Beyond the Urban

Bram, France
3 226 inhabitants

Challenge

Joining Beyond the Urban was challenging for Bram, the smallest city in the network. Despite its size, Bram faces similar mobility issues and stands out for testing innovative actions, showing strong motivation, creativity and ambition to deliver concrete projects for its territory.

Local heroes

As a municipal councillor and a dedicated volunteer with the EcoBram&Co association, André Cathala embodies Bram's local commitment to environmental and mobility issues. His dual engagement has been instrumental in advancing a coherent and ambitious vision for a more sustainable and accessible city.



Lessons learnt

- Get started without hesitation: the programme offers valuable methodological support and learning through transnational exchanges.
- Ensure one dedicated person can follow the project over time, as sustained involvement is essential.
- Engage the local stakeholder group regularly to reflect residents' needs and maintain momentum.

Solution

Creation Bram's Multimodal Transport Hub

The multimodal hub at Bram train station is the cornerstone of the Integrated Action Plan, supporting Bram's ambition to link rural areas with major metropolitan centres. It will bring together key mobility services in one place: trains, buses, cycling facilities, shared mobility and support services to make sustainable travel accessible to all. As the territory's main mobility gateway, the hub will simplify daily travel and improve access to jobs, services and opportunities beyond Bram. More than a transit point, it will strengthen cohesion across the Piège Lauragais Malepère intercommunity and reinforce Bram's role as a rural–urban connector.



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Bram la ville à vivre !

Beyond the Urban

Bucharest-Ilfov, Romania
2 259 665 inhabitants

Challenge

Our biggest challenge was bringing everyone together. We shared a vision of sustainable, uncongested mobility, but investment priorities initially differed. After the second URBACT Local Group meeting, collaboration improved and the process ran smoothly.

Local heroes

Our activities would not have been possible without the strong involvement of the public transport operators in the Bucharest–Ilfov region. Their operational knowledge, real-world experience, and openness to dialogue helped us move from ideas to realistic solutions.



Lessons learnt

- Cities of all sizes, either large or small, face very similar mobility challenges.
- Before implementing technical solutions, bring all relevant stakeholders together.
- Mobility challenges are not purely technical, they require coordination, communication, and shared ownership among all parties.
- Building understanding and commitment among people and institutions first makes technical solutions more effective and easier.
- Plan small, achievable activities.

Solution

Connecting schools to public transport

The most impactful action in our IAP is Mobility for Education. The Bucharest–Ilfov region is expanding fast, and schools are often built before reliable public transport reaches new neighbourhoods, pushing families to rely on cars. Through this action, we will connect every school to the public transport network by analysing school locations and travel patterns, identifying service gaps, and adjusting or extending bus routes accordingly. Local authorities, operators and communities will be involved to ensure routes match real needs.The aim is to cut travel time and costs, improve safety, and encourage sustainable travel habits for a healthier, more connected future in Ilfov.



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TRANSPORT PUBLIC BUCUREȘTI ILFOV

Beyond the Urban

Hradec Králové, Czechia
93 506 inhabitants

Challenge

Hradec Králové's goal is to reduce the use of individual car, not through prohibitions and regulations, but by implementing measures that make sustainable transport so attractive that residents and visitors choose it voluntarily.

Local heroes

The success of the pilot project to place shared bikes in surrounding small municipalities would not have been possible without the willingness of the mayors, cooperation with the city, and active citizens who began using shared bikes and showed others that this is also a viable option in combination with other types of public transport.



Lessons learnt

It is important to focus on changing the transport behavior of city residents. Do not force them into anything, but show them that sustainable transport around the city is beneficial for them.

At the same time, it is also important that city representatives understand this and create the conditions for such a behavioral change.

Solution

Integrating bikes & public transport

The most impactful action in our Integrated Action Plan (IAP) is expanding the shared bicycle system beyond Hradec Králové, linking it more closely with public transport to build a more integrated metropolitan mobility system. The network now reaches neighbouring municipalities with strong commuting ties, such as Vysoká nad Labem and Běleč nad Orlicí, enabling commuters to combine shared bikes with public and suburban transport. Fare integration is a key feature: holders of an annual city transport ticket get an extended free rental period, making sustainable travel more accessible. Results are very positive, with record user interest and rentals, and more municipalities ready to join as the system grows.



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Hradec Králové

Beyond the Urban

Kočani, North Macedonia
31 602 inhabitants

Challenge

Main challenge In Kocani was strong dependence on private cars, both in the city and in surrounding rural areas. This resulted in congestion, limited mobility options for non-drivers, and negative environmental impacts.

Local heroes

Our heroes are youth. Most actions in our IAP are driven by their energy, creativity, and long-term vision. They turn today's challenges into bold ideas and real action



Lessons learnt

- Start small, act together.
- Citizens are heroes, not spectators.
- Celebrate every win, however tiny.
- Listen, include, innovate.
- Patience today, change tomorrow.
- Share your journey, inspire others.

Solution

School Streets, children at the heart of mobility

The most impactful action in our IAP is School Streets, putting children at the heart of mobility planning in Kočani. By limiting motor-vehicle access around schools during peak times, we will create safer, calmer spaces for arrivals and departures.
This helps reclaim streets for people, making walking and cycling easier while reducing dangerous crossings, traffic and air pollution. Benefits go beyond school gates: residents enjoy quieter neighbourhoods, parents feel reassured, and mornings run more smoothly. We are proud of School Streets for their immediate, visible impact on Kočani's children.



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Municipality of Kocani

Beyond the Urban

Machico, Portugal
20 000 inhabitants

Challenge

One of the main challenges was maintaining stakeholder engagement throughout a complex and time-intensive process. Additionally, adapting URBACT methodologies to local administrative constraints required continuous flexibility and learning.

Local heroes

This action would not have been possible without the strong commitment of the URBACT Local Group, municipal technicians and elected officials. The continuous contribution of local organisations and citizens ensured relevance, ownership and shared responsibility.



Lessons learnt

- Strong governance structures are essential for effective implementation.
- Co-creation improves the quality and feasibility of urban actions.
- Political and technical alignment strengthens long-term commitment.
- Flexibility helps overcome administrative and resource constraints.
- Preparing actions with an investment perspective increases sustainability.

Solution

Machico, an Atlantic city in transformation

Machico's key IAP action is a structured participatory governance framework to deliver sustainable urban development. It replaced fragmented initiatives with an integrated, investment-oriented approach co-designed with local stakeholders. Through URBACT, Machico improved cross-department coordination, engaged economic and social actors, and turned local needs into concrete actions. The approach supports urban regeneration, social cohesion and local assets, while strengthening access to future funding. Its main value is embedding participation and strategic planning into municipal practice for lasting impact beyond the URBACT project.



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MACHICO
CÂMARA MUNICIPAL

Beyond the Urban

Osona, Spain
165 292 inhabitants

Challenge

Our main challenge was to put mobility on the political agenda and build a shared, county-wide vision with a wide range of stakeholders. Osona is a highly self-contained territory—around 92% of daily mobility happens within the county —yet it lacked an integrated, strategic

Local heroes

This would not have happened without the commitment of Osona's municipalities (especially small towns and villages), the full support of the County Council, and the collaboration with UPC University. We are especially grateful to the 130 people who attended the 13 URBACT Local Group meetings, whether once or repeatedly.



Lessons learnt

- Start participation from day one as a driver of the process, not as a final validation step.
- Blend participation with strong technical expertise (universities, data observatories...).
- Go to the territory: hold meetings where stakeholders are.
- Set clear objectives early, even if it takes extra time, to stay focused and optimize efforts.
- Make key ideas clear and shared so local actors can discuss them.

Solution

County Mobility Office

This is the most impactful outcome of our IAP because it turns collaboration into lasting capacity. Drafting the IAP built a strong network across Osona and Lluçanès, integrating civil society, municipalities, county-level authorities and regional stakeholders. This new way of working produced consensus-based solutions like never before and confirmed that, without a dedicated structure, implementation would remain fragile and discontinuous.
The Office ensures continuity beyond political cycles, provides technical support to municipalities, and serves as a single interlocutor with higher-level administrations. It also safeguards the cooperative method developed through Beyond the Urban, turning a temporary URBACT project into a permanent driver of change.



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Creacció
Agència d'Emprenedoria, Innovació i Coneixement

Beyond the Urban

Santa Maria da Feira, Portugal
136 674 inhabitants

Challenge

Santa Maria da Feira faced fragmented urban–rural mobility, weak intermodality and low awareness of transport services. The key challenge was turning a long-term strategy into actions and ensuring continuity across political cycles through stable coordination and participation.

Local heroes

This would not have happened without the URBACT Local Group, which brought together students, seniors, active workers, NGOs, municipal technicians, and transport operators. Their direct involvement in co-design and usability testing was essential to shaping Mob.Feira as a practical and inclusive solution.



Lessons learnt

- Start with people's daily mobility needs, not with technology or infrastructure.
- Use co-creation to turn citizens into partners.
- Make information visible and simple.
- Digital tools work best when combined with physical touchpoints, such as QR codes.
- Trust and communication are as critical as technical mobility solutions.
- Exchanging experiences with other cities accelerates learning.

Solution

Mob.Feira: all transport info in one place

The most impactful action is Mob.Feira, a digital mobility platform that centralises transport information. After installing poles at all the bus stops in the parish of Milheirós de Poiares, they were equipped with QR codes that give users real-time access to routes and schedules. QR codes and the platform are now being rolled out across the entire municipality, reinforcing Mob.Feira as a one-stop access point for mobility services.
Mob.Feira addresses a key challenge: public transport information was fragmented and often invisible, especially in rural and semi-rural areas. It currently integrates real-time public transport data and is expanding to include cycling, with information on routes, trails and infrastructure.



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santa maria da feira
câmara municipal

Beyond the Urban

Szabolcs 05, Hungary
87 000 inhabitants

Challenge

In the Szabolcs 05 region, many residents rely on private cars for daily trips, while data shows low use of walking, cycling and public transport –driven by limited awareness and perceived lack of attractive, reliable and sustainable alternatives for urban–rural travel.

Local heroes

Teachers, municipal staff and community organisers –together with actively involved children from the pilot actions– played a key role in motivating families and local communities to rethink everyday travel and adopt safer, more sustainable mobility habits.



Solution

Shaping the next generation of travellers

In the Szabolcs 05 region of Hungary, the strongest drivers of long-term mobility change is the youngest generation. This is why a flagship action of the IAP is the Sustainable Mobility School Programmes, which goes beyond traditional traffic education by presenting walking, cycling and public transport as positive and healthy choices. Through playful activities and hands-on learning, children understand how their daily mobility affects their community. This solution's strength lies in the multiplier effect: children bring these ideas home, influence family habits and contribute to changing the local mobility culture.



Lessons learnt

- Engaging children early proves to be a powerful catalyst for wider behaviour change, as they influence families and normalise sustainable mobility in everyday life.

- Improving everyday travel is not only a matter of infrastructure, but also of awareness, habits and trust in alternatives -especially for short, routine trips.

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SZRDA

Beyond the Urban

Tartu, Estonia
13 023 inhabitants

Challenge

Tartu Municipality faces the challenge of encouraging residents to choose walking, cycling, and public transport over private cars, while ensuring that access to services and destinations remains convenient and accessible both in urban and rural areas.

Local heroes

The key contributors to Tartu Municipality´s Mobility Action Plan were the pupils of Kõrveküla Primary School and their parents, the teachers who integrated project activities into learning, and the members of the URBACT Local Group (ULG), who dedicated significant time and expertise to the project's success.



Solution

Rural stops, safer and more useful

In addition to gaining and renewing sector-specific knowledge and building valuable new networks, the project led to a comprehensive Mobility Action Plan. A key priority is improving rural public transport infrastructure through safer, more comfortable bus stops: lighting rural stops and creating multifunctional stops in larger centres that also serve as information points, parcel pick-up locations and community spaces. Another focus is developing playful, educational travel routes, for example including painting hopscotch grids or zig-zag paths on pedestrian routes to encourage physical activity, or integrating multiplication tables and other learning tasks into walking paths, making journeys engaging and instructive.



Lessons learnt

- Do not assume you already understand your problem. Network partners and URBACT tools help uncover hidden layers.
- Physical site visits are essential, you cannot think outside the box without leaving it.
- Engage schools early by offering them meaningful and inspiring learning opportunities linked to real-life challenges.
- Small, playful interventions can trigger big behavioural change.

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TARTU VALD

Beyond the Urban

Treviso, Italy
85 984 inhabitants

Challenge

Breaking the habit! The challenge was, and still is, to try to change people's mindset, to break habits, and to offer the opportunity to see both the spaces of the city and one's own way of using from another point of view.

Local heroes

The people who manage each individual action play a fundamental role in the process, such as the mobility manager of each school or company, or the organizer of a public event. The choice of these people is crucial to the outcome, because being convincing, determined, and consistent with the actions encourages other people to follow them.



Lessons learnt

The advice is to have a vision, even a big and important one, but to start with small things, feasible actions that are not overly ambitious, and then gradually expand and deepen them. In this way, the fear of change is avoided, the risk of failure is reduced, and awareness is created that change is not only possible but less difficult than it seems.

Solution

Work & school travel plans

The most impactful action of our IAP is the creation of a technical table with local companies, schools, and transport operators to find solutions best suited to the travel needs of workers and students. This will reduce private car use, especially during peak hour, and influence habits by fostering a sustainable mobility mindset. To date, 16 local businesses have joined, and we are helping them to develop commuting plans for their employees, covering a total of 8,000 employees. More companies will join soon. We are doing the same with schools, involving a total of more than 20,000 students from primary to secondary schools.



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