



INNOVATION TRANSFER NETWORK

FINAL NETWORK REPORT



URBACT



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CITISENSE

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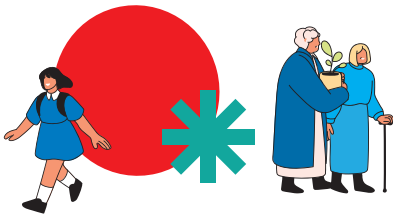


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1. Introduction	3
1.1 Introducing CITISENSE	4
The innovative practice: Be Secure – Feel Secure	4
A network of six, then five	4
2. A two-year journey: from understanding to re-use	5
3. The added value of transnational cooperation	6
3.1 A shared methodology, adapted locally	7
3.2 Structured peer review	8
3.3 A wider ecosystem of practice	9
4. From testing to investing: results at local level	11
4.1 Piraeus – sustaining the BSFS legacy from Tinanios Garden to a citywide plan	11
4.2 Naples – a Collaborative Urban Quality Model	12
4.3 Geel – training citizens, redesigning public space	13
4.4 Liepāja – a Youth Advisory Board and a network of youth centres	14
4.5 Manresa – a Security App, a Data Lake and a tactical intervention plan	15
5. Cross-cutting lessons learned	16
6. Next steps: implementing the Investment Plans	17
6.1 Securing the necessary resources	17
6.2 Safeguarding the Investment Plans over time	17
6.3 Moving from projects to structural policy	17
Closing reflection	17



1. Introduction

Between September 2024 and August 2026, six – and, from spring 2025, five – European cities set out together to test whether a single innovative practice, born in the Greek port city of Piraeus, could be adapted, reshaped and made to work in markedly different urban contexts.

This report closes that journey. It is written for urban policy-makers and practitioners who were not part of CITISENSE but who face similar dilemmas: how to respond to a growing sense of insecurity that persists even as recorded crime falls; how to move beyond policing as the default answer; and how to turn a two-year transnational learning exercise into something that outlives the project itself.

The report introduces the innovative practice and the diversity of the partnership; it demonstrates what transnational cooperation added to the development of each city's Investment and Continuity Plan; it presents the highlights, the results and the difficulties encountered along the way; and it closes by setting out what comes next for each partner after the network formally ends.



Figure 1: CITISENSE First Transnational Meeting in Piraeus, February 2025. Source: Municipality of Piraeus



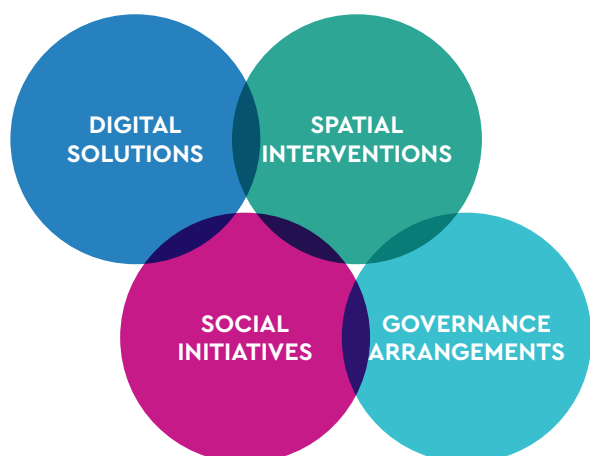
Figure 2: CITISENSE Final Transnational Meeting in Geel, July 2026. Source: Municipality of Geel

1.1 Introducing CITISENSE

> The innovative practice: Be Secure – Feel Secure

The URBACT CITISENSE Innovation Transfer Network was built to support the transfer of the **Be Secure – Feel Secure** (BSFS), an Urban Innovative Actions project tested between 2019 and 2022 by the Municipality of Piraeus under the urban security strand of the UIA 4th Call for Proposals. BSFS proposed a deliberate shift away from traditional, individual, law-and-order responses to insecurity, and towards a participatory and integrated approach built on three pillars: a new governance framework, novel digital tools, and social and spatial interventions. In practice, this meant establishing the Local Council for Crime Prevention (LCCP) and a Victim Support Unit, launching the CURiM collaborative risk-management platform, and combining Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) with community-based and awareness-raising initiatives.

For CITISENSE, BSFS was unpacked into four integrated transfer modules – digital solutions, spatial interventions, social initiatives and governance arrangements – that partner cities could adapt and combine according to their own needs, rather than replicate wholesale. This modular logic proved essential once the network began working with cities of very different sizes, institutional cultures and administrative capacities.



FROM BSFS TO CITISENSE

Four integrated **transfer modules** that can be **adapted and combined** according to each Partner's context and needs.

> A network of six, then five

Led by the Municipality of Piraeus, CITISENSE originally brought together six cities spanning a wide range of urban contexts: from a bustling port city to smaller towns and historic centres, from central Catalunya to the Baltic coast. What united them, despite their differences, was a shared and often counter-intuitive pattern: a growing perception of insecurity even where crime rates were declining or already comparatively low.





Partner city	Role in the network	Population	Local profile
Piraeus (EL)	Lead Partner	168,151	Major port city; safety through technology, community-based solutions and spatial upgrades.
Naples (IT)	Partner	911,697	Historic urban hub; public space use, safety perceptions and inclusivity around Piazza Garibaldi/Carlo III.
Liepāja (LV)	Partner – Municipal Police	66,680	Coastal city; youth-centred safety perceptions and sustainable management of public space.
Geel (BE)	Partner	42,362	Mid-sized town; public nuisance and safety in parks, station and market square.
Manresa (ES)	Partner	80,200	Regional hub; revitalisation of the historic centre and reduction of socio-economic inequalities.

During the first year of the project, the Hungarian municipality of Fót withdrew from the network following a change in local administration that shifted municipal priorities. From the third quarter of the project onward, CITISENSE therefore continued as a partnership of five: Piraeus, Naples, Liepāja, Geel and Manresa.

2. A two-year journey: from understanding to re-use

The CITISENSE roadmap unfolded across three phases – Understand, Adapt and Prepare for Re-Use – structured around six Transnational Meetings, six Online Network Meetings, eight rounds of thematic Exchange & Learning activities, two study visits, and at least eight rounds of Urban Local Group meetings in each partner city. The table below summarises the key milestones of this journey.

PERIOD	PHASE	KEY MILESTONES
Sept 2024 – Feb 2025	Understand	Lead Partner/Lead Expert city visits to all six partners; drafting and validation of the Transferability Study; 1st Transnational Meeting (Piraeus) with deep-dive study visit to Be Secure – Feel Secure.
Mar – Aug 2025	Adapt (I)	Set-up and expansion of the five Urban Local Groups; thematic Exchange & Learning activities; 2nd Transnational Meeting (Liepāja) with Transfer Modules workshop; withdrawal of Fót (HU) from the network.



PERIOD	PHASE	KEY MILESTONES
Sept 2025 – Feb 2026	Adapt (II)	Design of local Testing Actions; further ULG rounds; 3rd Transnational Meeting (Manresa) with Mid-Term Reflection, historic-centre regeneration and resourcing/financing workshops; joint session at the Smart City Expo World Congress, Barcelona; 4th Transnational Meeting (Naples) and study visit to We-Z (Rome)
Mar – May 2026	Prepare for Re-Use (I)	Implementation and assessment of Testing Actions; drafting of Investment and Continuity Plans 5th Transnational Meeting (Copenhagen) with Freetown Christiania study visit and Investment Plan peer review.
June – Aug 2026	Prepare for Re-Use (II)	Finalisation of Investment and Continuity Plans; financing roundtable (6th Online Network Meeting); Final Event in Geel and closing reflections.

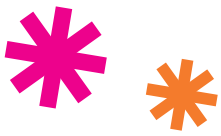
There are three elements that are important to note in the articulation of this journey. First, the different pace adopted at each stage: an intense Understand Phase and a fast-moving start to the Adapt Phase were followed by a quieter summer in 2025, which gave Urban Local Groups (ULGs) the space to consolidate their work and reflect at local level.

Second, the importance of the network's Mid-Term Reflection, held in Manresa in November 2025, which allowed partners to reflect on the steps, activities and network methodology adopted in the first half of the project, to discuss their challenges and expectations, and thereby to recalibrate the roadmap for the final stretch of activities.

Third, the logical build-up of activities: starting with getting acquainted with the original BSFS project, dissecting its key elements and transfer modules and understanding their relevance and transfer potential for each partner city; then moving on to webinars and workshops to develop a common ground of thematic, theoretical and practical knowledge, before diving into specific case studies to provide concrete examples of how the principles under discussion in the network were adopted in other contexts; and finally, the last semester entirely focused on bringing this knowledge together, implementing small-scale pilots (Testing Actions), and drafting, peer-reviewing and finalising the Investment Plans.

3. The added value of transnational cooperation

Across CITISENSE, transnational cooperation added value at three main levels: a shared methodology adapted locally, structured peer review, and a wider ecosystem of practice beyond the network itself. This mattered because no single city, working alone, could have tested the BSFS model against such a range of urban scales and institutional cultures in two years. Pooling diagnostic tools, review formats and external contacts let each partner see its own choices against others facing comparable dilemmas, which sharpened priorities that might otherwise have stayed implicit until much later in the process.

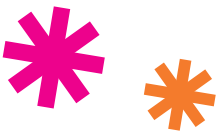


3.1 A SHARED METHODOLOGY, ADAPTED LOCALLY

The network gave partners a common set of analytical and planning tools and methods, drawing on the URBACT Toolkit and beyond: the problem tree, the hot-air balloon and identity-card exercises, exploratory urban walks, the intersectional Safe, Humane and Inclusive Public Spaces (SHIp) framework, and the Transfer Modules workshop. Each city then applied these to its own streets, squares and stakeholder landscape. The result was a comparable body of local diagnoses, each drawing on a different combination of these tools. Piraeus built its Urban Local Group around the existing LCCP network, layering stakeholders into a core team, a second circle and a wider outer circle. Manresa opened its process with a quadruple-helix meeting followed by a shared-vision exercise, bringing municipal services, security forces, business, academia and citizens together to define what kind of city they wanted to become. Naples combined an "identity card and hot-air balloon" exercise with an urban walk along the Garibaldi – Carlo III axis, producing a detailed "map of emotions" of the area. Geel paired stakeholder mapping with a citywide 5,000-resident survey on perceptions of insecurity. And Liepāja used the problem tree to map the causes and effects behind youth insecurity.



Figure 3: Collaborative workshop at the Manresa Transnational Meeting



This common scaffolding let cities with very different sizes and levels of prior experience level up together, sharing the URBACT method itself: an integrated, participatory approach to policy-making, built around the same toolkit, taken up equally by first-time and experienced partners.

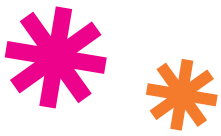
3.2 STRUCTURED PEER REVIEW

The clearest demonstration of added value came in the peer-review methodology used during the Fifth Transnational Meeting in Copenhagen, the most operationally significant transnational exchange of the network's journey. Ahead of the session, every city prepared a ten-minute pitch of its Investment Plan, three open questions on its work plan, and up to three core financing challenges, each framed specifically enough for peers to respond with targeted recommendations. On the day, cities under review hosted their own table with two delegates, while all other participants rotated across tables as peers, so that each city's dilemmas were tested against genuinely different external perspectives. Two rounds structured each table session: the first moved from diagnosis to recommendation on the city's work plan, the second did the same for its financing strategy, and each closed with a short list of concrete suggestions reported back in a closing plenary.



Figure 4: Peer-Review Discussion in Copenhagen

The range of dilemmas cities brought to the table shows how far this shared method could travel across very different administrative contexts. On their work plans: Piraeus asked how to institutionalise the Local Council for Crime Prevention beyond the project cycle and how to balance hard spatial investments against soft social measures; Liepāja looked for ways to measure perceived safety consistently over time while keeping youth participation genuinely representative; Geel weighed the tension between social prevention and citizens' demand for visible enforcement; Naples wrestled with how to communicate honestly when both crime data and safety perception improve together, without being accused of merely dressing up



reality; and Manresa debated whether to concentrate its tactical-urbanism budget on a few high-impact interventions or spread it across many small ones. On financing: Piraeus and Naples both confronted the difficulty of engaging private capital in a field with little commercial appeal; Liepāja and Geel each faced a mismatch between the funding instruments available and the timelines their plans actually needed; and Manresa's question, of how to make the avoided cost of insecurity legible to a finance department, ran through nearly every table in the room.

3.3 A WIDER ECOSYSTEM OF PRACTICE

CITISENSE also connected its partners to a wider network of cities and practitioners working on the same questions across Europe. The study visit to the EUI Innovative Action We-Z in Rome opened a dialogue on participatory regeneration in the Vigne Nuove neighbourhood, built around a "healing community" approach: residents, and young people in particular, taking active responsibility for their own neighbourhood as a route to both mental well-being and safer public space, treating empowerment itself as a driver of urban security rather than a side effect of it. The Fifth Transnational Meeting in Copenhagen brought partners into direct contact with Freetown Christiania's history of self-governance and the transformation of Pusher Street from a notorious open drug market into a vibrant, better-used part of the city, alongside the city's own Sikker By safety programme. Both cases pointed to the same underlying logic: that a community willing to take responsibility for its own public space, and a public space made lively, attractive and well-used, together generate the everyday social control that keeps a place feeling safe. The partnership behind Pusher Street's transformation – bringing together community self-governance, the city authorities and the police in an arrangement that would have seemed unlikely at the outset – offered partners a live example of the kind of integrated, participatory governance CITISENSE was itself trying to build. A joint session with the sister Innovation Transfer Network 2Nite at the Smart City Expo World Congress in Barcelona placed CITISENSE's community-based approach alongside a comparable transfer process under way in Sant Boi; and the URBACT ITN "Prepare for Re-Use" meeting in Paris situated CITISENSE within the full 2024 cohort of Innovation Transfer Networks. Taken together, these connections showed how the same challenge – translating a single innovative practice into different urban contexts – was playing out in cities well beyond the five partners, and left the network with a set of relationships that could well outlast CITISENSE itself, as a starting point for further collaboration.



Figure 5: CITISENSE and We-Z Partners in Rome

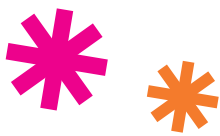


Figure 6: CITISENSE Partners with Local Stakeholders in Christiania, Copenhagen

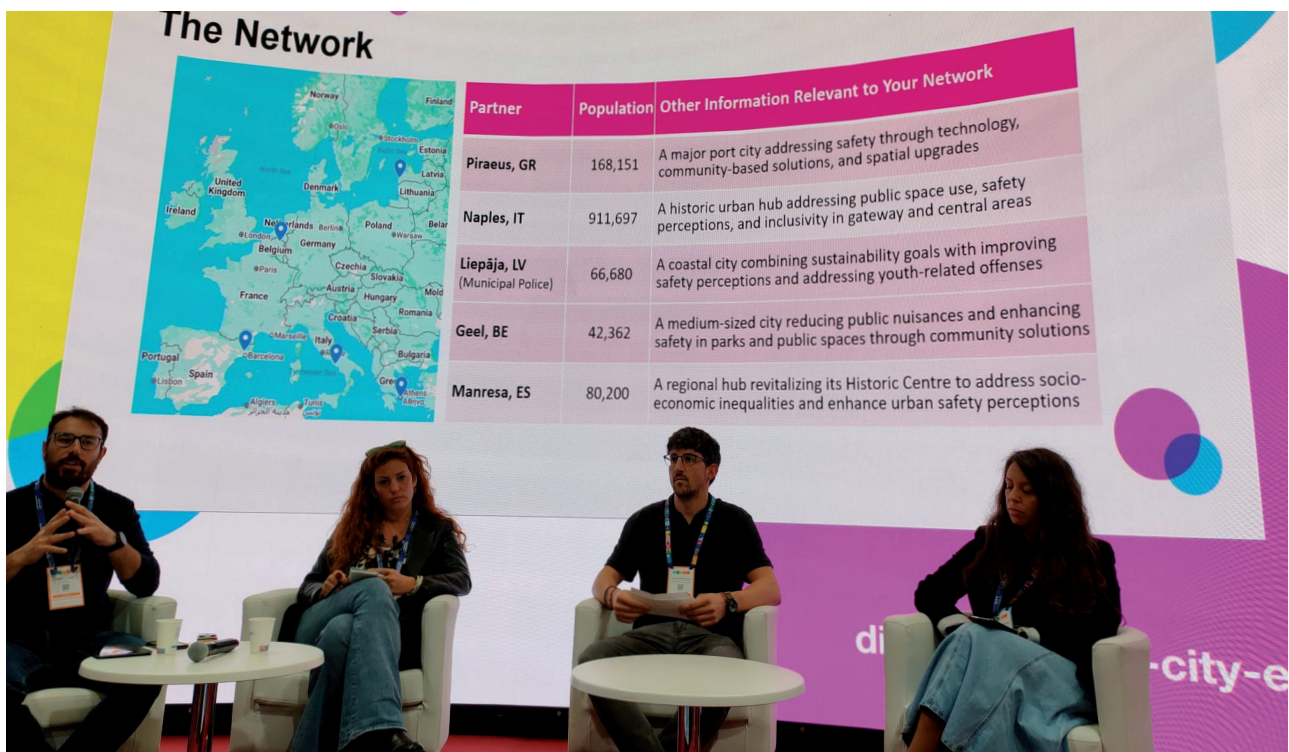


Figure 7: Panel Session at the SCEWC in Barcelona



4. From testing to investing: results at local level

Each of the five partner cities designed and ran a small-scale Testing Action to validate its own adaptation of the BSFS model before committing to a full Investment Plan. The ambitions, budgets and starting points varied considerably – as one would expect of five very different local realities – but all five generated concrete evidence that now feeds directly into the plans each city is finalising, and each Investment Plan already shows, in its work packages and budget lines, exactly where that evidence landed.

4.1 PIRAEUS – SUSTAINING THE BSFS LEGACY FROM TINANIOS GARDEN TO A CITYWIDE PLAN

Piraeus tested a four-pillar intervention at Tinanios Garden, a centrally located public space near the port that had suffered physical degradation and a concentration of vulnerable populations. A safety-perception poll deployed through the municipal app found the garden trusted by day but perceived as unsafe after dark by more than half of respondents, pointing to lighting and a lack of oversight as key concerns. Alongside this, the city renovated a derelict kiosk into a micro-civic hub, delivered a social programme of twelve activities reaching around a thousand participants, and formally aligned the LCCP with the Municipal Youth Council. Lengthy procurement procedures pushed several works from April into June – a delay the city has already folded into its planning for a wider rollout of the model across other neighbourhoods, targeted for 2030.

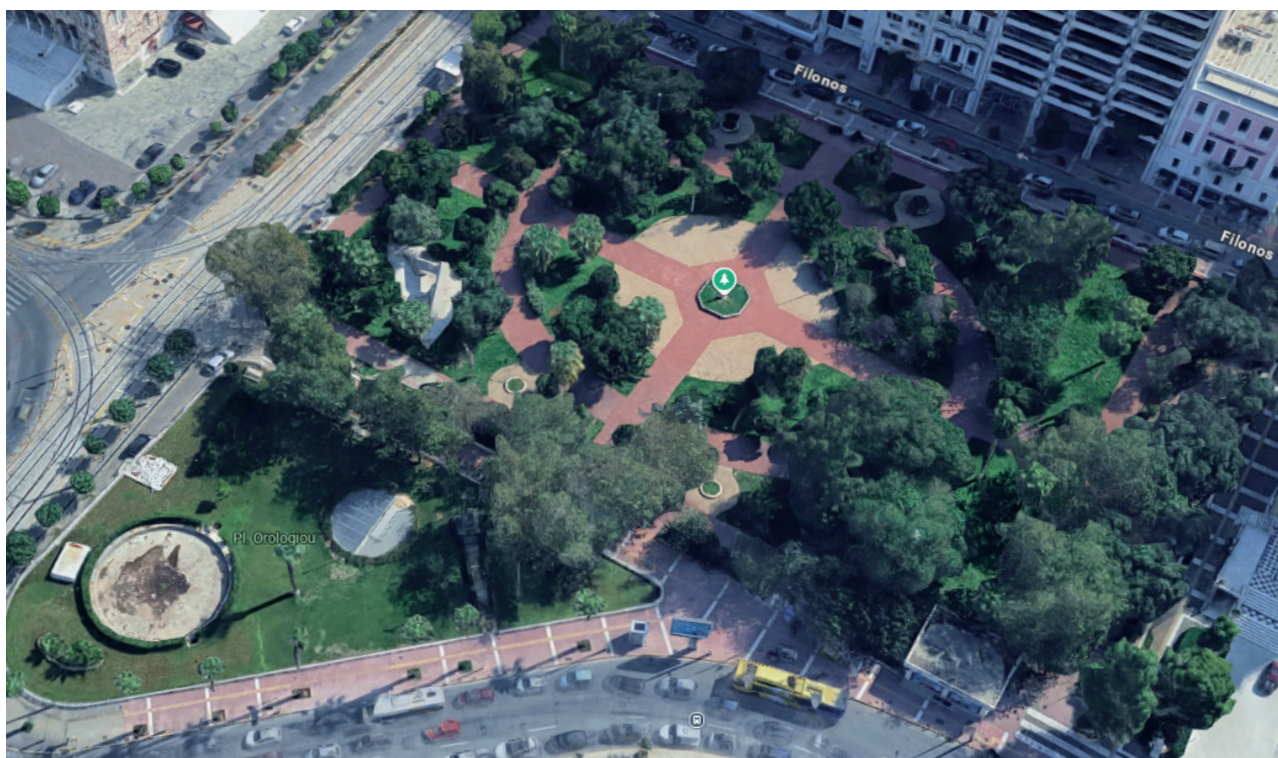
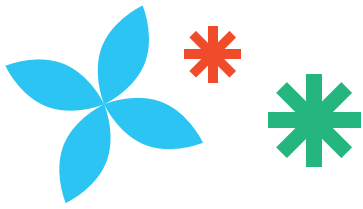


Figure 8: Aerial view of the Tinanios Garden. Source: Municipality of Piraeus

The Continuity Plan that followed is considerably wider in scope than the pilot itself. It is built on the legacy of the original BSFS project (2019–2023), whose exploitable assets – the Urban Risk Assessment methodology (an eight-step cycle running from boundary-setting through scanning, prioritising, analysing, task assignment, intervention and learning), the CURiM digital suite, and the LCCP itself as a standing multi-stakeholder governance board – form the starting point for everything that follows. The plan runs over five years (60 months) across



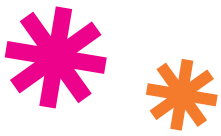
three phases: Integration, Scaling and Sustainability. Phase 1 focuses on technical integration (the Smart Reporting App and an upgraded CURiM Platform interoperating with lighting telemetry, CCTV, Hellenic Police feeds and citizen reports inside a unified Piraeus Operations Centre dashboard), institutional integration (signed inter-agency data-sharing protocols with the Hellenic Police) and governance integration (the LCCP formally interoperating with municipal directorates spanning social services, technical services, civil protection, planning, education and sport). Phase 2 extends validated interventions city-wide – the Smart Reporting App rolled out across all five districts, spatial works moving from the priority 2nd and 5th Districts to the rest of the city, the Victim Support Unit consolidating city-wide operation – with a mid-programme evaluation reviewing outcomes against Phase 1 baselines. Phase 3 converts the whole programme into standing municipal operations: asset-level maintenance plans (including a vandalism-response protocol addressing the re-vandalisation already observed at some post-BSFS sites), a train-the-trainer model for self-sustaining school and business awareness sessions, and formal registration in the EFUS network for peer exchange and replication. A cross-cutting Value Proposition Canvas frames the whole plan around two customer segments – municipalities and citizens – each with distinct jobs-to-be-done, pains and gains that the digital, spatial, social and governance pillars are designed to address jointly.

4.2 NAPLES – A COLLABORATIVE URBAN QUALITY MODEL

Naples embedded its Testing Action, City Vibes, within the city's Maggio dei Monumenti festival, combining emotional urban tours, a Flash Migrantour, inclusive cultural visits, a sports event, a musical performance and a photography installation, with guides and performers themselves drawn from marginalised groups. Early results from 55 participants showed a marked change in reported safety perception, but the experience also raised a question the network returned to repeatedly: whether a festival-framed, one-off programme can demonstrate a durable shift in everyday perception, or only a temporary one. The findings will feed into a structured, multi-year programme of social and cultural activities anchored around the concept of activating places where vibrancy already exists, and into building a stable pool of trained local guides and facilitators as a lasting asset.



Figure 9: A moment of the Maggio dei Monumenti event in Naples. Source: Municipality of Naples



Naples frames its whole Investment Plan around a distinctive premise: perceived urban safety, not crime alone, as the measure of urban quality, and collaborative governance – not a single infrastructure project – as the tool for improving it. The target area runs from Piazza Carlo III to Piazza Garibaldi via Porta Capuana and Borgo Sant'Antonio Abate, a corridor already absorbing an exceptional concentration of ongoing regeneration (the Real Albergo dei Poveri, Castel Capuano, the former Ex Pretura court building, the redeveloped Piazza Garibaldi transport hub, the former Fish Market and the former Forno di Via Casanova, plus the future Metro Line 10). The plan's central argument is that Naples doesn't lack investment or institutional commitment in this corridor – it lacks a mechanism to make all these separate interventions reinforce one another and translate into a stronger everyday sense of safety and belonging. The participatory process behind the plan moved through four phases: building a shared understanding of what "perceived

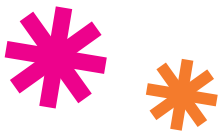
safety" actually means locally; reading the city together through urban walks, participatory mapping and an open questionnaire; co-designing solutions with the Urban Local Group, informed by a city-wide survey called *Comunità Forte. Spazi Sicuri* ("Strong Community. Safe Spaces"); and the Testing Action itself, run across the four Saturdays of May 2026 with closing events in Piazza Garibaldi and Piazza Carlo III. The resulting **Naples Collaborative Urban Quality Model** rests on three operational pillars – an Urban Quality Governance Platform coordinating institutions and policies, a Cultural & Social Concierge acting as a permanent community-facing hub (building on the existing *Bella Piazza* partnership and its Neighbourhood Concierge service), and a Place Activation Programme built around recurring Annual Place Activation Cycles and flagship Week Festivals – all monitored through an Urban Perception Observatory tracking perception surveys, behavioural observation and spatial analysis over time.

4.3 GEEL – TRAINING CITIZENS, REDESIGNING PUBLIC SPACE

Geel ran two parallel pilots. A bystander-training programme, delivered with Thomas More College, reached more than thirty participants and will now be built into the Investment Plan's social work package, backed by several years of secured Flemish funding. A second pilot, the Talking Bins – interactive bins designed to nudge behaviour through humour and local dialect – was cancelled at a late stage, yet the debate it triggered led the municipality to rationalise nineteen different bin types into a single citywide model, to be rolled out along CPTED principles. It is a useful reminder that a Testing Action can fail on its own narrow terms while still generating real policy leverage.



Figure 10: Event in Geel's City Park. Source: City of Geel



Geel's Investment Plan is grounded in a detailed local safety survey and 2025 police statistics: nearly 1,900 nuisance reports (split across noise, drunk persons and fights), several hundred GAS administrative fines, and dozens of arrests for public-order and intoxication offences, concentrated around the station area, city parks and night shops. The strongest single factor driving the sense of insecurity, according to the survey, is the presence of "(groups of) people" – particularly people of different origins and loitering youths – which the plan treats explicitly as a risk of polarisation and us-versus-them dynamics rather than only a policing issue. The response is structured as an integrated, neighbourhood-level strategy aligned both upward, with Flemish urban-renewal policy, and with Belgium's federal prevention architecture, notably the Local Integrated Security Cell on Radicalism (LIVC-R) – chaired locally and now explicitly broadened beyond radicalisation to cover polarisation more generally. The plan is organised into linked work packages: governance and the Local Security Council; social action and communication, which

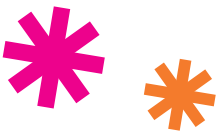
houses the bystander and de-escalation training (offered to vulnerable groups such as youths, women and the elderly as well as to the city's own frontline staff, with an explicit train-the-trainer and depolarisation strategist logic for municipal employees); and public-space adaptation, where CPTED principles are deliberately paired with New European Bauhaus principles so that safety interventions also deliver on sustainability, aesthetics and inclusive co-creation – with a CPTED audit team, a set of design guidelines submitted to management, and eventual embedding into the city's building codes and multi-year plan. Thomas More College is a named partner throughout, contributing academic evaluation, living-labs coordination and student participation in safety walks and CPTED audits. A dedicated risk analysis flags legislative discontinuity across electoral cycles and stakeholder fatigue as the main threats to the plan's longevity, to be mitigated by embedding the Local Security Council and CPTED principles formally into the city's official multi-year plan.

4.4 LIEPĀJA – A YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD AND A NETWORK OF YOUTH CENTRES

Liepāja structured its Testing Action around two NGO-led phases: youth opinion research led by the House of Hope, involving at least six focus groups, and an awareness campaign on money-mule fraud, implemented by NGO U-Plus on a topic chosen by young people themselves. The authenticity of youth ownership over the campaign's content was considered its strongest feature; running research and campaign in parallel rather than in sequence, however, limited how far the findings could actually shape the campaign. The results will feed directly into two components of the Investment Plan: the Youth Safety Council and the network of youth centres.



Figure 11 & 12: Workshop with youth in Liepāja. Source: Liepāja Municipal Police



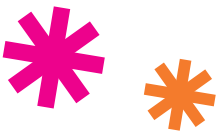
The Investment Plan situates this within a broader diagnosis: despite having the lowest crime rate among Latvia's largest cities, Liepāja shows a worsening sense of insecurity between 2020 and 2023, with youth particularly exposed to bullying (over 40% of students nationally report being bullied within a two-month period, and nearly 22% report cyber-bullying) and to a sense of disengagement, with over a quarter of young people saying they don't see their future in the city. The plan adapts the BSFS model into three parallel investments. The first is a digital visualisation and analysis platform, building on BSFS's CURiM tool, that will progressively integrate police incident data, GIS layers, CCTV metadata and citizen reports into a single dashboard for evidence-based patrol deployment and policy planning, phased over 24 months from infrastructure setup through two successive integration waves to full adoption. The second is a Youth Advisory Board, formalised through a City Council decision and a co-created governance mandate covering membership, safeguarding and decision-making, meeting monthly and progressively taking on co-designed initiatives rather than a purely consultative role. The third is a network of youth centres in Liepāja's suburbs, co-designed and co-managed with young people, combining life-skills and digital-literacy programming with practical activities such as shared meal preparation, built around CPTED principles of natural surveillance and good lighting but deliberately avoiding excessive supervision. Governance sits with Liepāja Municipal Police together with the Urban Local Group, which includes state, municipal, NGO (including House of Hope and You+) and youth representatives, with ownership of each investment transferring over time to the most appropriate municipal body or partner NGO.

4.4 MANRESA – A SECURITY APP, A DATA LAKE AND A TACTICAL INTERVENTION PLAN

Manresa combined a tactical-urbanism intervention at the medieval Arc d'en Botí – cleaning, painting, LED lighting and concealment of redundant wiring, co-designed with residents and police – with the beta launch of WardUs, a citizen-reporting app that had reached over 7,000 registered users and 200 incident reports by mid-April 2026. The clearest political lesson of the whole network emerged here: the local government's decision to pause active promotion of the app for fear of reviving public anxiety about safety – the so-called "security calm paradox" – showed how far framing can matter more than substance, and led the city to reposition WardUs as a collaborative civic platform rather than a security-reporting tool.



Figure 13: Public space renovation works in Manresa. Source: Municipality of Manresa



Manresa's Investment Plan is organised around exactly this tension between objective and perceived safety, which it names explicitly as the "Security Paradox" and treats as its central evaluation concept throughout. The digital work package develops WardUs into a fuller platform alongside a new municipal Data Lake: the app keeps its distinguishing rigorous identity-verification process (to prevent fraudulent use) and its live audio/video link to the Local Police, but its scope widens well beyond incident reporting to include everyday public-space issues such as damaged street furniture or failed streetlights, feeding a centralised Data Lake intended to fuse citizen perceptions with quantitative police data for faster, better-coordinated municipal decision-making; a longer-term ambition is a "preventive alert" feature that can passively flag high-risk situations

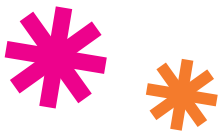
during a journey and trigger automatic assistance protocols if arrival at a destination is not confirmed. The public-space work package follows a diagnostic-first logic directly descended from the Arc d'en Botí approach: a comprehensive situation diagnosis of the Historic Centre, including a digital "Heat Map of Insecurity" plotting dark spots and deteriorated locations, followed by co-design and prioritisation workshops bringing together police, neighbourhood associations, shopkeepers and academic experts (the plan's own "quadruple helix"), a phased rollout of further small-scale tactical-urbanism actions – surface treatments, flexible street furniture, minor architectural fixes – and a formal monitoring stage using post-intervention surveys and app data to check whether perceived fear has actually fallen at each treated site.

5. Cross-cutting lessons learned

Reading the five experiences together, and drawing on Zygmunt Bauman's distinction between Sicherheit (protection from external harm), Gewissheit (confidence in the reliability of institutions and rules) and Geborgenheit (a felt sense of being sheltered and cared for), a small number of lessons cut across all five partner cities.

- Urban security calls for an integrated approach across departments and policy fields, since almost everything – housing, employment, mobility, culture – turns out to bear on it at some level.
- Insecurity is very often itself a symptom, not a cause: of urban decline, social vulnerability, or the poor condition of public space, rather than of crime as such.
- Unconventional partnerships – bringing in the "unusual suspects", from youth organisations to cultural operators – need to be deliberately built and sustained, not left to emerge on their own.
- Quantitative and qualitative data need to be combined and analysed without bias, since crime statistics and lived experience routinely tell different stories about the same street.
- Communication needs to be framed carefully and positively, engaging the most vulnerable groups rather than only the most vocal ones – talking of improving liveability rather than tackling insecurity, and of enhancing attractiveness rather than reducing avoidance behaviour.
- Urban Local Groups can evolve in opposite directions – narrowing into a smaller, committed core, or expanding to include entirely new stakeholders – and both are legitimate signs of success, provided the relationships built are trust-based and durable.

Perhaps the most significant, if least visible, outcome of CITISENSE is precisely this last point: the activation of stakeholder relationships and conversations that simply did not exist two years ago. Once cities agree on scope and goals, and recognise that valorising each other's complementary strengths is a positive-sum game rather than a competition for resources or credit, the foundations for genuine long-term cooperation are already in place – arguably a more durable legacy than any single physical intervention.



6. Next steps: implementing the Investment Plans

CITISENSE formally closes with the Final Event in Geel, but the substantive work of the network – embedding the BSFS approach into each city's own institutional machinery – is only beginning. Three sets of next steps stand out.

➤ Securing the necessary resources

For most cities, the first and most immediate task is simply to identify and secure the resources their Investment Plans call for. This is not a given: many of the funding sources cities are eyeing are competitive, so prioritising actions in relation to their realistic likelihood of being financed will be crucial, rather than pursuing every avenue at once. A further complication is timing – CITISENSE is closing near the end of the 2021/27 programming period, and with it still uncertain which EU funding streams and priorities will carry into the next one, cities are having to plan for the long term against a backdrop of genuine uncertainty over what will actually be available to draw on.

➤ Safeguarding the Investment Plans over time

A second, related task is to secure the provisions of the Investment Plans for the long term, so that they survive beyond the political cycle in which they were adopted. Fót's withdrawal from the network after a change in local administration is a reminder that a well-designed plan can otherwise be overrun by a change of political leadership before it is ever implemented – a risk that makes embedding these plans in more durable institutional commitments, rather than leaving them dependent on the goodwill of a single administration, a priority in its own right.

➤ Moving from projects to structural policy

The third and deepest shift is a qualitative one: moving beyond a project-based logic – interventions built around a one-off, time-limited funding source, chasing the next call simply to keep previous efforts alive – and instead working strategically and structurally, so that what began as experimentation under CITISENSE leaves the experimental stage behind and becomes consolidated, lasting practice. Each city's own priorities for the period ahead follow directly from its Testing Action and Investment Plan, and it is now up to each of them to carry that work forward into lasting institutional practice – strong in the new knowledge and skills acquired over the course of this journey, as well as in a broader international network to keep collaborating with.

Closing reflection

Two years ago, six cities set out to ask whether a project designed for one Greek port city could mean anything for a Latvian coastal town, a Belgian market town, a Catalan regional hub and one of Italy's largest cities. The honest answer, on the evidence gathered here, is that it could – not because any single tool or platform was copied wholesale, but because the underlying diagnosis travelled: that insecurity is, more often than not, a symptom of deeper social and spatial conditions, and that addressing it durably requires integrated, patient, cross-sector work rather than a single new policing measure. What each city takes forward is not identical, and it should not be: the plans differ in ambition, complexity and pace precisely because they were adapted, rather than imposed. What they share is a set of relationships – between police and social services, between municipalities and NGOs, between institutions and the young people and vulnerable residents most affected by these policies – that did not exist before CITISENSE, and that now offer the best available foundation for turning two years of transnational learning into lasting local change.

CITISENSE

INNOVATION TRANSFER NETWORK

FINAL NETWORK REPORT

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