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We Create Space

Transferability Study

We Create Space is an URBACT Transfer Network that builds on a proven participatory grant programme implemented in **Ostrava (Czech Republic)**. It enables residents to create public spaces themselves using funds from the city budget (more details: <https://tvorimeprostor.cz/en/>).

Co-financed by URBACT, the project transfers this approach driven by communities to partner cities **Koszalin (PL), Pescara (IT), Granollers (ES), Bucharest District 6 (RO), Niš (RS) and Métropole Rouen Normandie (FR)** to strengthen bottom-up, sustainable and inclusive urban development across Europe.

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All photographs in this document were provided by the Network partners.

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1 THE GOOD PRACTICE

1.1 Introduction

Across Europe, cities are increasingly facing the challenge of **rethinking how public spaces are conceived, activated, and governed**. Urban regeneration can no longer rely solely on top-down planning models or large-scale infrastructural investments. Instead, **contemporary urban policies** require more agile, participatory, and experimental approaches, capable of mobilizing local communities, activating underused spaces, and fostering a shared sense of responsibility in transformation processes. Within this broader European context, the URBACT programme has consistently supported cities in developing integrated and participatory urban solutions, promoting learning exchanges and the transfer of consolidated good practices across diverse territorial contexts.

It is within this framework that the **Transfer Network “We Create Space”** was established. The Network builds on the **awarded Good Practice of the City of Ostrava**, which has developed an innovative approach to activating underused urban spaces through small-scale interventions, open calls, lightweight governance models, and experimental forms of citizen engagement. The core ambition of “Tvoříme prostor” is not simply to replicate individual activities, but to **transfer an integrated method** that combines the involvement of the community (citizens, NGOs...), urban placemaking (particularly with a green perspective) participatory governance, and adaptive management, in order to **generate long-term urban transformation**.

The Good Practice implemented in Ostrava has demonstrated that small-scale, low-cost, and temporary interventions can **trigger broader processes** of social engagement, spatial regeneration, and institutional learning. Through the launch of open calls targeting citizens, associations, and informal groups, the support of micro-projects via streamlined selection mechanisms, and the experimentation of flexible operational tools, Ostrava has successfully activated and reactivated dormant urban areas and overlooked city spaces, **strengthening the relationship between public administration and local communities**. The practice is characterized by its modularity, scalability, and its capacity to operate within complex regulatory environments, making it particularly suitable for transfer to cities with diverse socio-economic, cultural, social, and administrative contexts.

The “We Create Space” Network **brings together municipal and metropolitan authorities**, ranging from large cities to more compact urban contexts, from different European regions and countries, each facing distinct, yet comparable challenges

related to the activation of public spaces, the revitalization of brownfields or underused sites, the strengthening of citizen participation, communities support and the consolidation of local governance models. While spatial contexts vary (from former industrial areas to peri-urban corridors, from central neighborhoods to metropolitan territories),



all partner cities share a common objective: to move from consultation-based participation to action-oriented co-creation, and from static urban planning to an approach grounded in iterative experimentation.

The Network is conceived as a structured **learning environment**, where the transfer of the Good Practice is not intended as a mechanical replication, but as a **process of contextual adaptation**. Each partner city, by identifying which modules of the Ostrava approach are most relevant to its local challenge, will test selected components through testing actions or governance experiments and progressively integrate these elements into its local policy framework. At the same time, the **transfer process will generate mutual learning**, allowing the original Good Practice of Ostrava to evolve and strengthen through interaction with diverse regulatory, cultural, and institutional contexts.

This Transferability Study aims to provide an **in-depth understanding** of the Good Practice, assess its **potential for adaptation** within partner cities, and outline a coherent methodology for its transfer throughout the duration of the Network. It establishes the analytical and operational foundations of the learning journey that will unfold from November 2025 to April 2028, setting the stage for an integrated, experimental, and collaborative process of urban innovation among participating cities.

1.2 European policy context connected to the Good Practice

The We Create Space Good Practice is embedded within a well-established framework of European urban policies that, over recent decades, have progressively **redefined the role of cities** as key actors in sustainable development, social cohesion, and institutional innovation. In this context, cities are no longer seen merely as recipients of policies, but as **active laboratories** for experimenting with new governance models, operational tools, and modes of engaging local communities.

A key reference is the **New Leipzig Charter** (2020), which defines the paradigm of European cities as just, green, and productive, emphasizing the need for integrated and multi-level approaches. In particular, the Charter highlights the role of public space as a **fundamental infrastructure for social inclusion and urban quality of life**, and explicitly calls for participatory and collaborative governance models. Within this perspective, practices such as **We Create Space fully align** with the European framework, offering operational tools that translate these principles into concrete actions through co-creation, the activation of underused spaces, and the direct involvement of citizens.

In parallel, the **Urban Agenda for the European Union** (Pact of Amsterdam, 2016) has introduced an additional innovative approach based **on multi-actor and multi-level partnerships**, overcoming the traditional fragmentation of urban policies. The Agenda explicitly promotes cross-sectoral integration, cooperation between institutional levels, and the experimentation of innovative solutions through **city-to-city exchange**. In this framework, tools such as open calls, micro-scale urban interventions, and temporary experiments—core elements of the Good Practice—represent concrete ways of implementing the Agenda’s principles, enabling cities to test solutions in real-life contexts and progressively adapt them to local specificities.

A further operational reference is the **European Urban Initiative** (EUI), which supports cities in developing and testing innovative solutions to urban challenges through pilot projects and capacity-building activities. EUI reinforces the idea of the city as a **space of complex experimentation**, where policies and tools are continuously tested, evaluated, and refined. In this sense, the incremental and experimental approach of We Create Space—based on micro-interventions and the **“test before invest”** principle—fully aligns with the logic promoted by the initiative, which acts as a multiplier of many past and ongoing URBACT projects.

The strengthening of participatory and collaborative dimensions in European urban policies is also rooted in the **broader evolution of EU cohesion policy**, which promotes integrated and place-based strategies for territorial development. Instruments such as **Sustainable Urban Development** (SUD) and programmes like URBACT have contributed to **spreading more inclusive governance models**, oriented towards the active involvement of stakeholders and the co-creation of public policies. In particular, **URBACT** has consolidated the role of good practice transfer as a **key driver of administrative innovation**, fostering peer learning processes and the adaptation of solutions across different contexts, including through previous waves of Transfer Networks.

Alongside the policy and institutional framework, academic and professional debates have also contributed to legitimizing approaches based on participation, experimentation, and bottom-up activation of urban space. The tradition of **placemaking and collaborative planning** (Healey, 1997) has highlighted how urban quality emerges from co-production processes between institutions and local communities, while the concept of **tactical urbanism** (Lydon and Garcia, 2015) has demonstrated the effectiveness of temporary and low-cost interventions as tools to trigger broader transformations.



These approaches are directly reflected in the operational structure of We Create Space, which uses micro-projects and experimentation as devices for learning and innovation.

1.3 Good practice description

Project: Flourishing library in Ostrava-Vitkovice



1.3.1 Short description of Ostrava: location, size and key socio-economic characteristics



The City of Ostrava is the third largest city in the Czech Republic and represents the main urban and industrial center of the Moravian-Silesian Region, located in the north-eastern part of the country, on the **border with Poland and not far from Slovakia**. The city has approximately 280,000 inhabitants, while the wider **metropolitan area has almost one million residents**, positioning itself as one of the main urban poles in Central Europe (together with Katowice metropolitan area).

Ostrava

Number of inhabitants	Area	Basic information
280,000	214 km ²	The third largest city in the Czech Republic Historically one of the most important industrial centers in Central Europe

Historically, Ostrava has been one of the most important industrial centers in Central and Eastern Europe, developing from the 19th century as a **mining and steelmaking hub** linked to coal extraction and steel production. For over a century, the urban economy was strongly characterized by the presence of large industrial complexes and production infrastructures, which shaped both the economic structure and the urban landscape of the city, extending even within the city itself, still today subject to profound infrastructural transformations and a positive tension towards the cultural, sports, educational and tourism reuse of brownfields, as places for celebrating the past on which to build part of the future identity of the city. Since the 1990s, with the **economic transition** following the end of the socialist system and the progressive closure of mining and steel activities, Ostrava has been undergoing a profound process of economic, social, and territorial transformation. This transition, as highlighted, has generated a series of **complex urban challenges**: the widespread presence of abandoned industrial areas, the need to diversify the economic fabric, the regeneration of urban neighborhoods marked by deindustrialization, and the creation of new opportunities to attract young people, talents and innovative activities. Over the last two decades, the city has embarked on a path of transformation aimed at strengthening its role as a **dynamic regional center**, investing in urban regeneration, the development of emerging economic sectors, culture, and the quality of public space.

Ostrava - where new stories begin. That's the vision that the city makes a reality during the next years. Ostrava is implementing a range of projects from **Strategic Development Plan 2024-2030**, which has been created with the contributions of

more than 13 thousand citizens. Plan focuses on three core priorities (A Vibrant Regional Capital, Wealth in People, a Healthy City) to help achieve this vision, creating an energized city that offers a high quality of life for all generations and attracts and retains talented people to live and work here. **Tvoříme prostor (We Create Space Grant programme)** is one of the flagship projects of Strategic Plan, which brings the City of Ostrava closer to its people, to nature, and through the sharing of this URBACT good practice also to the rest of the world.

As part of the city's efforts to realize its strategic vision Ostrava has progressively developed a **strong focus on participatory and innovative urban policies**, recognizing the central role of local communities in the city's transformation processes. In this context, the presence of numerous underused urban spaces, which are also partly a legacy of its industrial past, has represented both a challenge and an opportunity. On the one hand, these spaces require regeneration and new urban functions; on the other hand, they constitute a resource for experimenting with innovative models of urban activation, involving citizens, associations and NGO actors in the design and management of public spaces.

1.3.2 Strategic framework and policy priorities related to the Good Practice

The Good Practice developed by the City of Ostrava does not represent an isolated intervention but is embedded within a broader strategic framework of urban policies oriented towards territorial regeneration, administrative innovation, and the strengthening of civic participation. In recent years, the city administration has progressively integrated into its planning instruments **a vision of the city** based on experimental, collaborative and incremental approaches, recognizing that urban transformation requires not only large infrastructural projects, but also widespread processes of social and cultural activation of public space, sometimes prevailing over a purely infrastructural reconversion.

The city's urban policies have increasingly focused on enhancing public spaces as a fundamental social infrastructure for urban quality of life.



Public spaces are no longer considered exclusively as physical elements of the urban fabric, but as places of relationships, identity and civic innovation.

Their activation and care therefore represent **a strategic objective** to strengthen social cohesion, stimulate citizen participation, and support new forms of urban economy linked to creativity, culture and local entrepreneurship.

Within this strategic framework, the city has gradually **developed administrative and operational tools** aimed at facilitating the emergence of **bottom-up initiatives** and **supporting urban experimentation**. In particular, the administration has promoted open and collaborative governance models, in which citizens, associations, cultural organizations and informal groups can actively contribute to the transformation of urban spaces through temporary projects, community initiatives and small-scale interventions.

The We Create Space Good Practice is positioned precisely at the intersection of these strategic priorities. Through the use of open calls, the promotion of urban micro-projects, and the experimentation of flexible management models, the practice **enables the administration** to facilitate widespread urban activation processes, while **maintaining a role of coordination** and institutional support. This approach makes it possible to mobilize energies and skills present in civil society, reducing barriers to access for citizens and informal groups wishing to contribute to the transformation of the city.

A further element concerns the ability of the practice to be particularly **adaptable** in complex urban contexts. Thanks to the modular and incremental nature of the actions promoted, We Create Space allows **solutions to be tested gradually**, assessing their impact and progressively adapting administrative and operational tools. In this sense,



the practice represents a laboratory of institutional innovation, through which the city administration can experiment with new models of collaboration between the public sector, local communities and creative actors.

Through light but high-potential transformative interventions, We Create Space enables the activation of change dynamics that can subsequently evolve into more structured projects, thus contributing to a progressive and sustainable urban transformation process.

1.3.3 Summary of the Good Practice: We Create Space

The Good Practice developed by the city of Ostrava represents a **model of urban activation based on small-scale interventions**, participatory processes and flexible administrative tools. It originated as a concrete response to the widespread presence of underused or abandoned urban spaces, often a legacy of the city's industrial past, and is **configured as a systemic approach** aimed at transforming such spaces into active, inclusive and socially value-generating places. Unlike traditional urban transformation models, based on structural investments and long-term planning, **We Create Space adopts an incremental and experimental logic**, in which small temporary interventions become catalysts for broader transformations.



The practice is based on the idea that the reactivation of urban spaces can take place through the direct involvement of citizens, local organizations and a wide range of urban actors, promoting a bottom-up approach supported by an effective institutional infrastructure.

Project: Makovský school



1.3.4 Origin and development of the practice

We Create Space has its roots in the **municipal grant programme Tvoříme prostor**, launched by the city of Ostrava in 2017 as an operational tool to support community activation of public spaces.

In its initial phase, the programme did not yet present itself as a formalized or transferable “good practice”, but rather as **an experimental local funding instrument** aimed at responding to concrete needs emerging in neighborhoods:

- residual spaces,
- unused courtyards,
- poorly equipped green areas
- or places lacking recognized social functions.

From its inception, Tvoříme prostor was conceived as an **accessible micro-funding programme**, open not only to structured associations but also **to individual citizens** and informal groups, with the aim of **lowering the entry barriers** typical of public programmes and pro-client approach from the municipality representatives. Projects necessarily had to be open to the public, non-profit oriented and **based on strong direct community involvement**, both in the design phase and in implementation and maintenance.

A distinctive element, already present in the first editions, is represented by the central role assigned to the **active participation of citizens**, not only as beneficiaries **but as real co-producers of urban space**. Funded projects included light interventions with high social impact, such as

- community gardens,
- meeting spaces,
- leisure facilities,
- and small-scale distributed regeneration actions.

Over time, the programme has been structured through periodic calls (now organized in multiannual cycles and different editions) and a multi-phase selection process, which includes **moments of direct exchange between applicants and the evaluation committee**. This mechanism has made it possible not only to select the best projects, but also to accompany and improve proposals through iterative feedback, strengthening the design capacities of local actors.

At the same time, the administration has progressively **refined the programme management tools**, introducing clearer criteria, transparent evaluation methods and forms of technical and administrative support. This **continuous learning process** has transformed the programme over time from a simple funding tool into a true collaborative governance infrastructure. After several years of implementation, with **dozens of funded projects** and a high level of **continuity over time**,



the programme has demonstrated its effectiveness not only in terms of physical reactivation of spaces, but also in **strengthening trust** between citizens and the administration and in developing local social capital.

1.3.5 The Ostrava grant system: structure, functioning and role within the Good Practice

Tvoříme prostor, which constitutes the main instrument through which the administration enables **bottom-up urban activation processes**, far from traditional public funding logics, is configured as an accessible, continuous micro-grant system **strongly oriented towards the direct participation of citizens**. From a financial point of view, Tvoříme prostor is based on a **relatively limited but stable budget** over time, ensuring its continuity and its capacity to have a widespread impact on the urban territory. In the most recent programming, relating to the 2025–2026 period, the overall budget amounts to approximately 6 million Czech crowns, equivalent to around 240,000 euros, structured into multiple calls distributed over time. The maximum contribution per single project is 500,000 CZK (approximately 20,000 euros), a value that clearly defines the scale of the funded interventions: light actions, quick to implement and capable of producing immediate effects in urban space.

The analysis of the programme's historical series, launched in 2017, highlights a trajectory of progressive growth and consolidation. Overall, more than **69 projects have been funded**, for a total of approximately **21.5 million Czech crowns** disbursed, equivalent to around 890,000 euros. These figures, although not high in absolute terms, are particularly **significant when related to the scale of interventions and their territorial diffusion**, outlining a model of urban policy based on a multiplicity of punctual actions rather than a few large-scale interventions.



One of the distinctive elements of the programme lies in its **access mechanism**, designed to be as inclusive as possible.

Participation is open not only to formally established organizations, but **also to individual citizens, informal groups and local communities**, provided that the submitted projects are non-profit, guarantee public access and include active community involvement all in the preparatory, implementation and sustainability phases. This approach makes it possible to **reach a broad and diversified range of actors**, often excluded from traditional public funding instruments.

The selection process is structured in **three round evaluation process** and performs a function that goes beyond the mere evaluation of proposals. In the first phase, applicants submit a simplified **project proposal** and budget, which lowers entry barriers. This is followed by the second round that consists of direct dialogue with an **expert committee**, during which projects are discussed and refined. Only afterwards is a full grant application required followed by the third evaluation round. This mechanism introduces a dialogic dimension,



transforming the selection process into an opportunity for learning and project improvement, both for applicants and for the administration.

Beyond the financial dimension, the programme plays a central role as a tool of urban governance. The grant does not merely distribute resources, but **acts as a lever** to activate local energies, build relationships between administration and citizens and experiment with new ways of managing public space.

Project: Fairy garden



1.3.6 From local grant to European Good Practice: Ostrava broadens its horizons

It is precisely from this progressive maturation that Tvoříme prostor has been recognized as a URBACT Good Practice and reworked under the name We Create Space, making its modular structure and its potential for transfer to other European cities explicit. In this sense, We Create Space does not represent a project created ex novo, but rather **the evolution and systematization of a multi-year experience**, built through cycles of experimentation, adaptation and on-the-ground learning.

The distinction between the pre-URBACT phase and the URBACT phase is clear: the former represents an incremental process of local experimentation, based on continuous learning and adaptation; the latter constitutes **a phase of systematization and transfer**, in which the accumulated experience is transformed into a replicable framework. This transition also implies a change in scale and approach: **from a local public policy to a European tool for capacity building** and policy transfer, capable of generating mutual learning among cities.

From this perspective, the **programme timeline** reflects a true process of institutional learning, in which each phase has contributed to strengthening the robustness, flexibility and transferability of the practice. It is precisely this layering over time (made of experimentation, consolidation and formalisation) that makes We Create Space a robust Good Practice, suitable for adaptation in different urban contexts, while maintaining the coherence of its value-based and operational framework.

Table 1: Programme timeline

PHASE	PERIOD	MAIN CHARACTERISTICS	TOOLS AND APPROACH	OUTPUT / KEY DATA	SIGNIFICANCE FOR TRANSFERABILITY
EXPERIMENTAL PHASE (PRE-URBACT)	2017–2019	Launch of the Tvoříme prostor programme as a pilot tool	Open calls once a year, facilitated access, objective assesment criteria, involvement of citizens	First experimentation of local projects; community activation	Testing of the model; verification of the capacity to activate local communities

			and informal groups		
CONSOLIDATION PHASE	2020–2022	Structuring of the programme and stabilisation of processes	Regular funding cycles (4 each year); more specific selection process; support to applicants	Growth in the number of projects; territorial diffusion; dozens of interventions implemented	Strengthening of the model; increase in effectiveness and internal replicability
MATURITY AND RECOGNITION PHASE	2023–present	Recognition as a URBACT Good Practice	Formalisation of the model; definition of key components	Consolidated system; demonstrated social and urban impacts	Basis for codification and transferability at European level
URBACT PHASE (WE CREATE SPACE)	2024–2028	Transformation into a European transfer Network	Breakdown into modules; transfer methodology; peer learning	Involvement of partner cities; development of the Transferability Plan	European scalability; adaptation of the model to different contexts

1.3.7 Objectives and modules of the Good Practice

The practice pursues a plurality of interconnected objectives, reflecting the integrated and evolving nature of the approach developed over time by the City of Ostrava.

One of the most relevant aspects of We Create Space is its **progressive structuring** through different operational dimensions and thematic areas, which together constitute the backbone of the practice. During its evolution, particular attention has been dedicated to the **creation and management of a grant programme** capable of **supporting bottom-up initiatives** while ensuring transparency, accessibility and public value. The programme has also developed **transparent and inclusive application and evaluation procedures**, combining technical and qualitative assessments with the involvement of external expertise.

The city has progressively experimented with **different types of supported projects**, ranging from tactical urbanism and temporary activations to cultural, educational and

community-based initiatives, allowing the administration to better understand which interventions are most capable of generating long-term social and spatial impacts. Another central dimension concerns **project delivery and administrative facilitation**, through the adoption of a **“pro-client” approach** aimed at accompanying applicants during the implementation phase, simplifying procedures and strengthening internal collaboration within the municipal administration.

Attention is dedicated to cost control, sustainability, and project monitoring, with the objective of evaluating generated impacts, progressively improving the programme and **ensuring the effective use of public resources**. Finally, communication, marketing and public engagement represent a key component of the programme, contributing to disseminating implemented experiences, involving new actors and strengthening public awareness regarding the value of community-led urban transformation.

Taken together, these operational dimensions show how We Create Space evolved from a simple local funding scheme into a broader collaborative governance model for the activation of public space, progressively becoming more structured, transferable and adaptable to different European urban contexts.

Project: Viktorka playground



Table 2: Objectives and modules of the Good Practice

OPERATIONAL DIMENSION AND DESCRIPTION	KEY ELEMENTS	MAIN OUTPUTS / RESULTS	RELEVANCE FOR TRANSFER
<p>TERMS OF THE GRANT PROGRAMME</p> <p>DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF A MUNICIPAL FUNDING PROGRAMME DEDICATED TO THE ACTIVATION OF PUBLIC SPACES THROUGH BOTTOM-UP INITIATIVES PROMOTED BY CITIZENS, ASSOCIATIONS AND INFORMAL GROUPS</p>	<p>Periodic open calls; simplified access criteria; small-scale funding; openness to formal and informal actors</p>	<p>Activation of local projects; broader civic participation; dissemination of small-scale interventions</p>	<p>Highly transferable dimension, adaptable to different administrative systems and financial capacities</p>
<p>APPLICATION FORM AND PROJECT EVALUATION</p> <p>DEFINITION OF TRANSPARENT AND INCLUSIVE PROCEDURES FOR THE SELECTION OF PROJECTS, COMBINING TECHNICAL AND QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT WITH THE INVOLVEMENT OF EXTERNAL EXPERTISE</p>	<p>Technical and qualitative evaluation; transparent criteria; feedback to applicants; involvement of experts and evaluation committees</p>	<p>Improvement of project quality; increased trust between citizens and administration; greater programme legitimacy</p>	<p>Fundamental to ensure transparency, inclusiveness and credibility of the process</p>
<p>TYPES OF PROJECTS, SUCCESSFUL AND UNSUCCESSFUL PROJECTS</p> <p>EXPERIMENTATION WITH DIFFERENT TYPES OF URBAN AND COMMUNITY INTERVENTIONS AIMED AT REACTIVATING PUBLIC SPACES AND STRENGTHENING LOCAL RELATIONSHIPS, WHILE GENERATING LEARNING FROM BOTH SUCCESSFUL AND UNSUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCES</p>	<p>Tactical urbanism; temporary activations; community gardens and green infrastructures; cultural and educational initiatives; light spatial transformations; exchange with project creators</p>	<p>Diversification of practices; social and cultural activation; temporary reuse of spaces; shared learning processes</p>	<p>Enables cities to adapt the model to local needs and territorial characteristics while understanding which types of projects generate stronger impacts</p>

<p>PROJECT DELIVERY, A PRO-CLIENT APPROACH AND COLLABORATION WITHIN THE AUTHORITY</p> <p>SUPPORT PROVIDED BY THE ADMINISTRATION TO ACCOMPANY APPLICANTS THROUGHOUT THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS AND FACILITATE COLLABORATION ACROSS MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENTS</p>	<p>“Pro-client” approach; administrative assistance; internal coordination; simplification of procedures; collaborative governance</p>	<p>Reduction of bureaucratic barriers; increased feasibility of projects; strengthening of the relationship between administration and citizens</p>	<p>Crucial element for transfer, closely linked to local administrative capacity and institutional culture</p>
<p>COST CONTROL, SUSTAINABILITY AND PROJECT MONITORING</p> <p>EVALUATION OF PROGRAMME EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPACTS GENERATED BY INTERVENTIONS THROUGH MONITORING AND CONTINUOUS LEARNING ACTIVITIES</p>	<p>Qualitative and quantitative monitoring; feedback collection; resource control; iterative learning; sustainability assessment</p>	<p>Progressive improvement of the programme; institutional learning; evaluation of social and urban impacts</p>	<p>Essential to adapt the model to different contexts and ensure long-term sustainability</p>
<p>PROJECT SEARCH, MARKETING, COMMUNICATION AND PUBLICITY</p> <p>COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION STRATEGIES AIMED AT STRENGTHENING PROGRAMME VISIBILITY, BROADENING PARTICIPATION AND DISSEMINATING THE IMPACT OF THE PROGRAMME</p>	<p>Storytelling; public promotion; outreach; valorisation of projects; involvement of new actors; dissemination activities</p>	<p>Strengthening of participation; increased public visibility; expansion of engaged communities</p>	<p>Central to extending the impact of the programme and building support around participatory processes</p>

1.3.8 Results and impacts

Throughout its implementation, We Create Space has generated a series of significant results.

At the **spatial level**, the practice has contributed to the reactivation of numerous urban spaces, transforming them into lively and community-oriented places. At the **social level**, it has fostered the involvement of a wide range of actors, strengthening the sense of belonging and urban cohesion. From an **institutional perspective**, the practice has stimulated a change in the way the administration operates, introducing more flexible and collaboration-oriented tools. Moreover, it has contributed to the **development of new skills within the public authority**, related to the management of participatory and experimental processes. Finally,



the practice has demonstrated the possibility of activating urban transformation processes even in the absence of large financial resources, opening new perspectives for more inclusive and sustainable urban policies.

Project: Grandma's garden



1.3.9 Key stakeholders involved and operational model

The We Create Space Good Practice is based on a multi-actor governance model in which the effectiveness of the intervention **does not depend exclusively on the availability of financial resources**, but on the **capacity to activate, coordinate and support a plurality of actors** with differentiated but interconnected roles. In this sense, the practice is configured as a collaborative system in which the public administration assumes an enabling role, while **citizens and local organizations become direct actors of urban transformation**.

1.3.10 Stakeholder mapping

At the center of the model is the municipality of Ostrava, which performs an overall coordination function of the programme. The municipality is responsible for defining the strategic framework, managing the Tvoříme prostor funding programme and **coordinating among the different departments** involved, in particular those responsible for public space, urban planning and asset management.

Alongside the administration, a fundamental role is played by the **evaluation committee**, composed of external experts and institutional representatives, which is involved in the different phases of project selection. The expert committee does not limit itself to an evaluative function but **actively participates in improving proposals** through moments of **direct interaction with applicants**, contributing to raising the quality of projects and ensuring their feasibility.

A second key group is represented by the **direct beneficiaries** of the programme, who at the same time constitute the main implementers of the interventions. This is a heterogeneous group that **includes citizens, informal groups, associations, and NGOs**.



The possibility of access also for non-structured actors represents one of the distinctive elements of the practice, as it allows the interception of widespread energies and competences that would hardly emerge through traditional institutional channels.

A further level is constituted by the broader local community, which, although not always directly involved in the design phase, participates in the use, management and enhancement of the reactivated spaces. In many cases, the success of projects

depends precisely on the **ability to activate broader participation dynamics**, transforming punctual interventions into processes of collective appropriation of space.

Finally, **internal actors within the administration also play a key role**, particularly financial departments, as well as legal and property departments and city districts, contributing to project implementation through facilitation, authorisation and technical support. Coordination among these actors is a crucial element to ensure the effectiveness of the model, especially in administrative contexts characterized by a strong compartmentalization of competences.

Project: Štramberská neighborhood



1.3.11 The operational model

The functioning of the practice is based on a structured operational cycle, which integrates administrative, participatory and project dimensions into a single coherent process.

The starting point is represented by the **definition and publication of open calls**, through which the administration activates the system and invites potential applicants to submit project ideas. This phase is characterized by a **strong orientation towards accessibility**, with simplified procedures and requirements designed to encourage the participation of a wide audience.

This is followed by a **phase of interaction** and iterative selection, which constitutes one of the qualifying elements of the model. Projects are not evaluated exclusively based on a formal application, but through the **three-round evaluation process** that includes moments of direct interaction between applicants and the committee. This approach makes it possible to **progressively improve proposals**, reducing the risk of failure during the sustainable / implementation phase.

Once selected, projects enter the supported implementation phase, in which the administration plays an active accompanying role. This **support takes place both in financial terms**, through the provision of the grant, and in **administrative terms**, by facilitating access to authorizations and coordinating the offices involved. In this phase, the **role of the public authority as a facilitator** clearly emerges, rather than as a simple funder.

At the same time, the **community engagement process is activated**, accompanying all phases of the operational cycle. Projects become opportunities to activate relationships, promote participation, reduce anonymity and strengthen the sense of belonging to urban space.

The cycle concludes with a **monitoring and learning phase**, in which qualitative feedback is collected, and project results are evaluated. This moment represents a central element of the model, as it allows the administration to continuously adapt tools and improve the overall effectiveness of the practice for subsequent calls.

Table 3: Operational model of the Good Practice

	MAIN ROLE	ACTIVATION PHASE (CALL)	SELECTION PHASE	IMPLEMENTATION PHASE	MONITORING AND LEARNING PHASE
MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION (CITY OF OSTRAVA)	Direction, coordination and programme management	Defines the calls; communicates the programme; activates the process	Coordinates the committee; ensures transparency and coherence	Disburses funding; facilitates authorisation processes; coordinates departments	Collects results; adapts the programme; capitalises on experience
EVALUATION COMMITTEE	Qualitative assessment and project support	—	Evaluates projects; interacts with applicants; contributes to improving ideas	—	Provides qualitative feedback on project effectiveness
APPLICANTS / BENEFICIARIES (INDIVIDUAL CITIZENS, INFORMAL GROUPS, ASSOCIATIONS...)	Project design and implementation	Submit project ideas; activate local Networks	Refine proposals through interaction with the committee	Implement interventions; manage activities; activate the community	Contribute feedback; maintain or further develop projects
LOCAL COMMUNITY	Use, participation and co-management	May contribute to idea generation	—	Participates in activities; uses and takes care of spaces	Provides informal feedback; contributes to long-term sustainability
INTERNAL MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENTS	Technical and administrative support	Support the definition of calls (when necessary)	—	Issue authorisations; provide technical support; facilitate implementation	Contribute to internal evaluation and process improvement

1.3.12 Scope for improvement

In the process of adapting and reusing the We Create Space Good Practice, the added value of the Transfer Network lies above all in the **collective capacity** of partner cities to evolve the original model, strengthening its robustness, expanding its impact and improving its transferability across different urban contexts. The experience developed by Ostrava has demonstrated how a **structured system** of open calls, micro-funding and temporary activation of spaces can generate virtuous dynamics of participation and urban regeneration. It is precisely **through transnational exchange** that the practice can take a further qualitative leap, progressively transforming from a successful local initiative into a European model of collaborative governance for the activation of urban spaces. In this sense,



each partner city will contribute to the process not only as a recipient of the transfer, but as an active producer of knowledge, bringing into the Network evidence, challenges and solutions emerging from work with local stakeholders.

The **role of the Urban Local Group(s) will be crucial** in anchoring these reflections in territorial contexts, while the support of thematic experts will enable cities to engage in a continuous qualitative improvement process.

Project: Walldorf garden



INSTITUTIONAL RECOGNITION

Within this framework, the scope for improvement of the Good Practice unfolds along several closely interconnected strategic directions; a first area concerns **strengthening the institutional recognition of the practice and its integration into urban policies**. While in its original form We Create Space is configured as an effective bottom-up activation programme, the work of the Network will allow for consolidating its role within urban strategies, fostering a more explicit alignment with planning tools and with European priorities in terms of social inclusion, sustainability and regeneration, embracing additional cross-cutting URBACT priorities such as gender and digital challenges.

ENGAGEMENT OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES

At the same time, a further area of development concerns **innovation in space activation processes and in the engagement of local communities**. The practice, already strongly oriented towards participation, can be further enriched through the introduction of more advanced co-creation and engagement methodologies, capable of reaching also those groups that are traditionally more difficult to involve. Exchange among cities will make it possible to identify replicable solutions and to strengthen the link between temporary interventions and longer-term urban transformation strategies, contributing to consolidating the role of space activation as a lever for regeneration.

GOVERNANCE OF THE GOOD PRACTICE

Another crucial area of improvement concerns **the governance of practice and the functioning of the operational model**: the effectiveness of We Create Space depends on the ability to activate and coordinate a plurality of actors (administrations, citizens, local organizations), within a procedural framework that is sufficiently flexible yet structured. The work of the Network will make it possible to further refine this balance, strengthening coordination mechanisms within administrations, simplifying procedures, and clarifying the roles of the different actors involved. Attention will be given to the development of replicable models of collaborative governance, capable of facilitating the adoption of the practice in different administrative contexts.

Taken together, these areas of improvement outline an evolution path of Good Practice that goes beyond its simple replication, **aiming at the construction of a more robust, adaptable and shared model**. The Transfer Network therefore represents a privileged space to transform the experience of Ostrava into a European

reference for policies on the activation of urban spaces, capable of generating long-lasting impacts at the social, community and territorial levels.

1.4 Overall transfer potential

The We Create Space Good Practice shows **a high transfer potential** in the European context, thanks to the combination of operational flexibility, modularity of the model and strong grounding in local needs.

MODULAR STRUCTURE

One of the elements that most supports its transferability is **its modular structure**: the practice is configured as a system composed of components that can be selected, adapted and combined according to the specificities of different urban contexts; this characteristic allows partner cities not to replicate the original model in its entirety, but to **build targeted transfer pathways**, consistent with their administrative capacities, available resources and strategic priorities.

ADMINISTRATIVE LIGHTNESS

Alongside modularity, another key element is the **relative administrative lightness** of the practice, which makes it applicable also in contexts characterized by limited financial resources or by complex administrative systems that differ from the bureaucratic context of the Czech Republic and the City of Ostrava; while requiring an adequate level of internal coordination, the model **does not in fact require the creation of new organizational structures**, but can be integrated within existing administrations, at the same time fostering processes of administrative innovation, particularly with regard to procedural simplification and intersectoral collaboration.

ABILITY OF THE PRACTICE TO RESPOND TO URBAN CHALLENGES

Another factor that strengthens the transfer potential is the **ability of the practice to respond to urban challenges widely shared at the European level**: the issue of activating underused spaces, citizen participation and the co-creation of urban solutions is today central in urban policies, and We Create Space offers an already tested approach to address these challenges in an integrated way.

LEARNING-ORIENTED APPROACH

The transferability of the practice is further strengthened by its **learning-oriented approach**: the model developed in Ostrava is not static, but is based on a continuous process of experimentation, monitoring and adaptation; this makes it suitable to be

transferred through the URBACT programme, where peer exchange, joint reflection and progressive adaptation represent central elements of the process.

MINIMUM LEVEL OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES

It is nevertheless important to recognize that the transfer of the practice requires some enabling conditions; among these, particular relevance is given to the **availability of a minimum level of financial resources** to be allocated to micro-funding, the presence of administrative capacities able to manage participatory processes and the ability to activate and engage local stakeholders. Precisely thanks to the modular structure of the practice, these conditions can be progressively built, allowing even cities with less experience to initiate gradual implementation pathways.

The Transfer Network represents an essential element to maximize the transfer potential of the practice. Through systematic exchange among cities, the support of experts and the work of the Urban Local Group, it will be possible to develop shared tools, methodologies and solutions that facilitate its adoption on a wider scale.

Project: Parish garden in Ostrava-Heřmanice



Table 4: Overall transfer potential

MODULE	GLOSSARY / DESCRIPTION	“TVOŘÍME PROSTOR” TOPICS / DEEP DIVES PRESENTED IN OSTRAVA & KOSZALIN TNM 'S
OPEN CALLS MODULE	<p>Central tool of the practice, based on public open calls addressed to single citizens, informal groups and local organizations, and NGOs. The calls allow the collection of bottom-up project ideas for the activation of underused urban spaces. The module is highly transferable as it can be adapted to different regulatory and administrative contexts, representing the main entry point for activating the local community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - terms of the grant programme - application form - selection process - expert committee - three-round assessment - accessibility and inclusiveness of the calls - gender-balanced participation and equal access - digital accessibility of application procedures
MICRO-GRANTS MODULE	<p>Micro-funding system supporting the ideas selected through the calls. The financial contributions, limited in size but strategic, enable the rapid activation of light and experimental interventions. The module is transferable even in contexts with limited resources, thanks to its flexibility and the possibility of activating co-funding or complementary instruments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - maximum / ideal grant budget - the process of drafting and approving program terms and conditions by city authorities - alignment with the city's strategic documents - flexibility of funding schemes - support for green and low-cost interventions - accessibility of funding for diverse local actors
ADMINISTRATIVE FACILITATION MODULE	<p>Set of tools and procedures aimed at simplifying project implementation, reducing bureaucratic barriers. It includes support to beneficiaries in obtaining permits and authorisations and coordination among municipal departments. This module represents one of the main innovations of the practice and is crucial for its transferability, although it requires adaptation to different local administrative systems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - pro-client approach - collaboration within the authority - simplification of administrative procedures - cost control - application form support - financial report - terms and conditions of the contracts - digitalisation of processes and communication

<p>SPACE ACTIVATION MODULE</p>	<p>Module dedicated to the temporary or permanent activation of underused urban spaces through selected projects. Interventions may include temporary uses, light installations, events and community initiatives. Transferability is high, as the module is based on principles of flexibility and adaptation to the local context, although it requires a preliminary mapping of available spaces.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - requirements of accessible public space - types of (un/successful) projects - tactical urbanism interventions - temporary use of public spaces - accessibility, safety and inclusiveness of spaces - community events and installations - mapping of underused spaces - documents required from the landowner - green and climate-sensitive public space activation
<p>COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PROMOTION MODULE</p>	<p>Set of practices, tools and communication strategies aimed not only at actively involving the local community in the processes of ideation, implementation and use of projects, but also at promoting the programme, disseminating successful initiatives and increasing public visibility and awareness around community-led urban transformation. The module contributes to strengthening the sense of belonging, expanding participation and creating a recognisable public identity for the programme within the city. It is highly transferable, but requires specific skills in facilitation, communication, outreach and stakeholder engagement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - engaging citizens - participation & co-creation - active searching for projects - building a recognisable identity for the programme - marketing & branding - communication, dissemination and promotion strategies - required publicity - outreach to vulnerable and underrepresented groups - use of media and digital tools
<p>MONITORING AND LEARNING MODULE</p>	<p>Monitoring and continuous learning system based on feedback collection, impact evaluation and progressive adaptation of the practice. It makes it possible to improve the effectiveness of the programme over time and to capitalise on experiences. This module is essential to ensure the sustainability and scalability of the practice within the transfer Network.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - project and programme monitoring - impact evaluation and sustainability - long-term benefits - gender, social and environmental indicators - institutional learning and adaptation



2 CITY PROFILES

2.1 Metropole Rouen Normandie



2.1.1 Introduction

Rouen is part of the Métropole Rouen Normandie, a territory composed of 71 municipalities for over 500,000 inhabitants distributed over approximately 664 km². Métropole Rouen Normandie is the fourth largest metropolitan area in France regarding the number of municipalities. The territorial configuration is particularly articulated: one third of the territory consists of **forest areas**, one third of **agricultural surfaces** and one third of **urbanized spaces**, with a coexistence of dense urban centres, industrial and port areas, and peri-urban and rural contexts. This variety makes the metropolitan territory **extremely heterogeneous** both from a spatial and socio-economic point of view.

Métropole Rouen Normandie, France

Number of inhabitants	Number of municipalities	Number of inhabitants	Area	Basic information
500,000	71	500,000	664 km ²	Fourth largest metropolitan area in France regarding the number of municipalities

From an economic point of view, the Métropole represents **an important industrial, logistical and tertiary hub**, with approximately 230,000 jobs and 36,000 enterprises. Historically rooted in an industrial and port economy, the area is today engaged **in a transformation process** oriented towards the diversification of activities, the development of the service sector, the strengthening of the university system and the transition towards more sustainable economic models. This path is accompanied by the need to address **challenges related to decarbonization, economic resilience, and environmental and industrial risks**, without forgetting social issues.



In recent years, the territory has initiated a series of policies and projects aimed at **rethinking the role of public space** and making it more accessible and inclusive.

Initiatives such as the introduction of the “Gender Budget” and **the integration of social clauses in public procurement** testify an approach oriented towards ensuring greater equity in access to urban opportunities. At the same time, projects for the

regeneration of disused industrial areas and **temporary reactivation** of spaces have been launched, as in the case of the development of cycling infrastructures experimented during the pandemic period and subsequently consolidated.

Despite these positive dynamics, some structural challenges emerge that represent the starting point of involvement in the We Create Space Network. Firstly, the strong presence of disused industrial areas and abandoned spaces raises the **issue of their reactivation and reconversion**. Secondly, a marked dichotomy between central areas and suburban and peri-urban territories is highlighted, with the risk that investments and opportunities are mainly concentrated in the main urban centres. Finally, although consolidated tools and practices of participation exist,



the main challenge consists **in strengthening the capacity to actively involve citizens** in urban transformation processes, overcoming a consultative logic to reach more operational and collaborative forms of public space activation.

In this context, the objective of the Métropole is to **extend innovative approaches of space activation** – inspired by the Good Practice of Ostrava – to the entire metropolitan territory, thus contributing to a more balanced, inclusive and widespread transformation.

2.1.2 Policy framework referring to the GP transfer

The policy framework of the Métropole Rouen Normandie is structured around a set of strategies and tools that **integrate ecological transition, social inclusion and civic participation**, configuring a context favourable to the implementation of the Good Practice. Public action is oriented by a policy of social and ecological transition, which constitutes the main reference for urban and territorial policies.

From the point of view of strategic planning and funding, the framework is further supported by multi-level tools. **At the local level**, the PCAET (Plan Climat Air Énergie Territorial) and the future SCOT (Schéma de Cohérence Territoriale) define the sustainable development trajectories of the territory. One of the goal is to stop new land urbanization preferring regeneration. **At the European level**, the Programme Normandie ERDF ESF+ JTF 2021–2027 represents an important source of funding for projects related to ecological transition, innovation, and social cohesion.

Furthermore the policy framework finds tangible application in a **series of urban projects** that combine regeneration, participation and activation of public space, such as Seine Sud, Stroll of Cailly and the participatory park Les Bruyères, in addition to participation in European initiatives such as Urb-En-Pact. These interventions

demonstrate how the **Métropole is progressively experimenting integrated approaches**, while highlighting the need to strengthen the capacity to move from consolidated participatory tools to more operational models of activation and management of urban spaces.



The Métropole Rouen Normandie has a structured **set of experiences and tools** which, although not yet configuring themselves as a fully structured placemaking system, represent a **solid basis for the adaptation** and reuse of the Good Practice of Ostrava.

One of the most relevant elements is represented by the **Les Bruyères project**, developed within the URBACT programme, which led to the creation of an urban park through a participatory process. This project constitutes a tangible example of public space activation based on the direct involvement of citizens, demonstrating the capacity of the Métropole to integrate physical and social dimensions in urban transformation processes. This project is the typical example of a willingness to integrate public involvement from the conception stage to its implementation phase. Alongside this, there are **consolidated participation tools**, already described in the policy framework, such as the participatory budget, the neighborhood councils and the digital platform “Je participe”, which allow to collect proposals, activate consultations and involve citizens on a continuous basis. These tools have contributed to building a widespread participatory culture, while remaining predominantly oriented towards a consultative or deliberative dimension rather than an operational one.

On the side of space activation practices, experiences related to temporary use and experimentation emerge. A significant case is that relating to the participatory management of an urban park, for which calls for project were launched for the selection of operators in charge of the management and animation of the space, with the objective of developing activities open to the community. This type of approach highlights the **presence of tools already like the modules of the Good Practice**, in particular regarding open calls and forms of temporary activation. Further experiences concern interventions of public space reactivation through light and experimental actions, as in the case of cycling infrastructures introduced during the pandemic and subsequently stabilised, which show the capacity of the administration to test temporary solutions before their possible institutionalisation.



The experiences of Rouen highlight a **good capacity to activate participatory processes** and to experiment interventions on public space.

However, the need emerges to **evolve towards more structured and systemic models**, capable of more effectively connecting participation, funding and implementation of interventions, overcoming a predominantly experimental logic and strengthening the operational dimension of placemaking practices.



2.1.3 Key stakeholders involved

The governance of the transfer process in the Métropole Rouen Normandie is based on a structure mainly internal to the administration, accompanied by a system of external stakeholders already active in participatory processes and urban projects. The operational core of the project (ULG) is composed mainly of different departments of the Métropole, which work transversally on themes such as urban planning, participation, ecological transition and management of public space whose members have been trained in the gender equality policy.



This strong internal component reflects a **good administrative capacity** and **a high level of technical competence**, already consolidated through previous projects and participatory experiences.

Alongside this core, the involvement of external stakeholders develops starting from already existing Networks and devices. Among these, a relevant role is played by the Metropolitan Consultative Development Council, which represents **a structured channel of dialogue with civil society**, and by participatory tools active at municipal level, such as neighborhood councils and digital consultation platforms. These devices allow to intercept a plurality of local actors, including associations, informal groups, active citizens and third sector organizations.

The governance is therefore configured as a multi-level system, in which:

- the metropolitan administration plays a central role of coordination and strategic direction;
- internal departments contribute to the operational implementation of actions;
- local stakeholders participate in consultation, co-design and, in some cases, management of activities.

However, the need also emerges to strengthen the involvement of external actors in the more operational phases of projects, overcoming a predominantly consultative logic.



In this sense, the transfer of the Good Practice represents an opportunity to **better structure the role of stakeholders** in the co-management and activation of urban spaces, promoting more collaborative and continuous models.

2.1.4 GP modules to be transferred

The Métropole Rouen Normandie has identified a set of modules of the Good Practice of Ostrava that are relevant with respect to its own context, with a selective and adaptive approach **based on existing experiences** and the specificities of the French regulatory framework.

OPEN CALLS

Among the modules that the Métropole intends to transfer more decisively is that of open calls, already partially experimented through selection procedures for the allocation and management of public spaces. This tool is considered particularly suitable to activate bottom-up initiatives and involve local actors in the management and animation of urban spaces.

MICRO-SPACES AND TEMPORARY SPACES

A second relevant area concerns the activation of micro-spaces and temporary spaces, in line with experiences already initiated in the territory. The Métropole intends to strengthen the capacity to use underused or transforming spaces as places of experimentation, through light and progressive interventions.

ADMINISTRATIVE FACILITATION AND REGULATORY FLEXIBILITY

The module related to administrative facilitation and regulatory flexibility is considered strategic but at the same time critical. The French regulatory context, in particular with regard to public procurement, safety and legal responsibility, represents a significant constraint. For this reason, the transfer of this module will **require substantial adaptation**, aimed at identifying margins of flexibility compatible with the existing legal framework.

Other modules, such as those related to **collaborative governance**, the “test before invest” principle and monitoring and learning processes, are considered of interest but still in an exploratory phase. In particular, the Métropole recognises the need to strengthen its capacity to experiment temporary interventions before their institutionalization and to better structure the learning processes deriving from activated practices. Conversely, the module of micro-financing (micro-grants) is not currently developed in the local context and therefore represents an area of potential innovation, but also one of the main challenges, both from an administrative and financial point of view. **Participatory budgets do exist in cities but not at the metropolitan scale because** it demands a budget of one euro per inhabitant which would make the budget required too high.

The approach of the Métropole to the transfer of modules is configured as progressive and adaptive: **the objective is not a full replication** of the model, but the selective integration of tools and methodologies capable of strengthening the operational capacity of the administration and facilitating the activation of urban spaces through the direct involvement of local actors.

2.1.5 Assets and barriers

The Métropole Rouen Normandie presents **a structured set of conditions favourable to the transfer** of the Good Practice, accompanied by some structural criticalities that influence its implementation.

Among the main assets, **a solid institutional capacity emerges**, supported by an articulated administrative structure and consolidated internal competences in the fields of urban planning, participation, and management of complex projects. The

experience gained through participatory tools (such as the participatory budget, consultation devices and digital platforms) and European projects represents a significant basis on which to build further developments. To this is added the presence of active stakeholder Networks and an administrative culture already oriented towards citizen involvement.



Considering the barriers, the main critical element is represented by the **national regulatory framework**, in particular with regard to public law and procurement procedures, which **limit flexibility** in the activation and management of urban spaces.

To this are added constraints related to legal responsibility, technical standards, and the difficulty of implementing interventions directly carried out by citizens.

Further criticalities concern **the absence of consolidated micro-financing tools** and the need to strengthen the transition from participatory processes to operational implementation phases.

2.1.6 Transfer expectations and needs

The participation of the Métropole Rouen Normandie in the We Create Space Network is driven by the willingness to **strengthen its capacity** for tangible activation of urban spaces, **evolving from predominantly consultative models towards more operational and collaborative approaches**. In particular, the Métropole intends to **deepen effective ways to involve citizens** not only in the ideation phase, but also in the implementation and management of projects. Among the main areas of interest are the development of **tools for selection and support of projects** (such as open calls), the **definition of sustainable models** for the management of activated spaces and the introduction of progressive experimentation logics (“test before invest”).

Specific needs also emerge related to the understanding and **adaptation of the modules of the Good Practice to the French regulatory context**, about administrative flexibility and the introduction of micro-financing tools. The Métropole is also interested **in strengthening its competences** in terms of monitoring, learning and evaluation of the impacts of activated practices.



At the same time, Rouen can contribute to the Network by making available its **experience in participatory processes**, in the management of structured engagement tools and in the integration of urban policies with ecological and social transitions, offering a particularly relevant metropolitan-scale context for experimentation.



2.2 Bucharest District 6



2.2.1 Introduction

Bucharest District 6 is one of the six administrative districts of the Romanian capital and represents a **high-density urban area**, with approximately 397,000 inhabitants distributed over 41 km². The district is configured as a **strongly residential** context, developed mainly during the socialist period through the construction of large housing complexes (superblocks), which still today define the urban and social structure of the area.

Bucharest District 6

Number of inhabitants	Area	Basic information
397,000	41 km ²	One of the six administrative districts Strongly residential, large housing complexes

From a socio-economic point of view, District **6** presents a **predominantly active population** (approximately 63% between 20 and 64 years old) and a good provision of urban infrastructures but is characterized by strong demographic pressure and **a significant lack of green spaces** and widespread **places for social interaction**. Despite the presence of relevant natural elements, such as the Morii Lake and the Dâmbovița canal,



the system of public spaces appears **fragmented** and uneven, with large residual areas, underused or lacking a clear function.

The recent trajectory of the district has been strongly oriented towards **large-scale urban regeneration interventions**, also supported by European funds, as in the case of Liniei Park, Lake Morii Park and the City-as-a-Park programme, which have introduced new public spaces and improved accessibility and urban quality. These projects have often integrated co-design processes and **consultation with citizens** and stakeholders, contributing to strengthening the dialogue between administration and local communities.



However, these experiences have proved to be mainly episodic, with an intense but time-limited involvement, unable to generate stable forms of activation and care of spaces.

Alongside these transformations, structural criticalities emerge that directly affect the quality of urban life. The configuration of open spaces between residential blocks, often lacking a clear definition and maintenance, generates **problems** related to safety, waste management and the perception of collective spaces. The progressive **removal of delimitation** and control elements, such as fences and perimeters of houses and condominiums, promoted by the administration, has accentuated this condition, while the widespread presence of degraded residential buildings highlights a difficulty in coordinating regeneration interventions on a broader scale.



At the same time, there is a **growing spontaneous activation by citizens**, visible for example **in informal practices** of guerrilla gardening and autonomous care of green spaces, which testify to the existence of **a significant civic potential**, but still poorly structured and supported by adequate tools.

In this context, the main challenge for District 6 consists in **moving from a regeneration model** based on large infrastructural interventions **to a more capillary and incremental approach**, based on micro-interventions, widespread activation of spaces and continuous involvement of the community.

The We Create Space project fits precisely into this transition, **offering the opportunity to develop new models of management and activation** of public space capable of strengthening the social, environmental and identity dimension of the territory.

2.2.2 Policy framework referring to the GP transfer

The policy framework of Bucharest District 6 is configured within a complex multi-level governance, in which **competences are distributed** between the district municipality, the General Municipality of Bucharest and other institutional levels. This configuration directly **affects the capacity for planning** and management of public space, making strong coordination between different actors necessary.

At the local level, District 6 has recently developed a strategic orientation centred on **improving the quality of urban life** through the creation and regeneration of accessible and inclusive public spaces. This approach has translated into **a series of relevant interventions**, such as Liniei Park, Lake Morii Park and the City-as-a-Park programme, which represent concrete examples of urban policies oriented towards the enhancement of green areas and the regeneration of underused spaces. These

initiatives have also been supported by European programmes, including the European Urban Initiative (EUI), which have contributed to strengthening the administrative and financial capacity of the district, facilitating the implementation of large-scale projects. However, the prevailing model has so far been based on **significant infrastructural interventions**, with citizen involvement often concentrated in the initial design phases (co-design), but less structured in the long term.

On the participation side, the district has developed practices of citizen involvement through public consultations, workshops and the use of social media, but these modalities are not yet integrated into a stable and continuous system of collaborative governance.



The **lack of structured tools** for the direct activation of citizens in the management and transformation of spaces represents one of the main critical elements.

The policy framework therefore highlights an **ongoing transition**: from an approach centred on large projects and public investments **towards more flexible, distributed and participatory models**. In this context, the introduction of the modules of the Good Practice from Ostrava (in particular open call, micro-interventions and temporary activation of spaces) can contribute to **bridging the gap** between strategic planning and everyday use of urban space, strengthening the operational and community dimension of local policies.



2.2.3 Key stakeholders involved

The governance of the project in Bucharest District 6 is based on a **combination of institutional actors, local organisations and active communities**, embedded in a complex and **sometimes fragmented administrative** context. The central role is played by the district administration, which leads the process of planning and implementation of urban policies, coordinating project activities and managing relations with higher levels of government.



The presence of a proactive and **innovation-oriented local administration** represents one of the key elements for the implementation of the project.

Alongside the **institutional core**, there is a Network of stakeholders composed of non-governmental organisations, academic institutions, urban professionals and civic groups, already involved in previous co-design processes and participatory initiatives. These actors contribute with technical competences, territorial activation capacity and knowledge of local contexts.



A particularly relevant element is represented by the **presence of spontaneous practices of active citizenship**, such as guerrilla gardening and other informal forms of care of public spaces.

These experiences, although not yet integrated into structured institutional frameworks, **highlight a significant potential for direct community involvement in urban transformation processes**. The operational structure of the local group (ULG) is in the process of consolidation and is expected to include representatives of the administration, technical stakeholders and civil society actors.



However, there is a **need to strengthen coordination** between different levels of governance and to **define more clearly the roles of stakeholders** in the different phases of the process, in particular with regard to implementation and management of interventions.

In this perspective, the transfer of the Good Practice offers the opportunity to **structure more collaborative governance models**, capable of stably integrating

institutional actors and local communities, enhancing the energies already present in the territory and transforming them into operational processes of public space activation.

2.2.4 GP modules to be transferred

Bucharest District 6 has identified in the modules of the Good Practice from Ostrava a set of tools particularly coherent with its own trajectory of urban transformation, oriented towards the transition from large-scale interventions to widespread practices of public space activation.

OPEN CALLS

Among the most relevant modules emerges that of open calls, considered a key tool to activate bottom-up initiatives and involve citizens, informal groups and local organisations in the transformation of spaces. This module appears particularly suitable to intercept the energies already present in the territory, as demonstrated by spontaneous practices of space care (for example guerrilla gardening), while at the same time offering a structured and recognised framework for the selection and support of proposals.

MICRO-SPACES AND TEMPORARY INTERVENTIONS

Closely connected is the module related to the activation of micro-spaces and temporary interventions, which represents one of the central elements of the district strategy. After a phase characterised by large infrastructural projects, the administration intends to develop a more capillary system of micro-interventions capable of reactivating residual spaces, underused areas and urban interstices, contributing to strengthening the social and everyday dimension of public space.

TEST BEFORE INVEST

The principle of “test before invest” is also particularly relevant, as it allows to experiment with light and reversible solutions before any structural investments. This approach appears coherent with the need to adapt interventions to complex urban contexts, such as those of large residential complexes, and to build more flexible and incremental processes.

The module of **collaborative governance is considered** a priority area of development, with the aim of strengthening the involvement of stakeholders in the operational phases of projects and building shared management models of spaces.

In this sense, the transfer of the Good Practice can contribute to better structuring the role of local actors, overcoming a predominantly consultative participation.

On the contrary, the **module of micro-financing** (micro-grants) **represents a less developed element in the local context and requires significant adaptation**, both from an administrative and financial point of view. Similarly, the issue of regulatory flexibility constitutes a challenge, in relation to the complexity of the regulatory framework and the need to coordinate different institutional levels. Finally, the module related to **monitoring and learning** is recognised as relevant, but still poorly structured. The project therefore represents an opportunity to develop tools for evaluation and capitalisation of experiences, capable of strengthening the effectiveness and replicability of the actions undertaken.

2.2.5 Assets and barriers

Bucharest District 6 presents a combination of favourable elements and criticalities that significantly influence the transfer process of the Good Practice. Among the main assets, **a strong public investment** capacity emerges, already demonstrated through the implementation of important urban regeneration projects. To this is added a **growing political attention** towards the improvement of public space and an explicit **willingness to innovate intervention tools**, moving towards more flexible and participatory approaches.



The district also has a **Network of active stakeholders**, which includes institutions, local organisations and civic groups, and a significant **potential for bottom-up activation**, demonstrated by spontaneous practices of space care.

From the point of view of barriers, the context presents some structural criticalities. First of all, the **fragmentation of urban governance** and the distribution of competences between different institutional levels make coordinated management of interventions more complex. To this are added **regulatory and procedural constraints**, related to the management of public space and land ownership, which can limit the flexibility and speed of activation of projects. Further difficulties concern the **long-term sustainability of initiatives**, the **lack of consolidated micro-financing tools**, and the **need to strengthen administrative capacities** to support more operational participatory processes. Finally, the **physical conditions of some urban areas**, in particular large residential complexes, represent a further element of complexity, requiring interventions capable of combining physical regeneration and social activation.

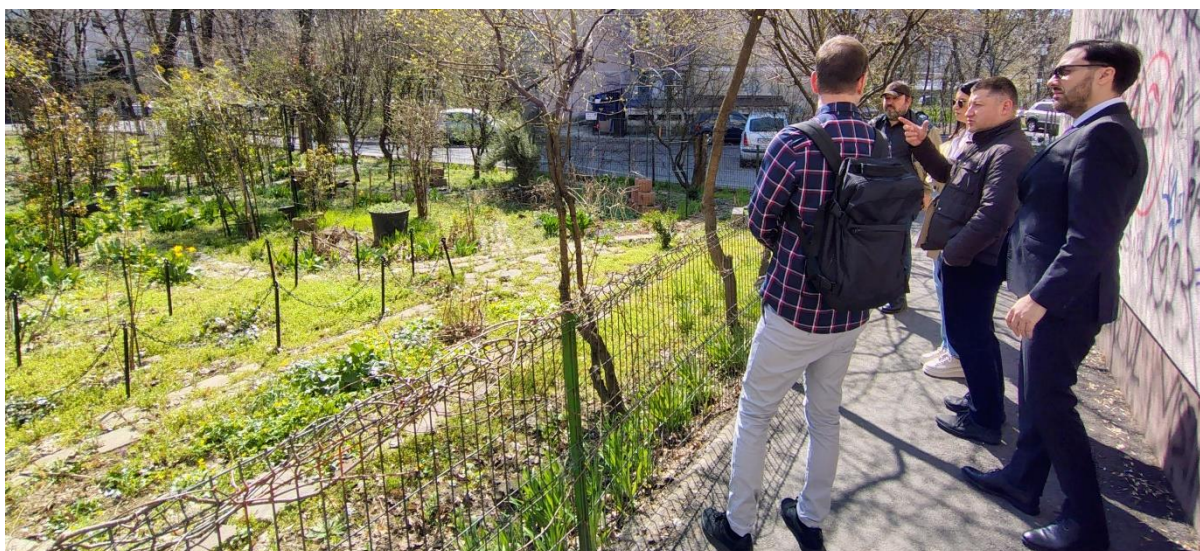
2.2.6 Transfer expectations and needs

The participation of Bucharest District 6 in the We Create Space Network is driven by the **willingness to consolidate the transition** from a model of urban regeneration based on large investments to a more capillary, flexible and **activation-oriented approach** to public space on a daily basis, punctuating the district with micro-interventions. In particular, the district intends to **develop operational tools** capable of actively involving citizens and local stakeholders in the phases of ideation, implementation, and management of interventions. Among the main priorities are the structuring of open call mechanisms, the activation of urban micro-spaces and the experimentation of light solutions according to the principle of “test before invest”, with the aim of making the process of urban transformation more dynamic and adaptive.

Specific needs also emerge related to the **definition of collaborative governance models**, the management of regulatory constraints and the possibility of introducing micro-financing tools, currently poorly developed in the local context. The district is also interested in **strengthening its competences** in terms of project support, monitoring and learning, to ensure continuity and sustainability to the activated initiatives.



At the same time, Bucharest District 6 can contribute to the Network by bringing the **experience gained in the implementation of large-scale interventions** and in the **management of complex projects**, as well as a particularly significant urban context to experiment the **transition from macro to micro** scale. The presence of **spontaneous practices of civic activation** also represents an added value, offering fertile ground to test more structured and replicable engagement models.



2.3 Koszalin



2.3.1 Introduction

Koszalin is a medium-sized city located in north-western Poland, in the West Pomeranian Voivodeship, **close to the Baltic Sea** coast. With a population of 105,143 inhabitants (2024) and an area of approximately 106 km², the city represents an important **administrative and functional hub for the surrounding territory**, also playing a coordinating role within the Koszalin–Kołobrzeg–Białogard functional area. The **governance system is strongly centred** at the municipal level, supported by forms of intermunicipal cooperation mainly linked to the management of European funds and integrated policies.

Koszalin

Number of inhabitants	Area	Facts
105,143	106 km ²	Administrative and functional hub for the surrounding territory, also playing a coordinating role within the Koszalin–Kołobrzeg–Białogard functional area

From a socio-demographic perspective, Koszalin faces particularly critical structural dynamics. The city has recorded a **negative natural growth rate** for years and a progressive **ageing of the population**: the share of residents of post-working age has reached approximately 28.8%, while the average age exceeds 45 years, significantly above the national average. This is accompanied by a negative migration balance, particularly linked to the **outflow of young people** towards metropolitan areas, alongside processes of suburbanisation. At the same time, an increasing **diversification of the population** can be observed, with the stable presence of foreign residents, particularly from Ukraine, contributing to reshaping the city's social profile.

From an economic perspective, Koszalin presents a relatively dynamic structure, characterised by a **high presence of micro and small enterprises** and a relatively low unemployment rate. However, the economic system remains weakly diversified and **highly fragmented**, with a limited presence of large industrial actors and a significant role of the public sector as an employer. **The cultural sector is active** and structured, supported by consolidated institutions and a local strategy aimed at promoting citizens as producers of cultural content, although there is still considerable **room for development in bottom-up initiatives** and creative ecosystems.

In recent years, the city has undertaken a **strategic planning** path oriented towards urban sustainability and regeneration, through instruments such as the “#Koszalin2030” development strategy and the Municipal Revitalisation Programme. However, implemented interventions have mainly focused on infrastructural projects and **top-down initiatives**, with uneven results in terms of social activation and use of space. The city centre, in particular, is experiencing a gradual weakening of commercial and social functions, further aggravated by the growth of peripheral commercial centres and the presence of underused or unattractive public spaces, such as the main square, which is located along a major traffic axis and is currently undergoing a major redevelopment process. The existing dual carriageway is being progressively reduced, with the introduction of cycling infrastructure, wider pedestrian areas and an increased presence of greenery.



The main urban and social challenges therefore concern the need to counteract the loss of vitality in the city centre, improve the quality and attractiveness of public spaces and, above all, strengthen the active involvement of citizens in urban transformation processes.

Despite the presence of established participatory tools, such as participatory budgeting and funding programmes for NGOs, the **level of civic participation remains limited** and often concentrated among already active groups. In this context, there is a **strong need to develop more inclusive and accessible models** capable of activating new social energies and making the city more liveable, cohesive and resilient.



2.3.2 Policy framework referring to the GP transfer

Koszalin's urban policy framework is characterised by a **solid strategic base** and a fair level of integrated planning capacity, with a growing focus on urban regeneration, quality of life and citizen involvement. Among the main references is the “**#Koszalin2030**” **development strategy**, which defines the city's long-term priorities, including strengthening social cohesion, improving public spaces and promoting a more sustainable and inclusive urban model. This is complemented by the **Municipal Revitalisation Programme**, which identifies specific intervention areas (particularly in the city centre) and promotes integrated actions aimed at tackling physical and social degradation by combining infrastructural interventions with social and cultural initiatives.



This instrument represents one of the main points of connection with the Ostrava Good Practice, as it recognises public space as a key lever for urban regeneration and community building.

An important component of the local framework is also represented by existing participatory tools, such as **participatory budgeting** and **funding schemes** for civil society organisations. In particular, the **NGO grant system** provides structured support for local initiatives, although it is often oriented towards sectoral projects and **not directly linked to public space activation**. At the same time, civic participation, while formally structured, tends to involve a limited number of actors, highlighting the need for more inclusive and accessible models.

Koszalin is also embedded in a broader framework of European and national policies oriented towards sustainable urban development, through **participation in programmes such as URBACT and other EU-funded initiatives**. In this context, intermunicipal cooperation within the **Koszalin–Kołobrzeg–Białogard functional area represents an additional governance layer**, supporting the development of integrated strategies at a wider territorial scale.



Despite this solid strategic framework and the availability of planning and funding tools, a gap remains between policy design and the actual capacity to activate bottom-up processes and foster citizens' appropriation of public spaces.

In this sense, the Ostrava Good Practice represents an opportunity to bridge this gap by introducing operational tools capable of making community involvement more concrete, accessible and widespread in urban transformation processes.



2.3.3 Key stakeholders involved

Koszalin's local governance is characterised by a well-structured administrative system, with the municipality playing a central role in strategic planning and policy implementation. In particular, the Department of Cooperation and Strategy is a key actor, with responsibilities in managing European projects, coordinating urban strategies and building partnerships at both local and international levels. Alongside this, other municipal departments contribute to policy implementation, often operating in sectoral silos but with **increasing attention to interdepartmental coordination**, especially within revitalisation and urban development programmes.

The local stakeholder system includes **a broad network of public actors, cultural institutions, NGOs and third-sector organisations**, which mainly play a role in implementing projects and initiatives funded through public calls. The cultural sector, in particular, is well structured and capable of activating initiatives on the ground, contributing to urban vitality and the construction of local identities.

Within the project framework, the **Urban Local Group (ULG) represents a strategic tool to strengthen coordination among these actors and broaden participation**. It can support the transition from a predominantly institutional and project-based model towards **a more open and collaborative system**, capable of involving citizens, informal groups and local communities in the activation and management of public spaces.

2.3.4 GP modules to be transferred

In the case of Koszalin, the transfer of the Ostrava Good Practice is not primarily about introducing entirely new tools, but **rather about reorganising and strengthening existing mechanisms** in order to make them more effective in activating public space and engaging citizens.

OPEN CALLS

The city already has a solid base, particularly in terms of funding systems such as **NGO grants and participatory budgeting**. However, these tools are often fragmented, sectoral and not sufficiently oriented towards the concrete transformation of urban spaces. In this context, the open calls module plays a central role, as it can **help structure bottom-up activation processes** in a clearer and more accessible way, directly linked to places and community needs. This approach will also be tested through the planned Test action, which foresees a call for proposals

inviting residents to submit ideas for small-scale neighbourhood public space improvements implemented together with local communities and NGOs.

MICRO-FINANCING MODULE

In continuity with this approach, the micro-financing module can represent an **evolution of existing instruments**, making them more flexible and capable of **supporting small-scale, rapid and experimental interventions**. This is particularly relevant for broadening the range of beneficiaries, including not only structured organisations but also informal groups and individual citizens.

ADMINISTRATIVE FACILITATION

Administrative facilitation is another key element of the transfer. Despite strong institutional capacity, the local system shows a certain procedural rigidity that can hinder bottom-up initiatives. The introduction of support and simplification mechanisms can therefore ease access to processes and improve implementation efficiency. At the same time, **space activation represents one of the most strategic areas for Koszalin**, especially in the city centre and in underused spaces. Light, temporary and low-cost interventions can contribute to reactivating these areas, generating new social dynamics and improving the perceived quality of the urban environment. The planned Test action is expected to provide practical experience in implementing such small-scale participatory interventions supported by social animation and community engagement activities.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & PROMOTION AND MONITORING AND LEARNING

Finally, the modules related to community engagement and monitoring and learning are essential to strengthen a currently limited level of participation and to build a more structured system of evaluation and continuous improvement over time. In this sense, the objective is not only to activate new projects, but to develop a widespread capacity for co-creation and management of public spaces. The transfer of the Ostrava modules can therefore help bridge the gap between institutional potential and effective participation, fostering a more dynamic and inclusive model of urban activation.

2.3.5 Assets and barriers

Koszalin presents a relatively **solid institutional base, with good strategic planning capacity** and consolidated **experience in managing European funds** and urban programmes. Among the main assets are existing tools such as participatory budgeting and funding schemes for civil society organisations, as well as a dynamic

cultural sector and a network of local actors capable of supporting local initiatives. The availability of public spaces, particularly in the city centre, also represents a concrete opportunity for the activation of light regeneration interventions.

At the same time, several **significant barriers** emerge. These include a **low level of civic participation**, often limited to already active groups, and difficulties in engaging a broader and more diverse population. **Administrative rigidity and fragmentation of existing tools** further reduce overall effectiveness. From a socio-demographic perspective, **population decline and ageing** represent additional critical factors affecting urban vitality and the capacity for community activation.

2.3.6 Transfer expectations and needs

Koszalin participates in We Create Space with the objective of making existing tools more effective and accessible, developing a more integrated approach oriented towards public space activation. In particular, the **city aims to strengthen its capacity to engage citizens** in a more inclusive and continuous way, overcoming a currently limited and uneven level of participation.



Key needs include simplifying administrative processes, improving access to funding for less structured actors and developing operational methodologies capable of activating small-scale interventions in a rapid and effective way.

The planned Testing action will serve as an opportunity to test these methodologies in practice through resident-led neighbourhood improvement activities and cooperation with local NGOs providing community animation support.

At the same time, Koszalin is **interested in building a structured monitoring and learning system**, able to capitalise on experiences and progressively improve local policies.



In this context, the city can contribute to the Network by sharing its experience in managing public funding instruments and strategic planning, offering a valuable case for testing the integration between administrative capacity and more dynamic models of participation and urban activation.

2.4 Pescara



2.4.1 Introduction

Pescara is a medium-sized city **located on the Adriatic coast**, with approximately 119,000 inhabitants over an area of 33.5 km². Characterized by a linear urban structure developed along the waterfront and the Pescara River, the city serves as an urban hub for a wider area and is currently **undergoing institutional integration with the neighboring municipalities of Montesilvano and Spoltore**. This metropolitan perspective strengthens Pescara's relevance as a territorial node and as a laboratory for new forms of urban governance.

Pescara

Number of inhabitants	Area	Facts
119,000	33.5 km ²	Territorial node with metropolitan perspective and a laboratory for new forms of urban governance.

From a socio-demographic perspective, the city presents a diverse composition, with a **significant presence of young people and students**, alongside a gradual aging of the population. The social fabric is dynamic yet marked by **territorial imbalances**, with a **strong polarization between central areas**, which are more attractive and active, **and peripheral neighborhoods**, which face fewer opportunities, limited services, and social vulnerabilities. The urban context shows a good availability of public spaces, particularly along the coast and main urban axes, but also a widespread presence of underused, mono-functional, or poorly managed spaces.



In recent years, local policies have progressively shifted attention towards the reuse and reactivation of these spaces, with increasing interest in participatory approaches and direct community involvement.

The Fontanelle neighborhood represents an emblematic case in this regard, where social fragilities, public housing, and a lack of services coexist with significant potential for transformation through targeted interventions and co-design processes.

2.4.2 Policy framework referring to the GP transfer

Pescara's urban policy framework is characterized by a gradual shift towards integrated approaches combining urban regeneration, social inclusion, and active

participation. A central reference is the **General Urban Plan (PRG)**, which defines the city's spatial structure and **identifies areas for transformation and regeneration**, including peripheral neighborhoods. Alongside this, the **Municipal Social Plan** plays a key role in **shaping inclusion policies** and support for vulnerable groups, with particular attention to areas such as Fontanelle.

These tools are complemented by programs and **projects developed within European and national initiatives**, including Go.L.E.N.A. (Local Governance for the Empowerment of Adriatic Neighborhoods), which promoted urban regeneration interventions with strong youth involvement, and TEENace, focused on activating youth workers and strengthening youth participation. These experiences have contributed to building an operational base oriented towards co-design and the experimentation of more inclusive intervention models.

In terms of participatory tools, the city has **implemented participatory budgeting**, along with initiatives such as *Parchi in Comune* and youth engagement and information services. However, these tools remain partially fragmented and not always capable of generating lasting impact, especially in more fragile contexts.



2.4.3 Key stakeholders involved

Project governance in Pescara is based on collaboration between public administration, social services, third-sector organizations and local actors, with a **strong centrality of social policies in coordinating activities**. Alongside the local administration, the stakeholder system includes an active network of third-sector organizations, social cooperatives, local associations, and operators working within neighborhoods, particularly in the Fontanelle area. These actors play a key role in community activation, service provision, and the identification of local needs, thereby building a direct link between public policies and the territory.

The Urban Local Group is embedded within this ecosystem, with the aim of **strengthening coordination among institutional actors and the local community** and structuring co-design processes more effectively.

2.4.4 GP modules to be transferred

In the case of Pescara, the transfer of the Ostrava Good Practice represents an opportunity to structure and systematize **tools that have already been partially tested locally**, integrating them into a more coherent and continuous operational model.

OPEN CALLS

The open calls module is considered particularly relevant for strengthening bottom-up activation and **involving a wider range** of citizens, associations, and informal groups, especially in peripheral neighborhoods.

MICRO-FINANCING MODULE

Closely related is the micro-financing module, which represents a key element in concretely **supporting local initiatives** and enabling the implementation of small-scale projects.

SPACE ACTIVATION MODULE

The space activation module plays a central role, as it directly responds to the **need to reuse and enhance underused areas**, particularly in peripheral zones. The “test before invest” principle is also highly relevant, allowing low-cost solutions to be tested before larger structural investments. This approach is particularly suitable in a context characterized by administrative constraints and limited resources, enabling greater flexibility and adaptability.

COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The collaborative governance and community engagement & promotion module builds on existing experiences but requires further strengthening to **ensure more inclusive and continuous participation**, particularly among young people and hard-to-reach groups.

MONITORING AND LEARNING MODULE

Finally, the monitoring and learning module represents an important area for development, aiming to **systematize evaluation processes** and build a continuous learning framework capable of progressively improving the effectiveness of interventions.

2.4.5 Assets and barriers

Pescara presents several relevant assets for the transfer of the Good Practice, including an active administrative structure in the social field and a well-established Network of third-sector actors. The presence of initiatives already developed in participation, inclusion, and urban regeneration provides a concrete basis for building more structured tools. Among the main barriers are administrative and procedural constraints that slow down implementation, as well as difficulties in ensuring continuity and long-term sustainability of initiatives. In addition, there are challenges in engaging local communities in a stable way, particularly in peripheral areas and among more vulnerable groups.

2.4.6 Transfer expectations and needs

Pescara participates in the Network to strengthen its **capacity to activate and manage public spaces** through more structured, continuous tools. In particular, the city intends to develop models based on open calls, micro-financing, and small-scale interventions, while improving coordination among actors and the long-term sustainability of actions. Key needs include

- strengthening operational capacities,
- simplifying administrative processes,
- and developing effective tools for community engagement, particularly for young people.



At the same time, Pescara can contribute to the Network by sharing its experience in integrating social policies with urban regeneration, offering a useful context for testing models focused on inclusion and community-based services.

2.5 Niš



2.5.1 Introduction

Niš is one of the main cities in southern Serbia, with approximately 249,500 inhabitants over a territory of nearly 600 km². As the **administrative, economic and cultural centre** of the Nišava District, the city plays a strategic role at the regional level, acting as a hub for students, workers and business activities, also thanks to the presence of universities and an evolving economic fabric.

Niš, Serbia

Number of inhabitants	Area	Facts
249,500	600 km ²	Administrative, economic and cultural centre of the Nišava District

From a demographic perspective, Niš shows a structure in line with the national context, with a **significant share of the population of working age** (around 65%) and a **still relevant youth component**, although accompanied by ageing dynamics and youth migration towards larger cities or abroad. This reflects a phase of socio-economic transition, in which the city is progressively diversifying its development model, with increasing **attention to creative, cultural and innovation sectors**.

The urban context is characterised by the widespread presence of public spaces and interstitial areas, particularly in residential inter-block spaces, originally conceived as places of social interaction and proximity green areas but now often underused or lacking a clear function. Alongside these, Niš has a significant historical and cultural heritage, offering considerable **potential for the activation of temporary uses** and cultural initiatives.



The main urban challenges concern the **fragmentation** of interventions on public space, the lack of structured participation tools and the **limited involvement** of local communities in decision-making processes.

Currently, regeneration actions are often **episodic and uncoordinated**, with a limited capacity to generate a sense of belonging and shared management of spaces. In this context, Niš is in an initial (yet aware) phase of evolution towards more participatory models, with the aim of transforming underused urban spaces into active and community-oriented places. We Create Space therefore represents a concrete opportunity to **introduce operational tools** capable of structuring co-creation

processes, strengthening civic participation and building more sustainable models of public space management.

2.5.2 Policy framework referring to the GP transfer

The urban policy framework of Niš is characterised by a good capacity to access and manage **national and European programmes**, with a growing focus on issues such as sustainable mobility, ecological transition and integrated territorial development. Among the main strategic references is the **Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan** (SUMP 2023–2037), which defines the development directions for sustainable urban mobility, together with a series of **programmes funded by European and international institutions**, such as the project “Be ready – Urban heat islands, resilience, preparedness and mitigation strategy” (Interreg Danube), SMARTMOBAIR (Interreg ADRION) and Green Urban Oases – Model for climate-adaptive and resilient schools and kindergartens (funded by the Swiss Government in cooperation with the Government of Serbia within the UN programme “PRO – Local governance for people and nature”) which strengthen the focus on climate resilience and urban innovation. At a broader territorial scale, tools such as the **Integrated territorial investment** (ITI) strategy and the **Development strategy for the urban area of Niš and surrounding municipalities** represent attempts to build an approach to urban and metropolitan development, albeit in the absence of a fully formalised metropolitan governance. These tools foster coordination across different administrative and sectoral levels, creating a favourable context for the experimentation of innovative interventions.

At the same time, the municipality has developed a more than **solid experience in managing projects** related to urban regeneration, social inclusion and the enhancement of cultural heritage, as demonstrated by initiatives related to energy efficiency, the upgrading of vulnerable settlements and the development of urban and cultural infrastructures.



However, despite this project capacity and the presence of consolidated planning tools, there is a certain lack of policies and instruments specifically oriented towards the active participation of citizens in the transformation of public space.

Existing tools, such as registers and maintenance plans for green areas, are mainly **technical and managerial in nature**, with limited involvement of local communities. The Good Practice from Ostrava fits in as a complementary and innovative element, capable of filling this gap through the introduction of operational tools that make it

possible to integrate existing policies with a more structured and action-oriented participatory dimension.



2.5.3 Key stakeholders involved

Local governance in Niš is based on a **structured institutional framework**, with a strong central role of the municipal administration and a growing involvement of external actors, particularly within European projects. The Municipality of Niš plays a coordinating role through several departments, including those responsible for urban planning, environmental protection, investments and local development. In particular, the City Administration for local economic development and investments represents a key actor, with competencies in the management of international projects and partnership building, acting as a bridge between local policies and European programmes.

Alongside the administration, there is a **stakeholder system** composed of public institutions, businesses, universities, civil society organisations and non-governmental organisations, which **mainly participate within specific projects** rather than through permanent collaborative governance structures. The presence of

the University of Niš and research centres constitutes an additional support in terms of expertise and innovation. However, the **involvement of citizens and local communities remains limited and poorly structured**, with participation mainly taking place in a consultative form or linked to individual initiatives. At present, **there aren't stable co-design platforms or consolidated models** of continuous collaboration between administration and citizens in the management of public space.

The Urban Local Group (ULG) envisaged within the project is configured as a strategic tool to strengthen this dimension, creating a space for coordination between administration, stakeholders and communities.



For this reason, the transfer of the Good Practice represents an opportunity to evolve from a predominantly institutional and project-based model towards a more open, participatory and bottom-up co-creation-oriented system.

2.5.4 GP modules to be transferred

The transfer of the Good Practice from Ostrava represents the introduction of a largely innovative model in a context where tools for participation and public space activation, as already highlighted, are still poorly structured.

OPEN CALLS

The open calls module plays a central role, as it enables the **activation of bottom-up ideas and projects**, offering for the first time a **systematic tool** to involve citizens, informal groups and local organisations in the transformation of urban space. This approach directly responds to the need to overcome predominantly top-down intervention methods.

MICRO-FUNDING MODULE

Closely connected is the micro-funding module, which can provide the financial support necessary to **initiate small-scale interventions**, making the proposals emerging from the calls concretely feasible and fostering the activation of local communities.

ADMINISTRATIVE FACILITATION

The administrative facilitation module is particularly relevant, as the **local context is characterised by complex procedures and limited operational flexibility**. The introduction of support and simplification mechanisms can help make implementation processes more accessible and faster.

SPACE ACTIVATION

Space activation represents another priority area, especially in relation to **inter-block spaces and underused areas**, which offer significant potential for temporary and incremental interventions capable of generating new forms of social interaction and urban use.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & PROMOTION

The community engagement module is essential to build a more solid and continuous participation base, overcoming episodic consultation and promoting more structured co-creation processes.

MONITORING AND LEARNING

Finally, the monitoring and learning module appears as a driver to support the introduction of these tools, enabling the evaluation of the effects of implemented actions and the progressive development of local capacity for adaptation and continuous improvement.

2.5.5 Assets and barriers

Niš presents some significant assets, including

- **a good administrative capacity** in managing European projects,
- the presence of academic institutions
- and a local system open to international cooperation.

The availability of underused public spaces also represents a concrete opportunity to experiment with urban activation interventions.

Among the main barriers, however, are the **limited diffusion** of participatory practices, the **absence of structured tools for citizen involvement** and the complexity of administrative procedures. This is compounded by **fragmentation** of interventions and a weak culture of co-management of public spaces.

2.5.6 Transfer expectations and needs

Niš participates in the Network with the aim of **developing tools** for public space activation and community engagement, introducing intervention models that have so far been little used.

Among the main needs identified are the strengthening of operational capacities, the **simplification** of administrative processes and the development of a more **structured culture of participation**.



At the same time, Niš can contribute to the Network by bringing its experience in managing complex projects and building partnerships, offering an ideal context to test the introduction of innovative models in an early stage of development.



2.6 Granollers City Council



2.6.1 Introduction

Granollers is a medium-sized city located in the Catalan region, about 30 km from Barcelona, within the **Barcelona Metropolitan Region**. With a population of around 67.000 inhabitants distributed over 14.87 km², Granollers is characterised by a compact urban structure and a **relatively high density**, making it a relevant **territorial node** for a wider area beyond its administrative boundaries. Thanks to its position along the Barcelona–Vic corridor and the presence **of strong infrastructural connections** (road and rail), the city plays the role of a hub for services, industry, commerce, culture and education.

Granollers, Spain

Number of inhabitants	Area	Facts
67.000	14.87 km ²	Hub for services, industry, commerce, culture and education within the Barcelona Metropolitan Region

From a socio-demographic perspective, Granollers shows **moderate population growth**, with **increasing cultural diversity** (around 25% of residents are of foreign origin) and **progressive ageing** (over 19% of the population is over 65). These dynamics generate significant **challenges in terms of social inclusion**, accessibility and cohesion among different groups, with particular attention to **territorial inequalities** concentrated in peripheral areas and neighborhoods with a higher presence of vulnerable populations. From an economic point of view, the city presents a system in which the **industrial sector maintains a central role** (particularly in the metalworking, chemical and logistics sectors), alongside the growing importance of services, commerce and education.



The administration has expressed **a strong commitment to the development of cultural and creative industries**, considered a strategic area for economic growth and the enhancement of urban identity.

In recent years, Granollers has undertaken a structured strategic planning path, based on tools such as the **3rd Strategic Development Plan** and on a **comprehensive set of urban policies** oriented towards sustainability, participation and the green transition. In this context, the city has **solid experience in**

participatory processes, including participatory budgeting, urban co-design initiatives and educational and cultural programmes that actively involve citizens, schools and local associations.

Despite this capacity, some critical issues emerge that represent the starting point for involvement in the We Create Space Network.



The difficulty in ensuring truly **inclusive and representative participation** (capable of involving different groups by age, origin and socio-economic condition) limits the effectiveness of activated processes.

At the same time, the complexity of urban transformations requires greater **coordination between departments** and a more integrated capacity to address challenges in a cross-cutting way. The We Create Space project therefore represents an opportunity to develop structured, inclusive and replicable models, particularly with regard to **regeneration and activation interventions** in strategic urban areas, such as the neighbourhood of Sant Miquel.

2.6.2 Policy framework referring to the GP transfer

The urban policy framework of Granollers is characterised by a high level of structuring and integration, with a clear centrality given to participation, sustainability and collaborative governance. This orientation is reflected in a series of tools that constitute a favourable context for the implementation of the Good Practice from Ostrava: at the **local level**, a key reference is the **3rd Strategic Development Plan of Granollers**, which defines a long-term vision based on social inclusion, innovation, environmental sustainability and economic development. The plan explicitly promotes the **strengthening of citizen participation in decision-making processes**, where participation is not treated as an episodic tool, but as **a structural component** of urban governance.

Alongside strategic planning, the city has **developed consolidated operational tools**, including participatory budgeting, now in several editions, which allows citizens to directly contribute to defining public spending priorities. This tool represents one of the most concrete **examples of integration between public policies and direct community involvement**, providing a solid basis for introducing more advanced bottom-up activation models.

From a thematic perspective, Granollers' urban policies are **consistent with the objectives of We Create Space**, particularly with regard to the promotion of inclusive public spaces, sustainable urban regeneration and the strengthening of social

cohesion. At the same time, there is a need to improve integration among existing tools and to strengthen the link between participation and the concrete implementation of interventions: the introduction of the Good Practice modules represents an opportunity to evolve from a consolidated participation system to **a more operational and systemic model**, in which citizen involvement translates into concrete and replicable actions.



2.6.3 Key stakeholders involved

The governance of the project in Granollers is based on **a collaborative structure** between the administration, local actors and the community, within a context characterised by a **strong participatory culture and high institutional capacity**. The central role is played by the Granollers City Council, which coordinates the process and ensures integration between different urban policies. Alongside the institutional component, there is a **structured network of local stakeholders**, composed of associations, civil society organisations, educational institutions, cultural operators and economic actors. These actors are **already involved in various participatory processes** promoted by the administration, actively contributing to the definition and implementation of urban initiatives. The presence of a strong and organised associative fabric represents a fundamental asset for the project. Another relevant role is played by the education system, with the involvement of schools and institutions participating in civic education programmes and co-design processes, fostering the inclusion of younger generations in decision-making pathways.

The operational structure of the **Urban Local Group (ULG)** fits into this active ecosystem and is configured as a coordination space between the administration and stakeholders, with the aim of strengthening the collaborative and operational dimension of processes. Nevertheless, there is a **need to improve the inclusiveness and representativeness of the actors involved**, particularly with regard to young people, migrant populations and social groups less active in participatory processes.

2.6.4 GP modules to be transferred

In the context of Granollers, the transfer of the Good Practice from Ostrava is configured as an evolution and **strengthening of practices already partially in place**, particularly in the field of participation and urban governance.

OPEN CALLS

Among the modules considered most relevant, the open calls module emerges first, seen as **a tool capable of structuring and expanding already active participatory processes**. Granollers has consolidated experiences, such as participatory budgeting, but is interested in developing more flexible and targeted activation methods, capable of **engaging new actors** and fostering diversified and inclusive participation.

COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE MODULE

A second central area concerns the collaborative governance module: the objective is to strengthen **coordination** between internal departments and improve integration **between the administration and stakeholders**, overcoming sometimes fragmented participation. In this sense, the Good Practice provides tools to clarify roles, responsibilities and operational methods of the actors involved.

SPACE ACTIVATION

The module related to micro-interventions and space activation is also considered relevant, particularly for testing punctual actions in specific neighbourhoods such as Sant Miquel. However, compared to other cities in the Network, this **module takes on a complementary role**, functional to testing and operationalising participatory processes rather than responding to a structural lack of spaces.

MONITORING AND LEARNING

Another element of interest concerns the monitoring and learning module, which can **support the city in making the evaluation of participatory practices** more systematic and in capitalising on experiences ex post.

Conversely, some modules present greater **difficulties of adaptation**. In particular, the issue of micro-funding clashes with administrative and regulatory constraints

that limit flexibility in resource management, while the “test before invest” principle is less rooted in the local context, where **more planned approaches prevail**, less oriented towards incremental experimentation.

2.6.5 Assets and barriers

Granollers presents a set of conditions particularly favourable for the transfer of the Good Practice. Among the main assets are strong administrative capacity, extensive experience in participatory processes and a consolidated network of active local stakeholders.

The presence of already structured tools, such as **participatory budgeting** and **strategic planning processes**, provides a very solid basis on which to integrate the Ostrava modules. This is complemented by a widespread culture of participation and a good capacity for coordination between departments, which facilitates the integration of urban policies.

On the side of barriers, the main critical issues concern the **effectiveness and inclusiveness of some local tools**: in particular, there is difficulty in engaging a broader diversity of the population, including young people, migrants and less active groups. Added to this are administrative and regulatory constraints that limit the introduction of more flexible tools, such as micro-funding, and a certain rigidity in decision-making processes that may hinder experimental and incremental approaches.

2.6.6 Transfer expectations and needs

Granollers participates in the We Create Space Network with the aim of evolving from a consolidated participation system to a more structured, inclusive and action-oriented model. The city intends to strengthen tools such as open calls and develop more effective collaborative governance models, capable of actively involving a wider variety of actors. Among the main needs identified are strengthening internal coordination and introducing tools that make it easier to move from planning to action.



At the same time, Granollers can contribute to the Network by sharing its experience in managing participatory processes and building integrated urban policies, offering an advanced governance model on which to test the evolution towards replicable approaches.



2.7 City profile: at the glance

Based on the city profiles described above, the **specific characteristics of each city** have been outlined here in a schematic way through illustrative tables, taking into account the “**Participatory maturity table**” (with score), the modules each city has identified for transfer (and their level of interest), and the “Reciprocal learning and contribution”.

Table 5: Participatory maturity table (with score)

CITY	SCORE (1-10)	LEVEL	KEY ELEMENTS	MAIN GAPS
OSTRAVA (LP)	8	High	Structured open calls system, strong bottom-up activation	Activate new communities
GRANOLLERS CITY COUNCIL	7	Medium	Advanced participatory governance, strong local Network	Systematisation and scaling
ROUEN METROPOLE	7	Medium	Active participatory processes	Community activation
PESCARA	6	Medium	Local experiences, strong social component	Fragmentation
BUCHAREST D6	6	Medium	Administrative capacity, strong investments	Weakly bottom up approach
KOSZALIN	6	Medium	Structured grants and participatory budgeting	Low effective participation
NIŠ	6	Medium-low	Existing micro grant schemes	Lack of structured tools

The index is built on four dimensions (with equal weight):

1. Presence of participatory tools
2. Quality and inclusiveness of participation
3. Integration within urban policies
4. Capacity for real activation of public space

Table 6: Modules & cities

CITY	OPEN CALLS	MICRO-FINANCING	ADMIN FACILITATION	SPACE ACTIVATION	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & PROMOTION	MONITORING
GRANOLLERS CITY COUNCIL	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
ROUEN METROPOLE	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓
PESCARA	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
BUCHAREST D6	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓
KOSZALIN	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
NIŠ	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓

✓ = Relevant – the module is considered useful and applicable within the local context, but it is not among the main priorities of the transfer process;

✓✓ = Highly relevant – the module represents a significant area of interest for the city and is expected to play an important role in the local adaptation of the Good Practice.

✓✓✓ = Priority – the module is identified as a strategic priority for the city and constitutes one of the core components to be explored, adapted and potentially implemented during the transfer process.

Project: Parish garden in Ostrava-Heřmanice



Table 7: Reciprocal learning & contributions

CITY	WHAT IT CAN TEACH	WHAT IT CAN LEARN	RELATED MODULES
OSTRAVA (LP)	Building an integrated system; management of open calls and micro-grants; administrative facilitation	Adapting the model to different contexts; refinement of the practice; translation at metropolitan scale	All modules
GRANOLLERS CITY COUNCIL	Advanced participatory governance; integration of participation into policies; structured stakeholder engagement	Strengthening the operational dimension (testing, concrete activation); scaling of models	Community engagement and promotion module; Monitoring and learning module
ROUEN METROPOLE	Translating urban policies into operational tools; working on public space, green revitalization, participatory processes	Structuring participatory processes; increasing operational capacity and concrete tools	Open calls module; Community engagement and promotion module; Administrative facilitation module
PESCARA	Social activation in fragile contexts; working with vulnerable communities; integration between social policies and public space	Structuring tools; continuity and coordination of actions	Space activation module; Micro-grants module; Community engagement and promotion module
BUCHAREST – DISTRICT 6	Management of large-scale interventions; urban transformation in complex contexts; investment capacity	Bottom-up activation; micro-scale approach; community involvement	Space activation module; Open calls module; Administrative facilitation module
KOSZALIN	Administrative capacity; management of funds and grant schemes; strategic planning	Strengthening participation; community activation; operational flexibility	Micro-grants module; Open calls module; Community engagement and promotion module
NIŠ	System building; digital approach to placemaking, the use of media to disseminate projects; essential approach	Introduction of structured tools; governance; comprehensive operational models	Community engagement and promotion module; Space activation module; Open calls module



3 TRANSFER PLAN

3.1 Introduction

Based on the analysis developed in the previous sections, the We Create Space Transferability Plan now moves from the description of the Good Practice and local contexts to the definition of a shared **methodology for its transfer and adaptation**. While Section 1 outlined the fundamental components and evolution of the Ostrava Good Practice, and Section 2 provided a detailed overview of the contexts, capacities and needs of the partner cities, this section focuses on **how the transfer process** will be structured and implemented within the Network.

The **diversity of the partnership** represents the starting point of this phase. As highlighted in the city profiles, partner cities present different levels of participatory maturity, institutional capacity and experience in the activation of public spaces. All cities already have participatory frameworks in place and aim to systematise and strengthen their approaches, while some of them are at an early stage and require the introduction of new tools and methodologies. This **heterogeneity constitutes a key element** of the transfer process, fostering mutual learning and the adaptation of the Good Practice to different urban contexts. The transfer of the Good Practice is configured as a **structured pathway**: the modular nature of the practice plays a central role in this approach;



by articulating the Good Practice into a set of interconnected modules, the Network is able to identify, select and adapt specific components according to the needs and conditions of each partner city.

The transfer process will be guided by a **flexible and differentiated methodology**, combining a common framework at Network level with locally adapted pathways. This approach is consistent with the URBACT methodological structure. This document marks the **transition from the Understand phase to the Adapt phase**, and the activities described in this section provide an initial operational framework for how cities will progressively translate the Good Practice into concrete actions, through testing activities, peer exchange and continuous learning.

Particular attention will be given to the role of Urban Local Groups, transnational meetings and testing actions as key tools to support this process. These elements will **facilitate knowledge exchange**, enabling cities to **experiment with small-scale interventions** while progressively building more structured approaches to the activation and management of public spaces.

3.2 Transfer methodology

The transfer methodology of We Create Space is based on an approach that **combines a common framework at Network level with differentiated adaptation pathways at local level.**

Starting from the evidence emerging from the Understand phase, the Network has a shared analytical base, built through the description of the Good Practice, its breakdown into modules and the comparative analysis of partner cities. In particular, the summary tables developed in Section 1 and 2 (relating to participatory maturity, assets and barriers and transfer potential) allow for a structured reading of differences across local contexts and for identifying the main areas of intervention for each city.

The **“modules vs cities”** matrix developed in this document highlights how each partner has identified different priorities, confirming the need for a selective and adaptive approach. In this perspective, transfer does not take place as a single block, but through **the selection of specific modules** or combinations of them, depending on the needs, capacities and level of participatory maturity of each context. The classification of partners according to **levels of readiness and transfer potential** (A, B, C), as summarised in the table below, represents an additional operational reference to guide the work of the Network in the next phase.

Table 8: Reciprocal learning & contributions

CITY	POPULATION	TRANSFER ASSETS	TRANSFER BARRIERS	POTENTIAL	COMMENT
OSTRAVA	284,765	Consolidated GP	Adaptation	A	Benchmark
GRANOLLERS CITY COUNCIL	66,576	High maturity	Scaling	A	Full reuse
ROUEN METROPOLE	Rouen 111,360 (Métropole approx. 500 000)	Citizen participation services	Limited ownership	B	Good adaptation
PESCARA	118,657	Local experiences	Fragmentation	B	To be systematised
BUCHAREST DISTRICT 6	367,760	Strong investments	Top-down approach	B	In transition
KOSZALIN	105,143	Existing tools	Weak participation	B	Good base
NIŠ	249,816	Openness	Low experience	B	Capacity building

- **a – High potential:** cities capable of developing and implementing a comprehensive transfer plan, with the perspective of structured reuse of the Good Practice already during the project.
- **B – Medium potential:** cities with a solid starting point, requiring a process of adaptation and experimentation to achieve partial and progressive reuse of the Good Practice.
- **C – Initial potential:** cities requiring a more structured capacity-building process, focused on the introduction of modules and the creation of basic conditions for transfer.

Partner cities are positioned along a continuum ranging from contexts with high participatory experience to contexts where such tools are still at an early stage, as also highlighted by the participatory maturity table. This differentiation implies the **need to adopt a non-uniform but calibrated methodological approach**. In this sense, the definition of **clusters of cities** with similar characteristics—presented in the comparative tables—constitutes a useful tool for organising targeted activities and fostering more effective exchange among comparable contexts.

From an operational perspective, the methodology is based on a combination of complementary tools and mechanisms.

URBAN LOCAL GROUPS

Urban Local Groups represent the main space for local anchoring of the process, ensuring stakeholder involvement and the co-construction of actions.

TRANSNATIONAL MEETINGS

Transnational meetings, on the other hand, represent key moments of exchange, in which cities share progress, challenges and solutions, contributing to the construction of collective knowledge. These are complemented by more targeted support activities, including thematic workshops, peer review sessions and working sessions dedicated to specific modules or clusters of cities.

Transnational meeting in Koszalin in May 2026



Table 9: Reciprocal learning & contributions

PERIOD	PHASE	FOCUS	ACTIVITIES	TNMS (INDICATIVE)	EXPECTED OUTPUTS
NOV 2025 – MAY 2026	UNDERSTAND	Building the knowledge base	Kick-off meeting; city visits; GP analysis; local data collection; ULG activation; initial workshops	TNM#1 – Ostrava (February 2026), TNM#2 – Koszalin (May 2026)	Baseline Study; City Profiles; definition of modules; initial identification of needs, Network roadmap; Transferability Study (draft and final);
JUN 2026 – NOV 2026	TRANSITION (Understand → Adapt)	Structuring the transfer process	Development of the Transferability Study; definition of modules per city; construction of comparative tables; validation with partners	TNM#3 – Niš (November 2026) + online meeting(s)	Updated Network roadmap; module selection per city; definition of readiness levels
DEC 2026 – JUN 2027	ADAPT Phase 1	Local adaptation	Thematic workshops on modules; cluster-based work; development of Transfer Plans; strengthening of ULGs; Mid-Term Reflection, ad hoc expertise for identified needs	TNM#4 – Granollers (1Q 2027), TNM#5 – Bucharest 6 (2Q 2027); Modules & local adaptation)	Draft local Transfer Plans; definition of testing actions; strengthening of local governance
JUL 2027 – DEC 2027	ADAPT Phase 2	Operational experimentation	Implementation of testing actions; peer review; exchange among cities; technical support on modules; ad hoc expertise for consolidation	TNM #6 – (Pescara 4Q 2027), Testing actions focus)	Testing actions implemented; initial results; operational adjustments; finalisation of local Transfer Plans
JAN 2028 – APR 2028	REUSE	Consolidation and capitalisation	Final peer review; dissemination events; production of final outputs; integration of GP improvements	TNM#7 – (Rouen, Final event & reuse 1Q 2028)	Network Final Report/Product; Improvement Plan; capitalisation of results

TESTING ACTIONS

A central role is played by testing actions, understood as **small-scale experimental interventions** through which cities will be able **to test selected modules** or activate parts of them; these actions represent an **operational learning tool** for the Network, as they make it possible to verify in practice the feasibility of the adopted solutions, collect feedback and progressively adapt approaches. Testing actions will be **integrated into local Transfer Plans**, which will define for each city the objectives, activities, resources and expected outputs of the transfer process. During the Adapt phase, the work of the Network will be oriented towards supporting cities in building these pathways, facilitating the transition from a theoretical understanding of the Good Practice to its concrete application. The process will be accompanied by **continuous monitoring and moments of shared reflection**, which will make it possible to capitalize on experiences and feed into the subsequent Reuse phase, in which the results of the experimentation will be consolidated, systematized and shared more broadly.

A potential **joint Transnational Meeting with the URBACT Network TACTICITY** (where Ostrava and Bucharest District 6 are also project partner cities) could furthermore represent an additional opportunity for **cross-Network learning** and exchange, considering the thematic affinities between the two Networks around tactical urbanism, public space activation and community-led approaches. A shared TNM, hosted by Bucharest District 6, could support the comparison of practices, operational tools and transfer methodologies, further strengthening the European learning dimension of the Network.

A dedicated **Mid-Term Reflection process** will be organised during the Adapt phase of the network journey. This structured reflection exercise will provide an opportunity for partner cities, the Lead Partner and the Lead Expert to **jointly assess progress achieved so far**, review the relevance of the transfer assumptions, identify emerging challenges and opportunities, and reflect on lessons learned from ULG activities, transnational exchange and the preparation of Testing Actions. The process will also support the adjustment of the network roadmap and local transfer pathways where necessary, ensuring that the **second half of the project remains responsive** to the needs of partner cities and **maximises the learning potential** of the transfer process.

The proposed methodology aims to **ensure a balance**

- between structure and flexibility,

- between the transnational dimension and local anchoring,
- between learning and action.

In this sense, the transfer of the Good Practice is not only an exercise in replication but a **dynamic process of co-creation**, in which partner cities actively contribute to its evolution and adaptation. Particular attention throughout the transfer process will also be dedicated to **cross-cutting challenges** such as gender equality and digital transition. In this perspective, the Network will encourage inclusive participation processes, accessible public space activation and the involvement of diverse target groups, while also exploring the role of digital tools, communication platforms and online engagement in supporting community participation, dissemination and collaborative governance practices.

The involvement of **expert profiles**, with external contributions from selected Ad-Hoc experts, will further strengthen the capacity of both cities and the Network. As an example, the Lead Expert (LE) and Lead Partner (LP) have outlined potential skills and profiles to be identified within the URBACT roster.

Project: Park in Ostrava-Plesná, site visit during the Transnational meeting in Ostrava, February 2026



Table 10: Reciprocal learning & contributions

TNM	PHASE	EXPERT PROFILE	SKILLS AND CAPABILITIES	OBJECTIVE DURING THE MEETING
TNM#3 – NIŠ (NOV 2026), POSSIBLE USE OF AN AD-HOC EXPERT	Transition → Adapt	Programme designer / Public innovation expert	Translating ideas into operational models; designing open calls and grant schemes; building simple processes; ability to adapt to different contexts	Supporting the selection and adaptation of modules and clarifying the transfer logic
TNM#4 – GRANOLLERS (1Q 2027) (ADAPT – OPERATIONAL START) WITH AD-HOC EXPERT	Adapt – Phase 1	Tactical urbanism / Placemaking expert	Designing light interventions and their funding options through project budget; temporary use of spaces; rapid activation; working with communities; turning ideas into concrete actions	Facilitating the transition from strategy to action and supporting the launch of testing actions
TNM#5 – BUCHAREST 6 (2Q 2027) (TESTING ACTIONS) WITH AD-HOC EXPERT	Adapt – Phase 2	Urban project implementation / Project manager	Operational project management; planning (timeline, budget); stakeholder coordination; problem-solving; ability to work in complex contexts	Supporting cities in the concrete implementation of testing actions
TNM#6 – PESCARA 4Q 2027 (LEARNING & EVALUATION) WITH AD-HOC EXPERT	Reuse – Phase 1	Monitoring & Evaluation expert (urban/social impact)	Defining simple indicators; collecting qualitative and quantitative data; impact evaluation; reporting results; learning from data	Helping cities understand what works and what needs to be adapted, building a learning system
TNM#7 – ROUEN (1Q 2028) (FINAL), POSSIBLE USE OF AN AD-HOC EXPERT	Reuse – Phase 2	Policy transfer / Scaling expert	Transforming projects into policies; institutionalisation; scaling of models; integration into urban strategies; systemic thinking	Supporting capitalisation and the transition from experimentation to structured policies

3.3 Improvement plan – Lead partner (Ostrava)



Alongside the Transfer Plans developed by the partner cities, the Network represents a strategic opportunity for Ostrava to further strengthen and **evolve its Good Practice** and other existing local grant schemes for participation of inhabitants or communities in public space. Although We Create Space is a consolidated model already widely validated over time and recognised as a URBACT Good Practice, it presents areas for improvement that can be addressed during the project, thanks to exchange with other urban contexts.

EXPANSION OF THE PARTICIPANT BASE

A first direction of development concerns the **expansion of the participant base** and the **strengthening of bottom-up activation**. Despite the success of the programme, the level of active participation remains partially limited compared to the overall potential of the city. The Improvement Plan will therefore be oriented towards **identifying more effective strategies** and tools to engage a broader and more diverse range of citizens, with particular attention to less represented groups. In this sense, the Network will offer Ostrava the opportunity to learn from other cities about innovative approaches in terms of communication, engagement and activation of local communities.

METROPOLITAN DIMENSION

A second key area concerns the **metropolitan dimension**. Currently, the programme is strongly rooted in the urban context of Ostrava but presents **significant potential for extension at a wider scale**. Strengthening cooperation with municipalities in the metropolitan area represents a strategic priority, with the aim of transforming We Create Space into a tool capable of activating participation and regeneration processes beyond the administrative boundaries of the city. In this sense, the Network, and in particular some cities, will be able to support the definition of more open and multi-level governance models, fostering the exchange of practices and mutual learning across territories.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEMS

Another area of improvement concerns the strengthening of **monitoring and evaluation systems**. While the programme is able to measure certain concrete outputs, there is a need to develop more advanced **tools to assess long-term impacts**, particularly in terms of community empowerment, trust-building and the quality of relationships between citizens and the administration. Exchange with partner cities and the introduction of new methodological approaches will make it possible to build a more structured and impact-oriented learning system.

The first direction of development concerns the further evolution and diversification of the programme through the exploration of new types of community-led projects

and experimental approaches to public space activation. While the programme has already demonstrated a strong capacity to support bottom-up initiatives, the **Improvement Plan** will focus on identifying innovative formats and tools capable of broadening the scope and impact of the practice. Attention may be dedicated to themes such as

- tactical urbanism & school streets (inspiration from URBACT Network TactiCity, where Ostrava is project partner city),
- looking for “ideal” budget limit for bottom-up projects,
- potential crowdfunding mechanisms,
- and other non-typical community-led projects.



In this sense, the Network will offer Ostrava the opportunity to learn from partner cities and compare different operational approaches and practices, further enriching the evolution of the Good Practice.

The improvement pathway may also include greater **integration of environmental, digital and gender equality dimensions**, in line with the three cross-cutting challenges of the URBACT programme. These aspects, already present but not yet fully developed, represent an important lever to further align the Good Practice with European priorities and emerging challenges of urban transition.

3.4 Network roadmap and outputs

The roadmap of the We Create Space Network defines the **operational pathway** through which the transfer process will be developed over time, translating the methodology described in the previous section into a coherent sequence of phases, activities and expected results. As summarised in the reference table, the project is structured around transnational meetings, which represent the backbone of European exchange.

UNDERSTAND PHASE

The **Understand phase**, already initiated, has enabled the construction of a shared knowledge base through

- the analysis of the Good Practice,
- the development of city profiles,
- and the identification of modules and local needs,
- producing key outputs such as the Baseline Study and the Transferability Study.

ADAPT PHASE

Building on this foundation, the **Adapt phase** represents the **core of the process** and marks the transition from understanding to action: in this phase, partner cities develop their **Transfer Plans** and **launch testing actions**, i.e. small-scale experimental interventions that allow the selected modules to be tested in practice, verifying their feasibility and collecting feedback for their adaptation.

The entire process is structured around **Transnational Meetings**, which represent the main **milestones** of the Network and function as operational checkpoints where cities present their progress, compare approaches and receive peer feedback, directly contributing to the **evolution of the Transfer Plans**. The outputs of the Adapt phase therefore develop progressively, moving from an initial definition of local plans to their implementation and consolidation, up to the production of concrete results derived from testing actions.

NETWORK OUTPUTS

Throughout the project, **Network outputs** will not be limited to the production of formal documents but will be conceived as operational tools supporting the transfer process. Alongside programme outputs such as the **Transferability Study**, the **Transfer Plans** and the **Network Final Report**, particular importance will be given to outputs generated through **testing actions** and **peer exchange activities**. These will translate into experimental practices, replicable activation models, operational toolkits and tools adapted to local contexts, as well as shared learning among cities. In this sense, the value of outputs will lie not only in their formalisation, but in their ability to concretely support cities in the activation and management of public spaces, contributing to the development of transferable, flexible and adaptable solutions. Outputs will therefore be progressively developed throughout the Network's lifecycle, through a process combining local experimentation and transnational learning, transforming individual city experiences into resources useful for the entire partnership, as well as for other European cities, which will be engaged according to what is outlined in the Communication Plan (next section).

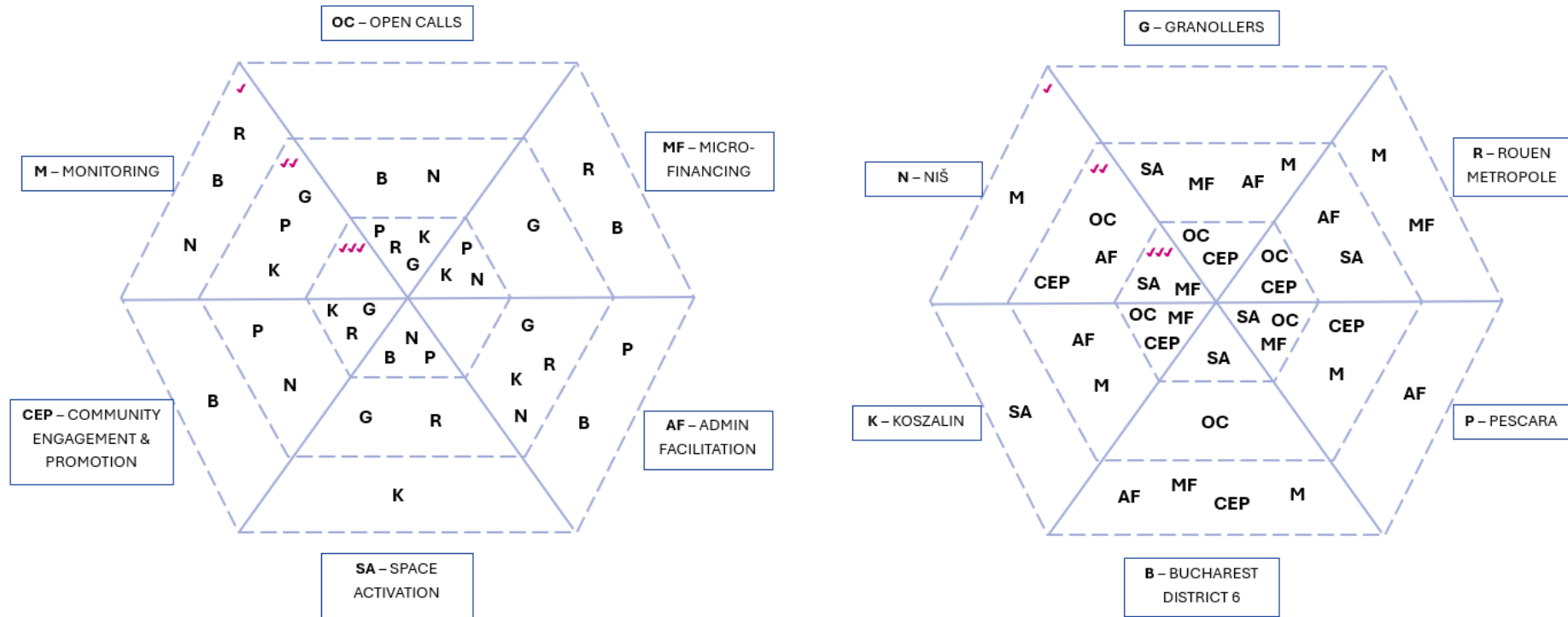
REUSE PHASE

The final **Reuse phase** is dedicated to the **capitalisation and systematisation of the experiences** developed, with the aim of translating the Network's learning into transferable and lasting outputs, including the **Network Final Report** and the **Improvement Plan**, enriching the URBACT programme with new tools for peer learning.

The Network Roadmap

	2025				2026				2027				2028																	
	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
Phase	UNDERSTAND PHASE								ADAPT PHASE								REUSE PHASE													
									Adapt phase 1				Adapt phase 2				Reuse phase 1				Reuse phase 2									
City visits	City visits																													
Transnational meetings and their objectives	TNM #1 Ostrava		TNM #2 Koszalin										TNM #3 Niš		TNM #4 Granollers		TNM #5 Bucharest District 6		TNM #6 Pescara				TNM #7 Rouen							
	Project launch Good Practice presentation		Practical knowledge exchange on effective programme delivery, Good Practice presentation										Supporting the selection and adaptation of modules and clarifying the transfer logic, testing actions introduction		Facilitating the transition from strategy to action and supporting the launch of testing actions, Mid-term reflection process		Supporting cities in the specific implementation of testing actions		Helping cities understand what works and what needs to be adapted, building a learning system				Supporting capitalisation and the transition from experimentation to structured policies, dissemination of the project results on metropolitan level							
ULG meetings					ULG #1 Setup of cooperation, Good Practice introduction				ULG #2, 3, 4, (5) Prototyping, testing, implementation, adaptation								ULG #(5), 6, (7, 8) Evaluation, improvement, transfer metropolitan cooperation													
Activities	Analysis of the Good Practice		Development of city profiles, identification of modules and local needs						Testing actions, focus on learning and transfer, Mid-term reflection process								Implementation, improvement, evaluation				Policy transfer									
Outputs			Communication Plan		Baseline Study, Transferability Study										Drafting of Transfer Plans and Improvement Plan				Booklet of testing actions		Transfer Plans		Improvement Plan		Final report					
Communication																														

The Network Roadmap diagram – aligned with Table 6: Modules & cities



Legend

- ✓ = Relevant – the module is considered useful and applicable within the local context, but it is not among the main priorities of the transfer process;
- ✓✓ = Highly relevant – the module represents a significant area of interest for the city and is expected to play an important role in the local adaptation of the Good Practice.
- ✓✓✓ = Priority – the module is identified as a strategic priority for the city and constitutes one of the core components to be explored, adapted and potentially implemented during the transfer process.

3.5 Communication and learning

Communication activities within the We Create Space Network are conceived as an **integral part of the transfer process** and **as a tool for disseminating results**. In line with the Communication Plan developed by the Lead Partner, communication is structured to

- support peer learning,
- facilitate continuous exchange between cities,
- make visible the progress, experimentation and outcomes of the project throughout its different phases, also beyond the Network itself.

Communication will therefore not be limited to the production of informative content, but will aim to build a shared narrative of the transfer of the Good Practice. Particular attention is given to **highlighting learning processes**, including not only successes but also challenges, failures and elements of adaptation emerging during testing actions, which are recognised as one of the main sources of content and reflection for the project. The communication system is structured on two complementary levels.

NETWORK LEVEL

At Network level, activities are coordinated by the Lead Partner and the Communication Officer and include tools such as the project web page, social media channels (in particular LinkedIn), Core Network Articles and Quarterly Network Journals (produced by the Lead Expert, in cooperation with the Lead Partner), which allow **structured dissemination of Network content and learning towards a broader community of professionals, policymakers and experts**. These are complemented by press releases and visual materials produced in connection with key project moments, in particular Transnational Meetings, which also represent key nodes for communicating results.

LOCAL LEVEL

At the same time, communication at local level is managed by partner cities, which through their institutional channels, local media and Urban Local Group activities contribute to **embedding the transfer process in territorial contexts**, involving stakeholders and the community. In this way, communication acts as a bridge between the transnational and local dimensions, ensuring information flows and facilitating the co-construction of actions.

A central role is played by **communication outputs** linked to Network activities, conceived as dynamic tools for learning and transfer; testing actions will be communicated through accessible and engaging formats, capable of making concrete results visible and transforming local experiences into replicable and transferable models. Similarly, documents such as the **Transfer Plans** and the **Improvement Plan** will represent both final deliverables and key content for disseminating the knowledge developed within the project.

3.6 Conclusions & overall assessment

The We Create Space **Transferability Plan** defines a methodological and operational framework that enables partner cities to adapt the Good Practice of Ostrava in a way that is consistent with their local contexts, while maintaining a shared vision at Network level. The analysis developed in the previous sections has highlighted how **transfer** will take place as a **differentiated pathway of adaptation**, based on the combination of Good Practice modules, local needs and levels of participatory maturity. Partner cities are positioned along a continuum of capacities and starting conditions, reflected in the different levels of **transfer potential** identified (A, B, C).

Some contexts present **favourable conditions for a more complete and structured reuse of the Good Practice**, thanks to greater participatory experience, consolidated institutional support and the presence of already active tools. Others will require **a more gradual pathway**, oriented towards adaptation and experimentation, while in contexts with less experience, transfer will primarily take the **form of a capacity-building process** and the creation of basic enabling conditions.



The **modular nature of the Good Practice** represents the key element that makes it possible to manage this heterogeneity, making the transfer flexible and adaptable: the **process will be based on the selection and combination of modules** according to local specificities. Operational tools such as **Transfer Plans** and **testing actions** will enable this approach to be translated into concrete actions, while the role of Urban Local Groups, Transnational meetings and peer learning activities will ensure a process of exchange and learning among cities.

At the same time, the transfer process presents some **critical conditions** that will need to be carefully addressed during the **Adapt phase**; among these are

- the ability to activate truly inclusive participation, going beyond the involvement of already active groups;
- the need to simplify administrative processes to make tools accessible also to less structured actors;
- and the importance of ensuring continuity of actions over time, avoiding that initiatives remain isolated or episodic.

Additional relevant factors include

- the availability of resources,
- the operational capacities of administrations
- and the degree of integration between urban policies and public space activation practices.

The **Adapt phase** will represent the moment in which this methodological framework will be concretely tested, through the implementation of testing actions and the development of local **Transfer Plans**. The results of this process will feed into the **Reuse phase**, in which the experiences developed will be consolidated and made transferable beyond the boundaries of the Network, contributing to the **development of more effective and replicable models** for the activation and management of public spaces at a wider scale, multiplying the Ostrava experience beyond the Network itself.

Project: Flourishing library in Ostrava-Vitkovice



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