

CITY OF ZAGREB

Plan Einstein Investment Plan

August 2026



Supported by the URBACT programme

**Plan Einstein Academy
Innovation Transfer Network**

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1. Context

1.1. About the investment plan

This document is the ‘Investment Plan’ setting out **how the City of Zagreb (Croatia) intends to implement the ‘Plan Einstein’ model** demonstrated initially by the City of Utrecht (Netherlands). Plan Einstein is a neighbourhood-oriented approach to local social cohesion (for more information see Section 2.1).

The Investment Plan is the **central output of the City of Zagreb from its participation in the URBACT IV Innovation Transfer Network ‘Plan Einstein Academy’**. This network ran from September 2024 until August 2026 with the aim of fostering transfer of the ‘Plan Einstein’ concept to five other cities in Europe, including Zagreb. It involved transnational exchange and learning – not only learning from the good practice example provided by Utrecht, but also exchange and mutual inspiration between the other partner cities: Coimbra (Portugal); Suceava (Romania); Thessaloniki (Greece); and Warsaw (Poland) (for more information see Section 2.2).

This Investment Plan is the **result of a participatory process with local stakeholders** in Zagreb who came together in an ‘URBACT Local Group’ (ULG). During the course of the project, the ULG was adapted from a city-wide group into a more local partnership, focusing on the target areas of Travno and Dugave in Novi Zagreb and bringing together organisations and institutions that are directly active in these neighbourhoods (for more information see Section 2.3).

The **Investment Plan sets out the shared vision** (see Section 2.4) developed by the local stakeholders (ULG) for implementing Plan Einstein in the target neighbourhoods and the **intervention logic** (see Section 3) and **planned actions** (see Section 4) for delivering on this vision.

Grounded in local experience and collaboration, the Investment Plan concludes with a **short section on the implementation framework** (see Section 5) for putting the plan into action, including the ongoing governance framework, funding strategy and risk mitigation.

1.2. City profile



Zagreb introduction

Zagreb, the **capital and largest city of Croatia**, lies in the northwestern part of the country near the Slovenian border. With a population of approximately 770,000 inhabitants, it serves as Croatia's principal administrative, political, economic, scientific and cultural centre.

The city is governed by the City Assembly, a representative body consisting of 48 directly elected members, while the day-to-day administration is carried out by 16 municipal administrative bodies responsible for both local self-government functions and delegated state responsibilities.

As Croatia's main transport hub, Zagreb occupies a **strategic position at the crossroads of Central Europe, the Mediterranean, and Southeast Europe**. The city benefits from extensive road and rail connections with the rest of Croatia and neighbouring countries, while Franjo Tuđman Airport, situated around 10 kilometres from the city centre, provides international and domestic air links.

Zagreb has a **diversified economy with a strong service sector and growing high-technology industries**. It is home to the headquarters of many of Croatia's leading companies, media organisations, universities, and research institutions. The city also enjoys a high standard of living and offers a rich cultural life through its museums, sporting events, festivals, and entertainment venues.

In March 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, Zagreb experienced a 5.3 magnitude earthquake that caused extensive damage, particularly in the historic city centre. The disaster left more than 1,900 buildings unsafe for occupancy and initiated a long-term reconstruction process.

Foreigners in Zagreb

The number of **foreign nationals living in Zagreb has increased rapidly in recent years**, although the exact figure depends on the data source and the population being measured. According to the Statistical Yearbook of the City of Zagreb (2023), 13,628 of the city's inhabitants are foreign nationals. Population statistics record only those with registered residence, while administrative data on residence and work permits capture a much larger number of temporary migrants.

As Croatia's economic centre, **Zagreb remains the country's primary destination for international migration**. Recent national migration statistics indicate that almost one-fifth of all people moving to Croatia from abroad settle in the City of Zagreb, confirming its role as the country's main hub for newcomers.

The city's **foreign population is highly diverse**. In addition to persons granted international or temporary protection, Zagreb has seen a significant increase in labour migration, with many newcomers originating from countries such as Nepal, the Philippines, India, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo and Ukraine. **New migration flows have also emerged** from countries including Cuba and several African states. Most labour migrants arrive through regular migration channels, typically entering Croatia via Franjo Tuđman Airport, while people seeking international protection often reach the country through land borders with neighbouring states before continuing to Zagreb.

The rapid growth of the foreign-born population has **created both opportunities and new policy challenges for the city**. Many foreign workers are employed in sectors facing labour shortages, including construction, hospitality, logistics, manufacturing and platform-based delivery services. At the same time, the increasing diversity of the population has highlighted the need for stronger integration measures, particularly in the areas of housing, language learning, access to public services, community participation and protection of labour rights. Preventing worker exploitation, addressing trafficking risks and ensuring equal access to information and services have become increasingly important priorities for local authorities and partner organisations.

Looking ahead, Zagreb is expected to remain the principal destination for international migrants arriving in Croatia. Continued labour demand, ongoing geopolitical instability in neighbouring regions and beyond, and Croatia's position on the EU's external border are all likely to contribute to sustained migration flows, **reinforcing the need for long-term integration policies** and coordinated cooperation between national institutions, the City of Zagreb and civil society organisations.

1.3. National reception policies

Housing of persons under international protection and temporary protection is the responsibility of the state. There is often a long wait for asylum applications to be considered, with limited resources within the Ministry of the Interior.

While they are waiting, asylum applicants who lack funds are provided with accommodation in two national reception centres managed by the Service for Reception and Accommodation of Applicants for International Protection, of the Ministry of the Interior. **The largest of these national reception centres is located in Zagreb**, in the building of the former Hotel Porin, a large Soviet-style hotel on the southeastern edge of the city. Housing more than 600 people, it opened as a centre in 2011.



The Porin reception centre is **situated on the outskirts of the residential part of the Travno neighbourhood**. A railway yard extends alongside the southern end of the centre. About three kilometres to the east of Porin, is a major landfill site in need of rehabilitation.

It is an open-type reception centre, meaning people staying there can enter and exit relatively freely between 11pm and 6am. Asylum seekers are accommodated in rooms with individuals of the same gender, unless they have arrived with their family.

In addition, they receive other material support, including three daily meals, clothing, hygiene supplies, reimbursement for public transportation costs related to the international protection procedure, and financial assistance. A second smaller national reception centre is located at Kutina, a town of 13,735 inhabitants in a hilly region of central Croatia.

The **Ministry of the Interior contracts NGOs to provide key services in the reception centres**. It currently has contracts with two NGOs, who are the only ones allowed to access and work inside the centre: the Croatian Red Cross and Médecins du Monde, with the support of UNHCR.



Support activities provided include: social, arts & culture, educational and sports activities; individual and group psychosocial support; special care for vulnerable groups, emergency and long-term healthcare and practical assistance for everyday life.

The activities carried out in the Porin **reception centre are not open to local citizens**, and vice versa. Local residents generally have little interaction with the people accommodated in Porin, often perceiving them as a threat. Their views on asylum seekers from Porin tend to vary between compassion and concern, and fear and xenophobia.

1.4. Local reception policy

Strategic documents and policies

The City of Zagreb, recognising the importance of migration and integration of foreigners at the local level, started to participate in a number of AMIF-funded projects, with **EUROCITIES**.

Under the CONNECTION project (CONNEcting Cities Towards Integration action), it developed the city's **first Action Plan for the Integration of Asylum Seekers and Persons Granted International and Temporary Protection**, which was adopted by the City Assembly for 2022. The Action Plan provided for the establishment of a multi-stakeholder working body to steer all integration-related activities in the city: '**The Coordination for Integration**'. Chaired by the Municipality, it currently consists of representatives from city administrative bodies, NGOs and migrant representatives (persons granted international protection, persons under temporary protection and non-EU foreign workers), all selected under an open call.

A **second** strategic document of local policy has been an **Action Plan for the implementation of the Integrating Cities Charter**, which is focused on asylum seekers, persons granted international and temporary protection, and also foreign workers. Adopted by the City Assembly in 2023, it was initially foreseen for the 2023-2024 period, but its implementation was extended into 2025.

In December 2025, the City Assembly adopted a **five-year strategic document on integration of foreigners**, which will be implemented through annual Implementation Plans. The city conducted focus group research to assess the evolving needs of the migrant community, ensuring that the results will be incorporated into the new integration strategy.



Welcome Centre in Zagreb (One-Stop Shop)

As part of its integration policy, the City of Zagreb established the **Welcome Centre**, a one-stop service designed to support all foreign nationals residing in the city, including beneficiaries of international and temporary protection, asylum seekers, foreign workers and their family members. The Centre **opened in September 2024** and represents the first municipal service in Croatia dedicated to providing comprehensive information and guidance for newcomers in one location.



The Welcome Centre was established by the City of Zagreb in cooperation with UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, and works closely with a broad network of public institutions, civil society organisations and specialised legal service providers. Rather than delivering all services directly, the Centre acts as a **coordination and referral point**, helping users navigate administrative procedures and connect with the most appropriate organisations and institutions.

The Centre provides **information and individual guidance** on a wide range of topics, including residence status, employment opportunities, workers' rights, healthcare, education, social welfare, Croatian language learning, housing and everyday life in Zagreb. It also offers referrals for legal counselling, medical support and other specialised services, contributing to a **more coordinated and accessible integration system**.

During its first full year of operation, the Welcome Centre recorded approximately 400 users through in-person consultations and telephone enquiries. Although initially established primarily to support refugees and persons under international protection, the structure of its users quickly reflected broader migration trends in Zagreb, with an **increasing number of foreign workers seeking assistance**. This shift has highlighted both the growing demand for municipal integration services and the need to further expand local support mechanisms as the city's international population continues to grow.

Infographic about City of Zagreb integration planning and activities:



1.5. Local stakeholder ecosystem

As mentioned above, the city's Action Plan for the Integration of Asylum Seekers and Persons Granted International and Temporary Protection provided for the establishment of a **multi-stakeholder working body to steer all integration-related activities in the city**: 'The Coordination for Integration'. Chaired by the Municipality, it currently consists of representatives from city administrative bodies, NGOs and migrant representatives (persons granted international protection, persons under temporary protection and non-EU foreign workers), all selected under an open call.

However, even more broadly, Zagreb has developed a **diverse and increasingly interconnected network of organisations, institutions and community actors** working to support the inclusion of migrants and the development of intercultural communities. This local ecosystem brings together civil society organisations, cultural institutions, public services, community centres and international organisations, creating a broad base of expertise and support for newcomers.

A significant part of these activities is **supported by the City of Zagreb through public calls for proposals and funding programmes** that enable NGOs and other partners to implement measures defined within the City's integration action plans. Through this cooperation model, local organisations provide a wide range of services and activities, including legal counselling, language support, employment assistance, psychosocial support, community engagement, cultural activities and assistance in accessing public services.

Key actors within Zagreb's integration ecosystem include organisations such as Jesuit Refugee Service Croatia, Croatian Red Cross, Médecins du Monde, Are You Syrious, Centre for Peace Studies, Centre for Cultural Dialogue, and the Center for Education, Rehabilitation and Stress Trauma.

2. Methodology

2.1. About Plan Einstein

“Living together, learning together, and working together” is the guiding motto of Plan Einstein, an innovative initiative from Utrecht, Netherlands, where refugees rebuild their lives within the local community. The approach fosters mutual understanding, respects human rights and supports personal development for both newcomers and residents.

Unlike traditional systems that isolate asylum seekers during legal processes, Plan Einstein provides an empowering environment that encourages participation, growth, and transformation. Plan Einstein brings people together as equals through inclusive activities, **aiming to build strong neighbourhood relations, enhance skills and connections, and improve mental wellbeing.**

Plan Einstein needs to be understood as a set of fundamental or ‘overarching principles’ which need to be respected.

Three ‘Overarching principles’:

- **A Human Rights based Approach** – based on respect for individual human rights and treating every person with dignity regardless of their background
- **A Future-Free Approach** in which support and inclusion are offered independently of any assumptions about anyone’s future life path.
- **Human contact, familiarity and cooperation increase empathy and trust** - contributing to improved social cohesion.

These principles are essential and fundamental to everything Plan Einstein is about – and should also be fundamental principles of any planned transfer of the Plan Einstein approach to another city. However, to understand how to turn these high-level overarching principles into concrete actions, a set of five ‘implementation principles’ were identified.

Five ‘Implementation Principles’:

- Take into account the shared needs of all community members ‘from Day 1’.
- Organise activities supporting the personal and professional development of all.
- Provide attractive spaces for meaningful encounters between diverse individuals.
- Facilitate diverse activities bringing together all-comers on an equal footing.
- Mobilise a supportive ecosystem of engaged stakeholders.

These ‘implementation principles’ can be used to guide the design of specific actions on the ground to deliver on the principles of Plan Einstein.



2.2. Plan Einstein Academy

Network partnership

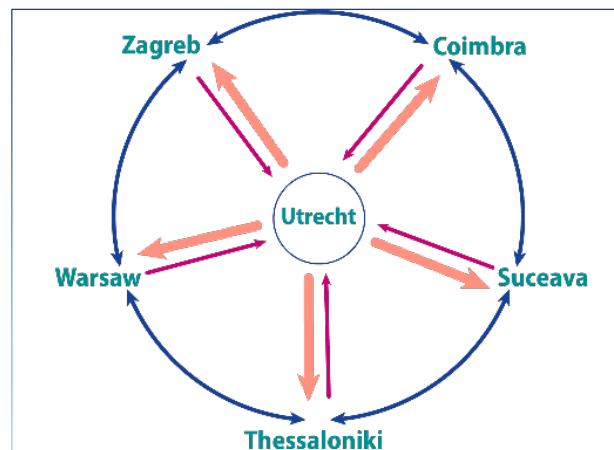
Plan Einstein Academy was a two-year URBACT network of six European cities.

Lead Partner

- Utrecht (Netherlands).

Transfer partners:

- Coimbra (Portugal)
- Suceava (Romania)
- Thessaloniki (Greece)
- Warsaw (Poland)
- Zagreb (Croatia)



The **network is characterised by its diversity**. This diversity is apparent in several aspects including: city size, geographic location, migrant profiles, local experiences of migrant reception and local policies towards migrant inclusion. This diversity aimed to create and enable unique combinations of possibilities, opportunities and preferences for transfer.

A core part of the knowledge exchange/transfer was from the innovative practice city of Utrecht to the partners. However, there is also the important principle that each partner had ideas, practices and approaches to share. The learning and exchange was also back to Utrecht and between each partner. The **knowledge exchange model** of Plan Einstein Academy is presented in the diagram above.

The knowledge exchange model looks something like a wheel, containing elements of a radial model – from Utrecht in the centre out to the partners – but also of a carousel model with knowledge passing all the way round and among the partnership. (Note that lines between all partners are implied.)

Network activities

The core activities of the network can be understood at transnational level on the one hand and local level at the other.

Local level activities

At local level, the core activities were **the establishment and regular meetings of an URBACT Local Group (ULG)** in each partner city (see Section 2.3 on following page), planning and delivery of local **small-scale testing actions** (see Section 2.4). These activities were designed to feed into the creation of an Investment Plan in each partner city as the final local output.

National level activities

Working as a network, the core activities were the **Transnational Exchange meetings** (both in-person and online) between all partners. These meetings typically addressed three types of content:

- **Aspects of Plan Einstein** - understanding and exploring the theoretical potential and practical implementation of relevant aspects of the overall Plan Einstein approach.
- **Mitigating implementation challenges** – anticipating, understanding and exploring how to overcome core cross-cutting implementation challenges.
- **Plan Einstein Academy network journey** - exchanging around key elements of the network journey to share progress, experiences, challenges and successes amongst the partnership.



On occasion, Transnational Meetings had a specific thematic focus supported by Ad Hoc Expertise mobilised for the meeting, such as around the topics of social entrepreneurship and funding.

Plan Einstein Academy produced a selection of **Network-level outputs** including a Network Final Output, four Network Journals and three articles, which can all be found on the [project webpage](#) on the URBACT website.

2.3. URBACT Local Group: from city-wide to neighbourhood focused

In the initial phase of the process, the City of Zagreb **aimed to establish a city-wide URBACT Local Group (ULG)** that would bring together representatives of all key stakeholders involved in the integration of foreign nationals. This approach followed the model of the existing City Coordination for Integration of Foreigners, creating a broad platform for strategic discussion and exchange among public institutions, civil society organisations and other relevant actors.

As the understanding of the Plan Einstein approach developed, the process highlighted the importance of working closer to local communities and responding to the specific conditions and opportunities present in individual neighbourhoods. Accordingly, the **focus shifted towards neighbourhood-based integration** and the role and composition of the ULG evolved.

Particular attention was given to the areas of Travno and Dugave in Novi Zagreb, which host a significant number of integration-related activities due to their proximity to the Porin Reception Centre for asylum seekers and the presence of established community infrastructure.

The ULG was therefore adapted into a more locally focused partnership, bringing together organisations and institutions that are directly active in these neighbourhoods and have practical knowledge of local needs. Its **core members include NGOs, cultural institutions, libraries, community organisations and other local stakeholders**, with support from relevant City administration bodies. The work of the group is coordinated by the City Office for Culture and Civil Society, ensuring links between neighbourhood-level initiatives and wider city integration policies.

This **transition from a broad city-wide platform towards a place-based partnership reflects the central principles of the Plan Einstein approach**: building sustainable integration through meaningful local connections, cooperation among stakeholders and the creation of spaces where newcomers and locals can interact.



2.4. Testing actions

During the project, Zagreb took advantage of the opportunity provided by URBACT to organise **small-scale testing actions in the priority target neighbourhood of Travno** in Novi Zagreb, an area selected due to its proximity to the Porin Reception Centre for asylum seekers and its existing network of community and cultural institutions.

Choir to Go

The first testing action was a singing-based activity called ‘Choir to Go’ developed with the Cultural Centre Travno. The action aimed firstly to develop the cooperation between the municipality and the Cultural Centre towards more inclusive activities in the neighbourhood. The activity also sought to test the potential for using arts and culture as a means for bringing diverse groups together in the neighbourhood of Travno.



‘Choir to Go’ was a multi-cultural and inter-generational activity that saw around 30 participants come together for a 3-hour singing workshop – including both traditional Croatian and foreign songs. The activity was well received by participants, although more awareness-raising would be needed to attract a broader diversity of participants, including residents of the Porin Reception Centre.

The plan is to hold the activity at least four times a year, increasing awareness and outreach over time.

‘Days of the Neighbourhood’ Travno

A second testing action aimed to introduce a more inclusive and welcoming dimension to the annual Days of the Neighbourhood activity in Travno. The event aimed to engage a range of local organisations in taking a more welcoming and inclusive approach – in line with Plan Einstein principles.



During two-days of inclusive community events in the heart of the targeted neighbourhood of Travno, participants were able to take part in musical workshops, artistic workshops, jewellery making, social games and much more – organised by local associations and volunteers.

The City of Zagreb also hosted an information booth of the city’s Welcome Centre where all interested people could get information about activities and services in Zagreb focused on building a cohesive and inclusive society.

The event was able to engage all kinds of stakeholders relevant to the neighbourhood – NGOs, kindergarten, school, locals and foreigners alike. Based on this successful action, further inclusive actions are now planned in the neighbourhood to celebrate World Refugee Day and International Migrants Day.

2.5. Shared local vision

During the course of the Plan Einstein Academy journey, the approach in Zagreb shifted from thinking exclusively about how to transfer Plan Einstein at city scale across Zagreb, to increasingly focusing down on how to plan implementation at the neighbourhood level. In this context, it is useful to **separate the overall vision for the City of Zagreb from the specific local vision for the pilot neighbourhood.**

City-wide vision

For the City of Zagreb, the overall vision for the city is a much **more decentralised approach to being a welcoming and inclusive city**. This means having a long-term vision of building welcoming, inclusive neighbourhoods across the city based on the pilot example of Travno. As part of this vision, the **City has an updated approach for the delivery of its integration services across the city**. At the heart of this is the decision to decentralise its new Welcome Centre - creating Welcome Centre Hubs in several locations in different areas of Zagreb, as safe and open 'spaces for meaningful encounters' which will have a few uses:

- Portable hub for our Welcome centre where employees from the Welcome centre will be available once a week
- Space for organising activities where locals and migrants can work together (from cultural to educational activities)
- A place in which we can advertise already existing activities to give them a better visibility
- A place for new ideas and possibilities

Local vision

However, this Investment Plan is not focused on delivery of this commitment. Rather, **the Investment Plan focuses down on the neighbourhood of Travno as a pilot case for implementing the Plan Einstein approach at local level in Zagreb**. This was the agreement of the ULG in order to facilitate the planning of specific actions at neighbourhood level with partners active in that community. On this basis, the members of the evolved URBACT Local Group (ULG) (see page 14) developed the following shared vision for the future development of the neighbourhood of Travno.

Vision for the pilot neighbourhood:

A socially cohesive neighbourhood in Travno where local residents come together and enjoy positive relationships and interactions regardless of their status, background or profile.

3. Intervention logic

Local vision

A socially cohesive neighbourhood in Travno where local residents come together and enjoy positive relationships and interactions regardless of their status, background or profile.

Areas of intervention

To deliver on the local vision for the neighbourhood of Travno, the Investment Plan has defined **four main areas of intervention**:

1. Spaces for meaningful encounters
2. Activities for meaningful encounters
3. Ecosystem approach
4. Plan Einstein in local policies.

Under each area of intervention one or more specific objective has been defined. These have been defined in ways that ensure that progress can be monitored over time.

Specific Objectives

1. Spaces for meaningful encounters

Specific Objective 1: To create **spaces for meaningful encounters** in the neighbourhood

2. Activities for meaningful encounters

Specific Objective 2.1: Organise or facilitate **personal development activities** bringing all people together as equals

Specific Objective 2.2: Organise or facilitate diverse **cultural and leisure activities** bringing all people together as equals

3. Ecosystem approach

Specific Objective 3.1: Ensuring **good cooperation** with NGOs and other stakeholders

Specific Objective 3.2: Ensuring **visibility for activities** for meaningful encounters in the neighbourhood

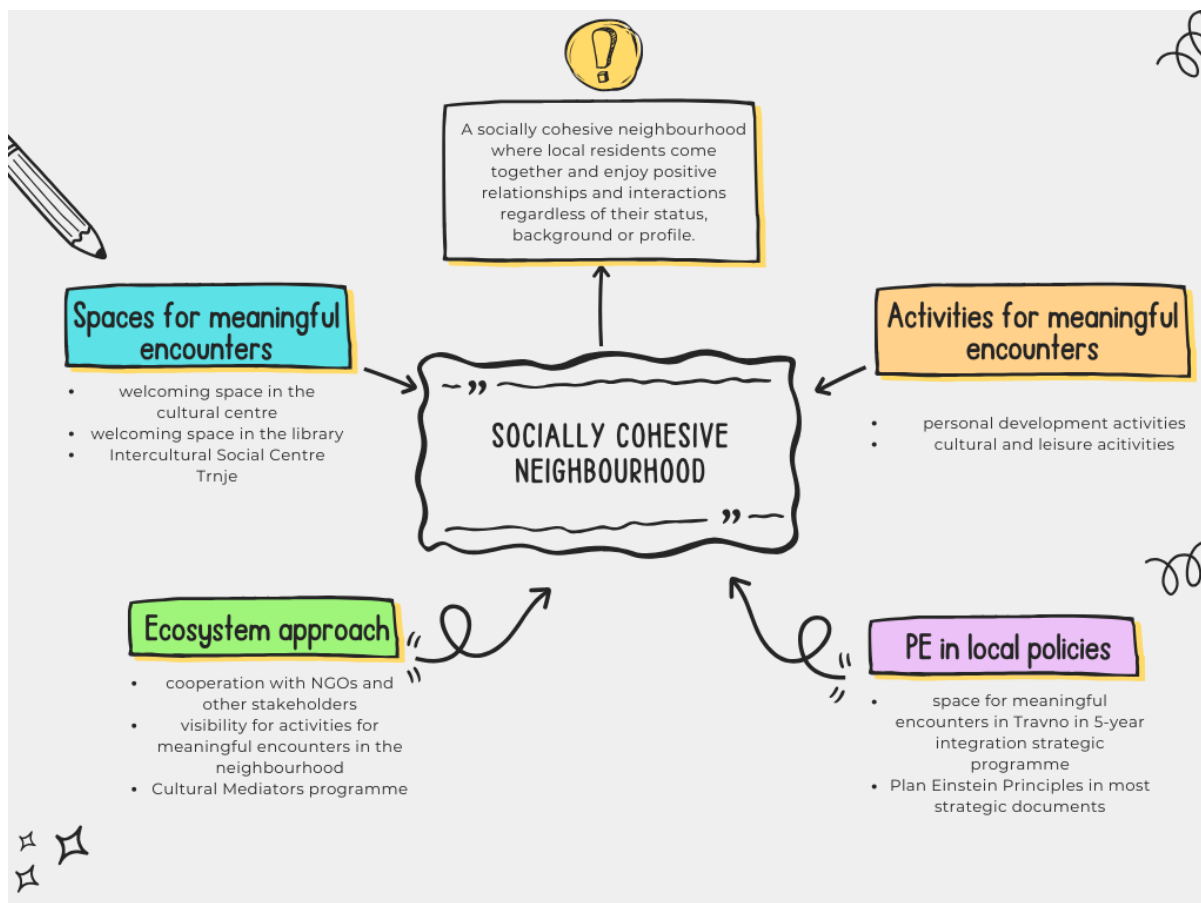
4. Plan Einstein in Local policies

Specific Objective 4: Embedding Plan Einstein into **local strategic and operational plans**

The **local theory of change** – building on the experiences in Utrecht – is that by delivering actions in each of these domains and achieving these specific objectives, tangible progress will be made towards achieving the overall vision of a more socially cohesive neighbourhood in Travno.

4. Plan of Action

The overall Plan of Action and the key activities foreseen under each area of intervention can be visualised as follows:



This plan of action is elaborated in more detail in the following **summary action tables structured by specific objective**.

4.1. Summary action tables

Specific Objective 1: To create spaces for meaningful encounters in the neighbourhood

Action name	Description	Output indicator	Action Lead	Key partners	Timing
1.1. Welcoming space at the cultural centre Travno	Significant physical intervention to turn a common area of the cultural centre into a dedicated open, welcoming space following Plan Einstein principles	1 open welcoming space	Cultural centre Travno	Municipality, NGOs Are You Syrious, Borders:none	Work expected to start in 2026 and be fully operational by late 2027. (see Section 4.2 'detailed activity planning' below)
1.2: Welcoming space at library Dugave	Reorganising existing library space, improving accessibility and introducing welcoming visual elements that encourage interaction between locals and newcomers.	1 open welcoming space	Library Dugave	Municipality	Expected to start in 2026
1.3: Intercultural Social Centre Trnje	Decorating and improving a more open and welcoming space following Plan Einstein principles as a part of the Intercultural Centre Trnje – this is an ongoing project where some spaces will be available for various intercultural activities	1 open welcoming space	Municipality	NGOs, Cultural Centres in Zagreb	This activity started, it is expected to be open in 2027

Specific Objective 2.1: Organise or facilitate personal development activities bringing all people together as equals

Action name	Description	Output indicator	Action Lead	Key partners
2.1.1. English Language Courses	Courses provided at the open welcoming space in the cultural centre, in three different ability groups. Courses run for 6 months.	2 parallel courses every 6 months. 50 participants per year	NGOs Are You Syrious, Borders:none	Municipality, Cultural centre Travno, Library Dugave
2.1.2. Entrepreneurship courses	3-month course in entrepreneurship, through weekly sessions of 3 hours, aimed at locals and asylum seekers.	2 courses per year. 20 participants per year	Cultural centre Travno	Municipality, Cultural centre Travno, Library Dugave
2.1.3. Digital workshops and courses	3-month course in programming and using mobile applications for work	2 courses per year. 30 participants per year	NGO Borders:none	Municipality, Cultural centre Travno, Library Dugave

Specific Objective 2.2: Organise or facilitate diverse cultural and leisure activities bringing all people together as equals

Action name	Description	Output indicator	Action Lead	Key partners
2.2.1. "Choir to Go"	3-hour workshop on singing traditional songs (Croatian and foreign) for parents and children (locals and foreigners)	4 times a year, 120 participants per year	Cultural centre Travno	Municipality, NGOs
2.2.2. Croatian movies with the neighbourhood	Free projections of Croatian movies for locals and foreigners (with English subtitles)	Monthly projections	Cultural centre Travno	Municipality

Action name	Description	Output indicator	Action Lead	Key partners
2.2.3. World Refugee Day	Celebrating World Refugee Day with a number of sensibilisation activities in Cultural Centre Travno and Library Dugave	1 event per year	Municipality	Cultural centre Travno, Library Dugave, NGOs
2.2.4. International Migrants Day	Celebrating International Migrants Day with a number of sensibilisation activities in Cultural Centre Travno and Library Dugave	1 event per year	Municipality	Cultural centre Travno, Library Dugave, NGOs
2.2.5. Fashion Show	Fashion show of clothing with traditional motives, models from local community and foreigners	2 events per year	Cultural centre Travno	Municipality, NGOs
2.2.6. Eat with your Neighbours	Culinary courses and tasting of traditional food	Monthly meet-ups.	Cultural centre Travno, Library Dugave	Municipality, NGOs
2.2.7. Alter-native Teaching	Classes in schools where the teachers are foreigners teaching children about their country of origin.	12 teachers, 120 lessons.	Municipality, Elementary and Highschools	NGOs
2.2.8. Mom-alone time	Playful workshops for children where parents can leave children for 2 hours and have some free time. For locals and foreigners	Weekly meet-ups.	Library Dugave	Municipality, Cultural Centre Travno, NGOs
2.2.9. Days of the Neighbourhood Travno	Activities and a communication stand on a 3-day fair celebrating the neighbourhood of Travno	1 event per year	Cultural centre Travno	Municipality, Library Dugave, NGOs

Specific Objective 3.1: Ensuring good cooperation with NGOs and other stakeholders

Action name	Description	Output indicator	Action Lead	Key partners	Timing
3.1.1: Regular ULG meetings	ULG meetings will continue after the project end for coordination of proposed activities open to new members and ideas	Monthly meetings	Municipality, Cultural centre Travno	Library Dugave, NGOs	2026+
3.1.2: Developing a legal basis for cooperation	A legal basis for different stakeholders to organise their activities in the space for meaningful encounters in Travno included in operative plans for implementation of the 5-year integration programme	New stakeholders included as partners (co-holders) of activities in operative action plans	Municipality	Cultural Center Travno, Library Dugave, Are You Syrious, Borders:none	2025
3.1.3: Expanding neighbourhood ecosystem	Identifying and contacting other NGOs working in this specific part of town and inviting them for cooperation	New members of the ULG group and partners in activities implementation	Joint responsibility of the ULG members	Cultural Center Travno, Library Dugave, Are You Syrious, Borders:none Municipality	Ongoing
3.1.4.: Cultural Connectors programme	Identifying and educating cultural connectors for specific major ethnical groups in Zagreb	Regular meetings and cooperation	NGOs	Municipality	Starting in September 2026 with funding from EU project Consolidate.

Specific Objective 3.2: Ensuring visibility for activities for meaningful encounters in the neighbourhood

Action name	Description	Output indicator	Action Lead	Key partners
3.2.1: Articles and invitations	Clear and informative articles and invitations for events – translated into different languages according to need	Articles and invitations on every event organised in this neighbourhood.	Ad Hoc (Municipality, Cultural centre Travno, Library Dugave)	NGOs
3.2.2: Translations of leaflets	Translation for leaflets and media posts in different languages for activities in Travno	Official translations on Ukrainian, Russian, Arabic and other languages (depending on the focus group)	NGOs	Municipality
3.2.3: Web and social page advertising	Regular maintenance of social pages with on-time advertisements	Web and social pages are regularly maintained	Municipality, Cultural centre Travno, Library Dugave	NGOs
3.2.4.: Cultural programme Connectors	Identify and train trusted members of migrant communities to support communication, outreach and participation - to ensure they are well informed about their rights, obligations and activities in Zagreb, and the municipality is well informed about the needs of migrants	Number of cultural connectors engaged with different communities.	Municipality	NGOs

Specific Objective 4: Embedding Plan Einstein into local strategic and operational plans

Action name	Description	Output indicator	Action Lead	Key partners	Timing
4.1.1: Plan Einstein in City of Zagreb's 5-year integration programme	Including 'Space for meaningful encounters in Travno' as one of the main activities in the Programme	Activity is written and elaborated in the Programme and the Programme is adopted by the City Assembly	City Department for Promoting Human Rights	Other City offices	2025
4.1.2: Plan Einstein in yearly operative action plans	Writing and developing Space for meaningful encounters in Travno as one of the main activities in operative action plans	Activity is written and elaborated on a yearly basis.	City Department for Promoting Human Rights	Other City offices	Implemented in plan for 2026, needed for 2027-2030 on yearly basis
4.1.3: Plan Einstein Principles in official strategic documents	Ensuring compatibility of other local strategies and action plans with the principles of Plan Einstein	Number of strategies compatible with Plan Einstein principles	Municipality		Ad hoc

4.2. Detailed action planning

More detailed action planning has been undertaken for the principal physical investment of the Investment Plan: the creation of the new open, welcoming space at the Cultural Centre Travno. The welcoming space is not only intended to become a permanent element of the Cultural Centre's regular ongoing activities long into the future, but also to provide a model that can be replicated in other neighbourhoods of Zagreb.

Action 1.1: Welcoming Space at the Cultural Centre Travno

Summary Description	
The creation of a new welcoming space at Cultural Centre Travno aims to establish an accessible community space where locals, newcomers and civil society organisations can meet, participate in activities and develop lasting social connections.	
Action Lead	Key partners
Cultural centre Travno	Municipality, NGOs Are You Syrious, Borders:none

Key implementation steps

Implementation step	Description	Output indicator	Resourcing	Timing
1.1.1: Identify suitable space	Selection of an existing common area of the cultural centre for transformation into a more open welcoming space.	1 appropriate space identified.	n/a	Q1 2026
1.1.2: Participatory design workshops	Open, inclusive sessions to plan enhancements to the space to make it more open and welcoming.	2 workshops	Funded from the city budget – these workshops will identify the costs needed to design the space	Q2 2026

1.1.3: Renovation of the space	Physical improvements to the space to improve accessibility, openness and attractiveness.	1 open accessible space	Investment funding – identified in the workshops	Q3-Q4 2026
1.1.4: Furnishing and decoration of the space	Arranging and decorating the space to feel more open and inclusive following Plan Einstein principles	1 open welcoming space	Investment funding – identified in the workshops	Q4 2026
1.1.5: Opening in a pilot phase	Including development of a diverse programme of community activities to attract local residents.	1 welcoming space open to the public	Initial funding to operate the space co-financed from the city budget.	Q4 2026
1.1.6: Full operationalisation	Including any improvements to the space or the programme of activities taking place within it.		Ongoing funding to operate the space – starting from city budget, upgrading from potential EU projects	Q3-4 2027
1.1.7: Securing the visibility of the space	Articles, promo materials (roll-up, leaflets, cards) to provide coordinated communication and outreach.	News articles, social media articles, leaflets - dedicated to the opening of new space	Co-financed from city budget as part of ongoing costs – aim to upgrade with EU project funding.	From pilot phase onwards

5. Implementation framework

This Framework sets out how the City of Zagreb will deliver the actions identified in the Investment Plan and ensure their long-term sustainability. It establishes the governance arrangements, implementation principles, investment approach, monitoring mechanisms and risk management measures that apply across all Specific Objectives. While some actions require targeted investment in physical infrastructure, the framework places equal emphasis on strengthening institutional cooperation, community participation and the long-term integration of activities into existing municipal services.

5.1. Strategic approach to implementation

The overall approach to implementation is informed by three key strategic principles:

- i. Maximising cooperation between local stakeholders
- ii. Exploiting existing capacity wherever possible
- iii. Supporting organic, sustainable change

Maximising cooperation between local stakeholders

Delivery of the Investment Plan will be carried out in partnership with municipal institutions, including Cultural Centre Travno and Library Dugave, civil society organisations, neighbourhood organisations and other relevant stakeholders.

Specifically, all activities – from the creation of open, welcoming spaces to the delivery of digital skills workshops – will be delivered through partnerships between municipal institutions and civil society organisations.

Ensuring good cooperation with and between community organisations and other stakeholders is so fundamental to the plan that it comprises one of the plan's six specific objectives (S.O.3.1).

Implementation will therefore focus on strengthening existing partnerships, improving coordination of annual programming across institutions, expanding stakeholder networks and establishing clear mechanisms for coordination (see Section 5.2 Governance).

Exploiting existing capacity wherever possible

Rather than focusing on significant new investments, new infrastructure or new services, the Plan seeks to build on and take advantage of existing local resources and capacity when possible to build a more comprehensive and impactful approach to promoting local social cohesion.

Implementation will strengthen existing programmes through improved coordination, inclusive outreach and adaptation to ensure compatibility with the principles of Plan Einstein. For example, existing educational programmes – such as English language courses, entrepreneurship training and digital skills workshops – will be adapted to encourage mixed participation by locals and newcomers, with particular emphasis on equal participation, lifelong learning and employability.

Similarly, existing culture and leisure activities – including workshops, neighbourhood events, creative programmes and annual awareness days – will be adapted to encourage intercultural participation and active involvement by diverse community members (as was tested during the project with the more inclusive approach to the Days of the Neighbourhood in Travno).

Supporting organic, sustainable change

Linked to the above two principles, the approach to implementation aims to ensure that new or evolved actions or approaches are embedded within the regular programmes and activities of key local partners, including the Cultural Centre Travno, Library Dugave and other partners.

Rather than one-off activities or major investments that cannot be sustained, the priority is on building the Plan Einstein approach more organically, but in ways that become embedded in the 'business as usual' approach. By embedding inclusive activities within the regular programmes of the City of Zagreb and its local partners, the City aims to ensure that meaningful encounters become a permanent feature of neighbourhood life.

In this way, the sustainability of the more open and inclusive approach will depend on continued programming, staff commitment and active community involvement – more than significant or new investment finance. The experiences gained through implementation also aim to provide a practical model for expanding similar spaces and services across Zagreb's neighbourhoods.

5.2. Future governance

Implementation of the Investment Plan will be **coordinated by the City of Zagreb's Department for Promoting Human Rights**, which will provide strategic oversight, ensure coordination across municipal departments and monitor progress towards the objectives of the Investment Plan. (See also Section 5.5 Monitoring framework below.)

The **URBACT Local Group (ULG)** established during the Plan Einstein Academy project will continue to serve as the principal coordination and participatory governance mechanism (see Action 3.1.1). Regular meetings will enable partners to coordinate activities, exchange information, monitor implementation, identify emerging community needs and jointly develop future initiatives. The ULG will remain open to new partners throughout implementation, ensuring that the governance structure continues to reflect the diversity of local stakeholders (see Action 3.1.3).

Implementation will follow an adaptive management approach, recognising that community needs, migration trends and funding opportunities may change over time. **Regular reviews will enable activities to be adjusted** while maintaining the overall objectives of promoting inclusion, strengthening neighbourhood cohesion and creating meaningful encounters between locals and newcomers.

5.3. Communication and Visibility

Long-term success of the Investment Plan will depend on effective communication that serves both to: support effective cooperation between public institutions, civil society organisations and local communities; and enable and encourage all residents to participate in neighbourhood activities.

With this in mind, **one of the specific objectives of the plan is "Ensuring visibility for activities for meaningful encounters in the neighbourhood"** (S.O.3.2) under which significant communication activities are foreseen, including the development of multilingual promotional materials, translated information, digital communication and community-based outreach, ensuring that activities remain accessible to diverse audiences.

An additional part of the plan worth highlighting in this context is the development of the **Cultural Connectors Programme** (Action 3.2.4). This will identify and train trusted members of migrant

communities to support communication, outreach and participation. Working alongside municipal institutions and civil society organisations, Cultural Connectors will facilitate dialogue between communities, improve access to information and encourage greater involvement in local initiatives.

By integrating stakeholder cooperation, multilingual communication and the Cultural Connectors Programme into regular municipal practice, the City of Zagreb aims to **establish a permanent local ecosystem and coordinated communication** that supports inclusion, strengthens neighbourhood cohesion and creates meaningful encounters well beyond the lifetime of the Investment Plan.

5.4. Funding strategy

The implementation approach set out above already highlights that the Investment Plan **prioritises the use and adaptation of existing public infrastructure, services and community programmes** wherever possible. Rather than seeking investment for creating new or parallel structures, the Investment Plan seeks to strengthen existing institutions by making them more inclusive and accessible to both locals and newcomers. **This approach reduces investment costs**, improves long-term sustainability and supports the integration of successful activities into the regular work of participating organisations.

For example, one of the key actions for creating a new open, welcoming space in the community is to make small adaptations to the current spaces of the Library Dugave. This demonstrates how existing public infrastructure can be adapted to encourage inclusion with relatively modest investment. Rather than requiring significant renovation, implementation focuses on reorganising existing library space, improving accessibility and introducing welcoming visual elements that encourage interaction between locals and newcomers.

Nevertheless, **external funding will be sought to support innovation and expansion**, while long-term operational costs should progressively become part of the regular budgets and annual programmes of participating institutions.

Investment requirements vary across the Specific Objectives but generally focus on four complementary areas:

- adaptation and improvement of welcoming community spaces;
- delivery of educational, cultural and community activities;
- coordination between institutions and civil society organisations;
- communication, multilingual outreach and community engagement.

Co-finance for these ongoing activities will primarily be provided through the City of Zagreb budget.

However, this will be **complemented by European and national funding programmes wherever and whenever possible** in order to increase capacity and expand activities. This will include seeking specific funding opportunities through the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+), the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF), the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and other funding opportunities supporting social inclusion, community development and urban regeneration.

5.5. Monitoring framework

Monitoring will be coordinated by the Department for Promoting Human Rights through regular **implementation reviews and annual evaluations**. Progress will be assessed using a combination of quantitative and qualitative indicators.

Precise monitoring indicators are still to be defined, but will include output indicators focused on the implementation of planned activities (e.g. number of courses delivered) as well as results indicators such as participation levels, diversity of participants, stakeholder engagement and user satisfaction.

Attendance records, stakeholder consultations, user surveys and partner meetings will provide the evidence base for continuous improvement and future decision-making.

5.6. Risk assessment

Several risks may affect implementation, including:

- Changing political priorities
- Limited financial resources
- Uneven community participation
- Reduced stakeholder engagement

These **risks will be mitigated** through diversified funding sources, strong partnership arrangements, continuous communication with stakeholders and the gradual integration of successful activities into the regular work of municipal institutions.

The long-term sustainability of the Investment Plan will therefore depend not only on completing individual actions but also on establishing durable governance arrangements, institutional ownership and stable operational funding.