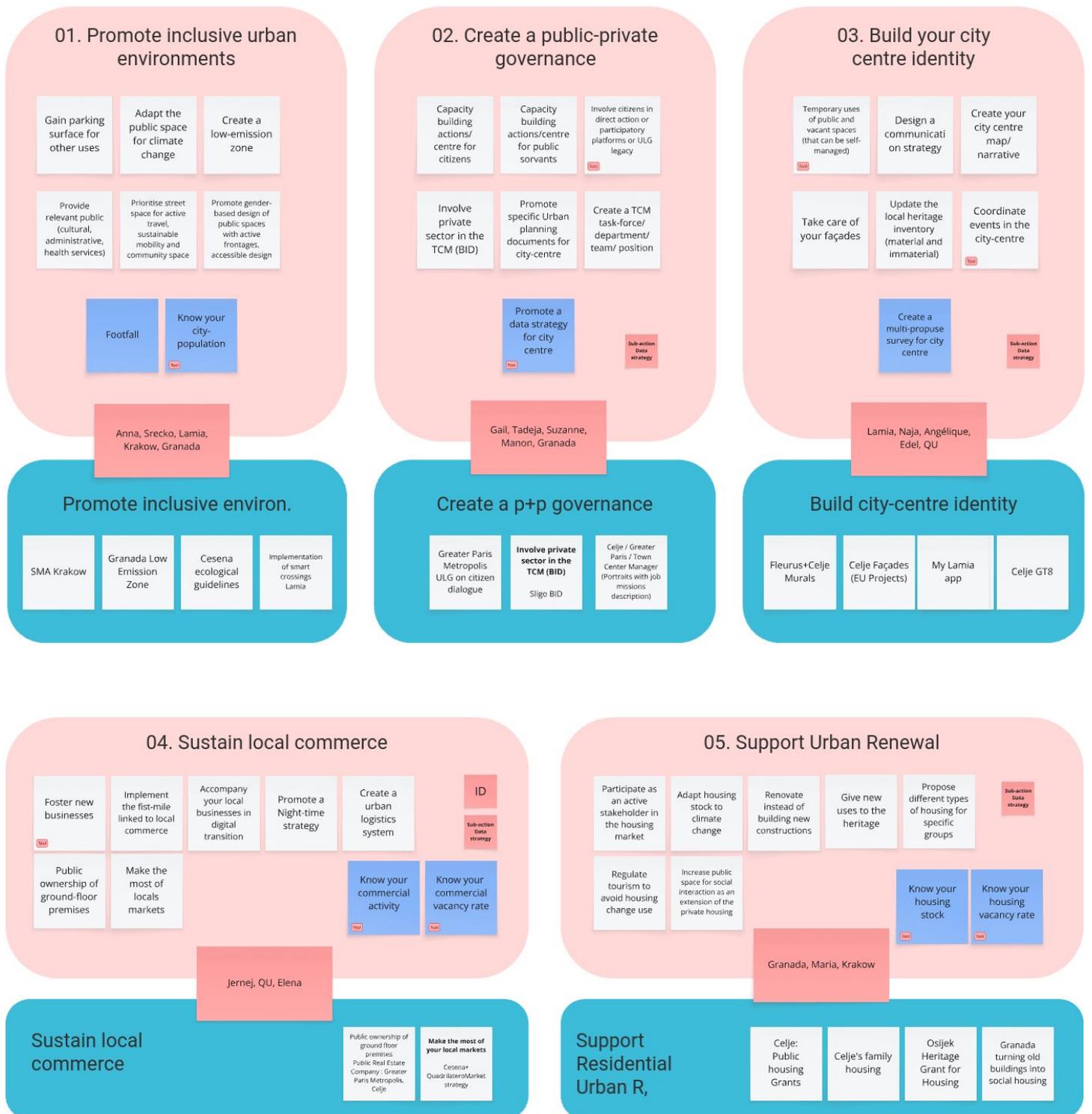
These diverse methods fostered both rigorous analysis and imaginative thinking, ensuring that learning and co-creation were engaging, inclusive, and directly applicable to local urban strategies.

Images of Krakow's workshop on storytelling



♥ 4. Co-producing the Action Plans

Common digital board to co-create the playbook (levers and actions) and image of IAP Review workshop in Celje.





How we scale up the knowledge?

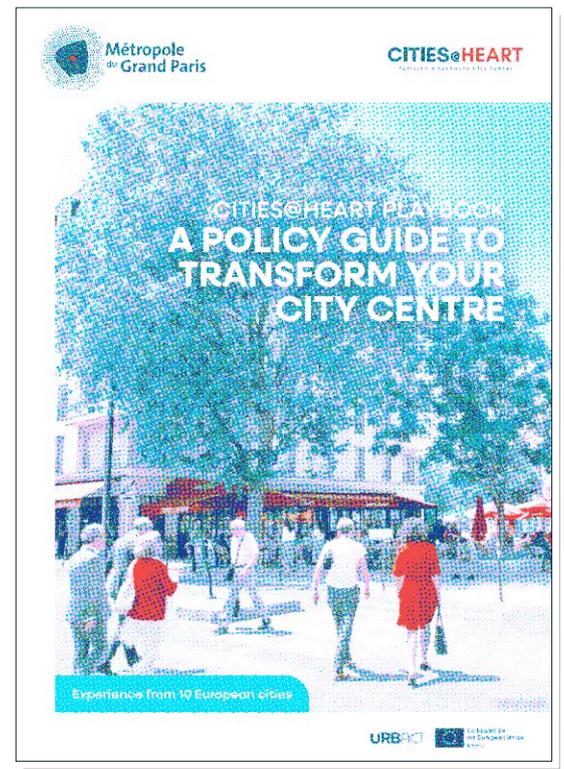
Through transnational collaboration and hands-on experimentation, the Cities@Heart network has turned shared experience into practical guidance to help cities transform their urban cores with clarity, ambition, and measurable impact.

5.1. The playbook

The Cities@Heart network has developed “A Policy Guide to Transform Your City Centre,” a comprehensive resource that brings together key insights, tested case studies, and evaluation indicators from its transnational experience. Designed as a practical toolbox, the guide supports cities in reimagining their urban cores through a structured and integrated approach.

Built on a bottom-up methodology, it translates local initiatives into broader lessons and is aimed at decision-makers, urban practitioners, and professionals involved in city centre revitalisation—particularly in small and medium-sized cities with limited resources. It offers adaptable governance models, management approaches, and policy tools, while also supporting collaboration across sectors and engagement with local communities.

The guide outlines the five key levers for transformation, each addressing specific challenges through targeted actions, supported by evaluation indicators and real-life examples. An implementation pathway at the end provides a clear framework to help cities design coherent, evidence-based policies for more vibrant, inclusive, and resilient city centres.



♥ 5. How we scale up the knowledge?

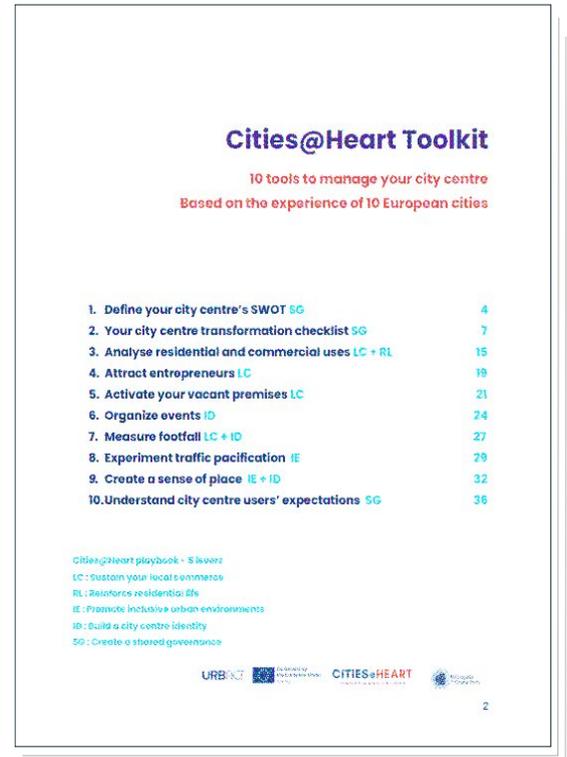
5.2. The toolkit

Complementing the policy guide, the Cities@Heart toolkit is a practical resource that supports the implementation of city centre revitalisation strategies. It helps policy makers and local technicians develop informed and measurable public policies through a set of adaptable, experience based tools.

The toolkit includes ten tools developed by municipalities within the Cities@Heart network. Designed to be implemented in house, they require limited financial resources and rely mainly on the time and expertise of public administration staff. Many are inspired by Small Scale Actions tested during the Cities@Heart journey, demonstrating that impactful results can be achieved with modest means.

Each tool is presented with its context, a step by step methodology, results achieved, feasibility criteria with indicative budget levels, and relevant indicators for monitoring and evaluation.

By sharing tested practices, the toolkit turns strategy into action, offering solutions that cities can apply or adapt to foster more vibrant, inclusive, and resilient city centres.



5.3. The pathway

Cities@Heart proposes a clear seven step pathway that supports cities in moving from diagnosis to long term action. It provides a structured framework to translate insights into concrete measures for the transformation of city centres.

By combining a shared vision, strong governance, and continuous evaluation, the pathway helps ensure that strategies are effectively implemented and sustained over time. Adaptable and scalable, it can be applied to different urban contexts, offering cities a practical route to develop coherent and evidence based policies for their urban cores.

The pathway

01

Define the boundary of your city centre

A city centre is not a fixed line but a living space. Its extent depends on density, uses, and connections between central and peripheral areas. In some contexts, multiple centres may coexist, either specialised or mixed, always functioning as a reference space for the city and the wider metropolitan area.

02

Identify the city centre stakeholders

Map residents, businesses, associations, service providers, and institutions, and involve them actively. Creating spaces for exchange, co-design workshops, and advisory forums ensures diverse voices are heard and trust is built around common goals.

03

Check the health of your city centre

A diagnostic strategy should cover commerce, public space, mobility, housing, culture, safety, and accessibility. This can be done through surveys, participatory mapping, observational audits, and data analytics, preferably using a combination of all of these methods, producing a comprehensive assessment that captures multiple dimensions.

04

Define the vision and objectives

Start with a long-term, consensus-based vision that inspires and sets direction. Once agreed, translate this vision into clear objectives that are economic, social, environmental, and cultural, which are measurable and realistic and guide priorities for transformation.

05

Draft your Action Plan

Inspired by URBACT methodologies, an Action Plan combines short-term pilots with medium- and long-term strategies. Each step should include clear timelines, responsibilities, resources, and financing, while maintaining flexibility to scale up successful initiatives or adapt to changing circumstances.

06

Choose your governance model

Strong governance ensures accountability and continuity. This can take the form of Town Centre Management structures, public-private consortia (such as a Business Improvement District), citizen assemblies, or hybrid boards, depending on context. Roles must be transparent, and stakeholder input secured. Governance bodies should meet regularly and be supported by a central coordination mechanism to ensure coherence and follow-through.

07

Evaluate and measure your results

An effective data strategy is key to measuring impact: define indicators, set baselines, build dashboards, and review regularly. Continuous evaluation supports adaptation, accountability, and clear communication of progress. City centres, due to their compactness and diversity, are ideal for testing integrated strategies with visible results, without citywide rollout. Their defined scale also enables easier coordination between public, private, and community actors, while fostering meaningful citizen participation.

Conclusion

Cities@Heart shows how shared challenges can drive collective action. Ten cities have turned vision into concrete plans and lasting partnerships, setting a model for vibrant, inclusive, and resilient urban centres across Europe.

The Cities@Heart journey represents a significant collective step towards reimagining and revitalizing Europe's urban cores. Over the course of the project, ten diverse partner cities have demonstrated that despite differing contexts, the challenges facing city centres are profoundly interconnected. The pressures of commercial change, shifting mobility patterns, housing accessibility, climate vulnerability, and the need for inclusive public spaces are common threads that bind European urban centres.

Through a shared, co-produced methodology, the network has moved beyond diagnosis to action. The development of ten locally tailored, yet strategically aligned, Integrated Action Plans (IAPs) is the cornerstone of this achievement. Each plan, co-created with citizens and institutions through vibrant URBACT Local Groups, translates a common vision into concrete, measurable interventions.

As the project concludes, the legacy of Cities@Heart lies not only in the plans themselves but in the established pathways for their implementation. The network has fostered a culture of collaboration, data-driven decision-making, and continuous learning.

The partner cities now stand equipped with governance models, monitoring tools, and a strengthened community of practitioners committed to making their centres more liveable, inclusive, and resilient.

The ultimate ambition of Cities@Heart is to inspire a wider movement. The lessons, tools, and methodologies compiled in this report and the accompanying Playbook and Toolkit are offered as a resource to towns and cities across Europe.

By placing people at the heart of urban regeneration and embracing complexity as an opportunity for innovation, cities can ensure their centres thrive as vibrant, balanced, and welcoming spaces for all.

Integrated Action Plan Report

December 2025.

Writing, editing and design

Mar Santamaria, Lead Expert of Cities@Heart URBACT Network.

Acknowledgements

This report was developed with the active involvement of all partner cities of the Cities@Heart network.

Photo credits

Greater Paris Metropolis, Lead partner, Project Partners and Lead expert.

URBACT drives change for better cities using participatory and integrated tools. Since 2002, URBACT has been driving change all over Europe by enabling the cooperation and idea exchange amongst cities within thematic networks, by building the skills of local stakeholders in the design and implementation of integrated and participatory policies, and by sharing knowledge and good city practices.

URBACT



Co-funded by
the European Union
Interreg

Partners



Pentágono Urbano



Comune di Cesena



AYUNTAMIENTO DE GRANADA



MUNICIPALITY OF CELJE



Kraków Metropolitan Area





CITIES
@HEART