



Urban sports promotion for social inclusion  
and active living

**INTEGRATED ACTION PLAN**

***Liepāja***



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## Integrated Action Plan – LIEPĀJA

This document which comprises Liepāja City Local Action Plan is a result of cooperation between municipal institutions, the private sector, non-governmental organisations and representatives of several local communities aimed at developing and improving various sites and processes in the city.

The plan provides for increasing the number of free leisure activities in Karosta, more specifically area of Beberliņi park, which has already been included in the development plans of the city. This project is intended to improve data collection in the city is in the pipeline. This project will specify the methods and tools potentially necessary for the city to ensure constant and extensive analysis of population habits in various fields and to guarantee efficient work on raising the public welfare.

The ideas provided in this document was consulted and ideas were generated together with URBACT Local Group members and other relevant and knowledgeable parties, to prepare and understand the future needs, current situation and interest from population. Therefore, this plan consists of various interconnected ideas, that could be realized by municipality our any interested organization. According to this document, described ideas in it can be the useful step for future activities, to approach responsible institutions and apply for different EU funding schemes.



## 1. City of Liepāja in context to URBACT "Vital Cities"

**Population** – 69433 (decreasing)

**Nationality structure** – Latvians (57%) Russians (29.3%) Others (13.8%)

**Area** – 60.4 km<sup>2</sup>

**Average Age** – 42.6 years

**Density** – 1021/km<sup>2</sup>

**Unemployment rate** – 6.2%

**Average gross salary (EUR)** – 708

**Main industries:** Public sector, tourism and manufacturing

City of Liepāja is the 3rd largest Latvian city located in west of the country and is situated between the Baltic sea and lake of Liepāja. Liepāja is cultural, economic, transportation and administrative centre of Kurzeme region. Liepāja can be reached by sea, road and air, which provides economic advantages for businesses, therefore have been growing and providing opportunities for various industries to be located in the "city of wind". We have been struggling with shrinking population over last 2 decades because of negative natural growth and migration trends. However, city have been working towards improving conditions overall to make Liepāja competitive and active city.

The decision making structure is represented by the City Council for which 14 deputies and a mayor are voted. The City Council appoints the members of four standing committees, which prepare issues to be discussed in the Council meetings: Finance Committee; City Economy and Development Committee; Social Affairs, Health Care, Education and Public Order Committee; Culture and Sports Committee. Besides, the local municipality's administration structure works with 120 employees.

Health is improving in the city as more people are looking ways to improve it and it has been showed in the survey, however there are still plenty of risks, which need to be considered and improve in relation to subject of healthy lifestyle. In 2014, 31% of the inhabitants started to enlarge their level of daily activity and refine their eating habits. 59% considered improving their health habits and agreed that more physical activity it would make a positive impact for their health. Nevertheless, the surveys show that there are more persons talking about improving their health than persons actually taking concrete steps.

For the non-communicable diseases (NCDs), the main health risk factors in the city are smoking (men 46%, women 20%), alcohol consumption (men – 19.7 litre/person, women – 6.3 litre/person), raised blood pressure (men 47%, women 42%) and obesity (22% men, 27% women). Prevention is based on the elimination of lifestyle-related risk factors (smoking, obesity, alcohol) and inclusion of appropriate physical activity. Leading causes of death are cardiovascular diseases and oncological problems and the average life expectancy at birth is 74.1 years (69 – men, 79 – women).

In regarding an active and planned projects city have been involved in a various regional and European level projects. Specifically, to project and physical activities and health Liepāja are following regional and local development plans. The plan of Liepāja urban development program 2015 – 2020" is created based on local level "Liepāja sustainable development strategy until year 2030", regional strategy "Kurzeme planning region spatial plan 2016. -2026", national level strategies: mid-term "NAP 2020" and long-term "Latvija2030" and on European level strategy "EU 2020". In local level "Liepāja urban development program 2015 – 2020" with particular policies to the interest of URBACT "Vital Cities" project:

- Policy 1.2 – Active, healthy and socially protected inhabitants
  - Active and healthy lifestyle promotion
- Policy 1.3 – Qualitative leisure possibilities, recognition and achievement in sport and culture. Strengthening sense of belonging
- Policy 1.4 – Effective city management in collaboration with inhabitants
  - Citizens involvement in city management
  - Modern and effective information exchange between municipality and citizens
  - Improved communication between municipality departments

In recent years a lot was done in sport – city's sports infrastructure development and regular hosting of high-level European and world-class championships, as well as the development of the best sports programme for youth in the country. New ideas are constantly implemented, and the range of offers of daily active lifestyle and sports activities is constantly developed to allow every resident of Liepaja to take up sports and live a healthier life. The joint long-term work of Liepaja residents in determined development of sports infrastructure has been praised not only beyond the city borders, but abroad as well. Liepaja is the first city in the Baltic region that was awarded the title of "European city of sport" by European Capitals and Cities of Sport Federation due to its development of sports infrastructure and industry.

Another spectacular fact is the Latvian Cyclists' Association has awarded Liepaja a certificate for its contribution to the development of cycling infrastructure, thus confirming that Liepaja is a cyclist-friendly city. Bike path network creation has been begun in 2009, which made Liepaja the first city in Kurzeme that has actively engaged in promotion of cycling. At present there is a total of 40 km of bike paths built in Liepaja. Bicycle stands of single design are installed in Liepaja's historic centre. The number of various cycling events both in Liepaja and its surroundings increases with each passing year. Many of these have already become traditional – Liepaja Cycling Marathon, Liepaja European Mobility Week bike ride, Priekule Mountain Bike Marathon, Tweed Run. This year Liepaja awaits vintage bicycle riders dressed in tweed costumes on May 07.

Furthermore, understanding of climate conditions and spatial position is required to plan and develop suggestions included in the Integrated action plan. Liepaja is located next to the Baltic sea, which impacts the climate at relatively high degree, providing city with mild winters and chilly summers. Bathing period can be from May to September in lakes and rivers, however the highest temperature in the sea are in August. Influence from water around the city the climate is humid and windy with yearly average temperature of 10.5 degrees Celsius. In this regard, Liepaja need to be aware that activities organized outdoors are used mainly in summer as in winter period there is a challenge to adjust outdoor facilities to winter sports as a result of lack of snow and temperature being above freezing. Activities suggested in the IAP should be considered in relevance of climate conditions and their impact to facilities and services provided outdoors.

However, Liepaja has a lot of potential to improve and in collaboration with stakeholders of the city, development can be successful. Therefore, Liepaja have taken active part in URBACT "Vital Cities" project to promote active lifestyle, cooperate with European and local partners towards brighter and more active future. In this plan will be discussed and suggested actions which would be necessary to make to provide new activities, involve citizens and adjust deprived areas in the city for low-threshold physical activities. At the moment Liepaja is at its` course in regional and local development strategies and problems tackled by URBACT "Vital Cities" IAP are relevant and approachable in the near future. In regards of URBACT "Vital Cities" project initial challenges for Liepaja are stated below. These challenges include digital solutions, improving deprived areas in neighbourhood, policy and legislations challenges and social inclusion through physical activities.

## Initial problem and policy challenge

- Broader possibilities to be active in neighbourhoods further away from the city centre
- Analysing and gathering data about activity levels in the city
- Give opportunity citizens to make and plan their own public space
- Shorten the gap between and connect different areas through active lifestyle
- Improve social inclusion in the neighbourhood where high percentage of minorities live.

## Focus:

Integrated Action Plan for city of Liepaja is focused to improve and redefine public spaces through initiatives coming from citizens. Increase possibilities to be physically and socially active through sport by developing new sport areas simultaneously survey and gather data about physical activity through various sources. Vital Cities project and generated ideas are the output of Urban Local Group, that consists of different stakeholders. Integrated Action Plan is a tool, that could be relevant and useful to citizens and public authorities to improve, redesign and co-operate in the city development actions.

To get the best connection between needs of the city and project goals four areas of focus were prioritised and included in the plan:

- Improving Municipal territories at the Initiative of local communities
- Data collection and creation of database
- Developing Beberliņi park — Establishing sports routes in Beberliņi
- Social inclusion through local sport and health events

These areas and routes would be better connected with the city, that could lead to higher usage rate of area

## Urban Local group

This project has provided good background and starting point to be active and co-operative with citizens of Liepaja, which has been one of the main purposes of this project.

Urban Local group meetings were attended by approx. 30 different people in various stages of the project, and many others were contacted, asked for expertise and informed

through newspapers about the project and integrated action plan. Together in this project was held 14 ULG meetings. In addition to that workshops with youth were organized, consultations and informal meetings with the individuals from the various fields were considered when writing the IAP.

### Core Urban Local Group members:

**Kristaps Reinfelds** –

Project coordinator.  
Liepaja City Council Sports Department  
International project manager

**Artis Lagzdiņš** –

Head of Liepaja City Council  
Sports department (-2017)

**Evija Mūrniece** –

Deputy director of Liepaja City Council  
Sports department

**Mārtiņš Herbsts** –

Project manager in Liepaja City Council  
Development department

**Anete Bērziņa** –

Territory planner in Liepaja City Council  
Building department

**Elīna Tolmačova** –

Head of Environmental, health and public  
participation department in Liepaja City  
Council

**Inga Krivcova** –

Head of winter swimming organization  
"VeloRonis".

**Tatjana Tarasova** –

Head of NGO "Karosta Kids".

**Vilmārs Bogdanovs** –

Entrepreneur.  
Windsurfing club and café "Rietumkrasts"

**Imants Ločmelis** –

Nordic Walking instructor at NGO  
"Nūjo ar Vēju"

**Rolands Strehers** –

Running enthusiast. Interest group  
"Skrienam Liepājā"

**Reinis Rozītis** –

Owner of NGO sports organization  
"Liepājas vieglatlētikas klubs"

**Anna Īviņa** –

Head of Youth organization  
"Jauniešu Māja" (-2017)

## 2. Call for re-designed deprived areas through community

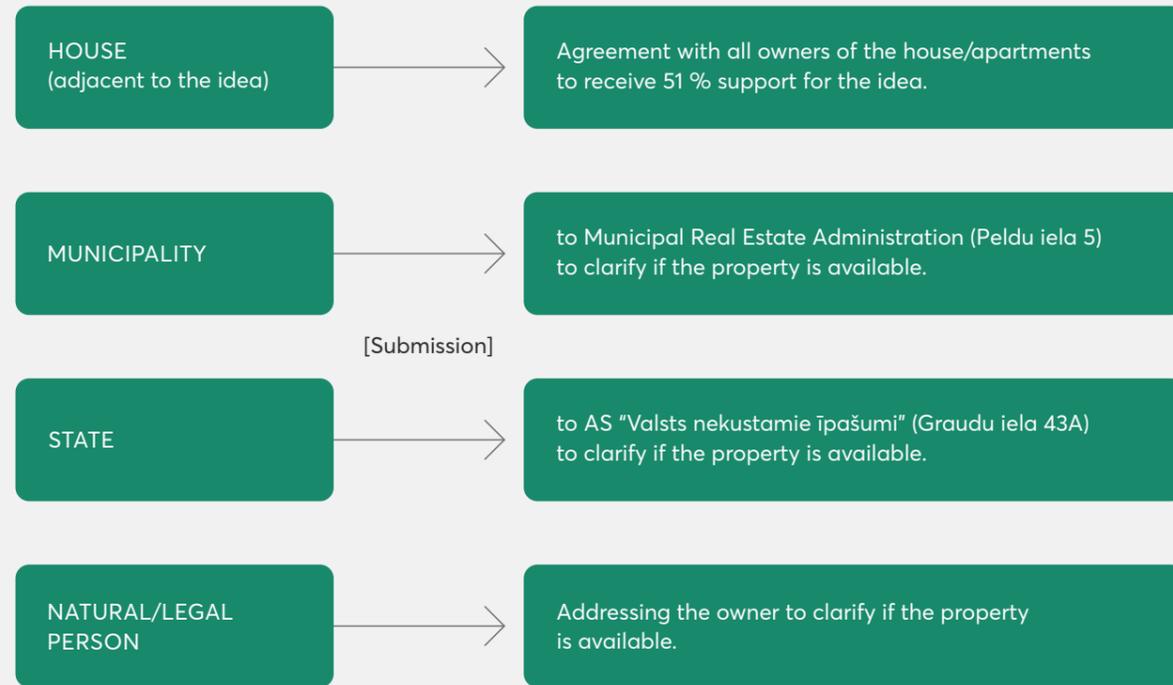
### Problem

We are responsible for the environment we live in and that surrounds us. Modern 21st century people are known for their innovative and bright ideas that all can be realised. A frequent problem is certain procedures that must be followed by all who have an idea of an object falling in the Structure Group 1 and who want to build this structure on the municipal land. The whole procedure starting from submitting the idea to implementing it takes minimum two months (see Diagram No. 1 for more detailed information). The current situation prevents fully fledged use of the social and municipal potential as many ideas are held back while the activists have to follow a special procedure which may drag on.

Being aware of this situation and the overall procedure of dealing with financial and project-related aspects, people tend to either stop before an idea is implemented or spend large amount of time and financing which has a major impact on the realisation and quality of the idea.

It is necessary to amend the current procedure and to reduce the overall bureaucratic burden to ensure implementation of small projects as soon as possible. Special elements and objects that can be approved within maximum two weeks must be specified, since this would increase the number of ideas and allow simpler realisation. Overall, this is a potential starting point for improved cooperation between the municipality and society to create more comfortable and popular active leisure sites in Liepāja.

1. **IDEA** (construction of Group 1 structure, Cabinet Regulation No. 500 of 19 August 2014, Annex 1)
2. **PUBLIC DISCUSSION** (approval 51 %) for supporting the idea, specified by owner of the territory, actual projects/concepts
3. **IMPLEMENTATION** \*taking into consideration the owner's view



4. **MANAGEMENT**



5. **DEMOLITION** — Demolition and putting into order shall be carried out pursuant to the contract

**PAPERWORK COSTS:**

Fee in the amount of 30.00 EUR to Liepāja City Council (Liepāja City Binding Regulations No. 28 of 8 December 2016) + topographic plan + project costs

**DURATION:**

minimum two months

**CONCLUDING LEASE CONTRACT**

\* In case of a natural/legal person verbal agreement is also acceptable  
 \*\* The contract shall specify the manager of the IDEA

**CONSTRUCTION BOARD PROCEDURE:**

NB! Provide possibility to the State Fire and Rescue Service, State Emergency Medical Service, etc. to access the adjacent structures and territories (Cabinet Regulation No. 333 of 30 June 2015).

Construction intention documentation:

**1.a. for construction work in depth more than 30 cm**

- 1) Topographic plan (to be received at the Construction Board)
- 2) Visualisation
- 3) Explanatory memorandum (3-4 pages)

\* If engineering networks cross the territory, APPROVAL MUST BE RECEIVED from the competent institutions.

\*\* If any equipment is to be installed, it shall conform to EU standards and include specification.

**1.b. for construction work in depth above 30 cm**

- 1) Actual plan (to be received at the Construction Board)
- 2) Draft design
- 3) Explanatory memorandum (3-4 pages)

7 working days to receive Construction Board's approval

Inspection within 3 working days following submission on the completion of construction works

**2. Submitting to the Construction Board for approval IMPLEMENTATION**

**3. After the completion, the BUILDING INSPECTION and the ARCHITECT inspects the object and fill in a standard form to confirm that the INTENTION matches the initial one.**

## Solution

To change the process, the following actions are necessary:

1. amendments to Liepāja City binding regulations,
2. information on sites where public initiatives are welcomed provided by the Real Estate Administration,
3. overview of territory use (topographic plans and engineering networks) provided by the Construction Board
4. development of IT platform for submitting public initiatives.

Process after the changes:

1. IT platform is used for submitting ideas to develop sites in Liepāja approved by the municipality,
2. submitted ideas are evaluated considering management costs and overall conformity,
3. publishing of the supported and achievable ideas on the platform to receive public opinion (voting and thoughts about the necessity),

4. initiatives (ideas) gaining most support is implemented by the authors,
5. agreement between the author, society and municipality on maintenance of the object.

The responsible institution for drafting integrated action plan is Liepāja City Council. For changes to be implemented several departments must cooperate — Information Technology Department, Department of Environment, Health and Public Participation, Construction Board, Real Estate Administration, Department of Development.

Considering the current work on the action plan, which includes development of new council website, costs have been incurred in respect of creating an IT platform for submitting public ideas and enabling small-scale public projects to attract financing from the State and municipality.

## Benefits

- Authors of ideas and the society would benefit from the eased initiative that would provide simpler and easier implementation of public ideas in the city along with solutions to developing the urban environment.
- Easily accessible website containing all ideas and indicating the responsible persons.
- An online voting system allowing control of and support to most interesting, outstanding and practical works.
- Public engagement in enhancing the urban environment and encouragement to create and manage the sites ourselves.
- Only the best ideas are implemented thus reducing the number of unhappy people.
- Creating of new sites and putting in order the current public sites in territories where no activities take place now.
- Facilitating municipality's work in relation to small-scale projects by allowing the activists to implement their ideas themselves on the municipal land.
- Quicker and simpler support to small scale projects and initiatives.

## 3. Tracking and data collection of physical activities

### Actual situation - Problem

Having evaluated the current situation in Liepāja in relation to data collection about the popularity of physical activity in Liepāja, it is clear that more information should be collected and processed to assess the necessity to extend the availability of physical activities and establish the route for future developments in the field of physical activities. Currently there is no targeted and controlled acquisition of information about physical activities.

During the last few years, Liepāja City has paid more attention to collecting information allowing studying and analysing of various habits, trends and other aspects in several fields.

The project "Vital Cities" provides the possibility to create a database to enable better understanding of the general physical activity indicators.

The **database** is necessary as it would provide the municipality with more detailed and substantiated information on the level of physical activities in the city and ease applying for the suitable financing. It would also contribute to easier organisation of

various better-tuned sporting events, observing the public leisure habits (when and where the population tend to spend their leisure), and understanding the actual level of using bicycle paths (map No.1) and sports facilities. Such information opens the door to more diverse development possibilities and allows tracking of the current investments in infrastructure and services.

One video camera was placed in Liepāja in 2017 to collect information about the population flow and intensity and directions and types of movement at one of the most popular leisure sites in the city — the bicycle path in the Seaside Park. The long-term plan includes placing of several new video cameras to enable tracking and collecting information on the public activity at various sport infrastructure objects.

Financial support for data collection and analysis might be provided by various European-level projects including INTERREG, URBACT and ERDF, which are the most appropriate for such activities.

## Benefits

- Information on the intensity and regularity of physical activities
- Intensity analysis of using bicycle paths and sports facilities
- Possibility to offer activities at sites and times convenient for the public
- Improvement of the studied environment
- Long-term tracking of changes in various activities
- Actual evaluation of investment and development
- Possibility to plan urban development based on the acquired data
- Data-based substantiation for applying for financing from various funds

## Partners` Experience — Birmingham

Birmingham has created a digital platform and a database where all the information related to various activities in the city is gathered. The database is maintained by an outsourced company Torque2 Ltd. This company offers marketing tools allowing integration of information obtained in numerous ways into a single client-friendly database. The database includes tools for analysing and reviewing information, and it enables engagement of customers and employees to raise understanding, profit and sales.

Several maps have been created which are especially useful when planning visits to various sporting and culture events. For example, the initiative "Active Parks" provides the possibility to work out together with professional instructors free of charge at public parks. Instructors are provided with special tablets so that each participant could scan his or her chip containing information about the person before the workout. The information is then saved in the database to collect information on the frequency and type of activities undertaken by people.

Another example that Liepāja might adopt in the future includes a system for obtaining information from bicyclists.

Safer and more suitable solution for Liepāja: special platform and GPS transmitter for bicyclists to receive all the necessary information. It is planned to install transmitters at several places across Liepāja.

Based on the data analysis, surveys for various target groups are created to understand their habits and to provide more suitable services in the future. Maximum two optional electronic survey forms are sent to each inhabitant within a year.

Regular collection of such information allows precise and clear data on the inhabitants and their habits, especially if information is collected constantly. Nevertheless, such platform should be updated regularly.



## 4. Developing Beberliņi — Establishing Sports Route in Beberliņi

### Actual situation

Beberliņi is a territory located in the northern part of the city and consists of Beberliņi water body and the surrounding woods. It borders the planned railway route in the south, although the woods stretch as far as Karosta. On the east, Beberliņi is adjacent to an abandoned military zone, which is a degraded territory now, while the street Lībiešu iela (connecting the city to Northern forts, wastewater treatment plant, and Šķēde) with allotment territory and the little used private house building zone, which is now covered in woods, marks the west border of Beberliņi.

In accordance with Liepāja City Territory Planning, Beberliņi is regarded as parkland, in which the main landscape element is a defined wood where the natural conditions must be preserved. Parklands may include improvements for sport and leisure, as well as infrastructure objects for parkland-related services and tourism, as long as the wood covers minimum 70 % of the total area.

There is an official bathing site in the water body that is approved with Cabinet Regulation No. 38 of 10 January 2012. Beberliņi bathing site is popular in summer and people swim both in the official site and other sites they can access.

Sporting events, like jogging, Nordic walking, winter swimming, hiking, corporate leisure activities, etc. are often organised in Beberliņi.

Currently a part of the parkland is leased out to SIA "BB VeikParks", SIA "Adventure Vision" and SIA "BB Taka". SIA "BB VeikParks" hosts a wake park and a café. In summer, it is possible to rent a number of water equipment. The company plans to open another wake park route and launch building of a campsite next tourist season. SIA "Adventure Vision" has established an above-the-ground adventure track, but SIA "BB Taka" is currently implementing their idea of a barefoot track.

Beberliņi is used intensively for spending leisure time — walking, cycling, organising picnics, swimming, etc. The territory is intertwined with dense path network. The locals access Beberliņi through the woods in the south, actually, Beberliņi is closely connected to the woods located between the territory and the nearby housing areas. It can now be considered as one parkland with a single network of paths and beaten tracks. Inhabitants of Tosmare housing area arrive at Beberliņi along the street Laboratorijas iela. Since the woods along Laboratorijas iela are rather wet, people tend to use one main road or the former railway track. Several beaten paths take people from the housing area on the street Ģenerāļa Baloža iela, as here the woods are dry, thin, and pleasant for walks and close to the housing area. In accordance with the city territory planning, a new railway track will run through this area thus separating the housing area from Beberliņi in the future. Pedestrian movement and flow should be considered

when designing the railway track to provide places for crossing the track. It is possible that several level crossings should be constructed to prevent accidents.

Visitors mainly access Beberliņi along the street Lībiešu iela. The main access route is located across the water body and the current wake park track. A small parking place has been built on the side of the access route, but in case of large number of visitors (in case of special events or during the swimming season) it is not enough with the current parking place.

Pursuant to Liepāja City Council order, study of protected forest habitats, vascular plants, moss, and lichen was carried out in Beberliņi in April 2014. It was concluded that the largest part of woods is a habitat protected by the EU laws — Wooded Seaside Dunes, a specially protected habitat. Also, rare and protected plants and animals were found here. Therefore, recommendations for nature preservation measures in Beberliņi given in the study conclusions must be considered when organising the further improvement of Beberliņi territory.

### Integrated Action Plan

Within the project, routes for various sports disciplines are developed in Beberliņi and the adjacent territories thanks to various track surfaces and diverse terrains which allow constructing routes of different complexity and length.

The possible routes may include: concrete, grass, swamp, forest paths, dunes, hills, fortifications, bunkers, soil, sand, water. This diversity allows adapting routes to healthy walks or high-intensity jogging and cycling.

It is possible to create routes along tourist destinations — the military zone, Karosta fort, breakwater and the Baltic Sea, or typical sport routes where terrain plays the key role. Currently Beberliņi development plan includes trail routes around the water body that would allow tourists and holidaymakers to get to know this territory better. Unfortunately, these routes would not be attractive enough for the wider public and locals looking for active leisure possibilities.

## Planned activities for improving Beberliņi territory

- Path network in Beberliņi suited for various activities — walking, cycling, jogging, etc.
- Marking routes according to their level of difficulty
- Information stand (map of paths) indicating route surfaces, markings, level of difficulty, length and other useful information
- Improved territory around Beberliņi water body
- Presenting the history of this territory to locals

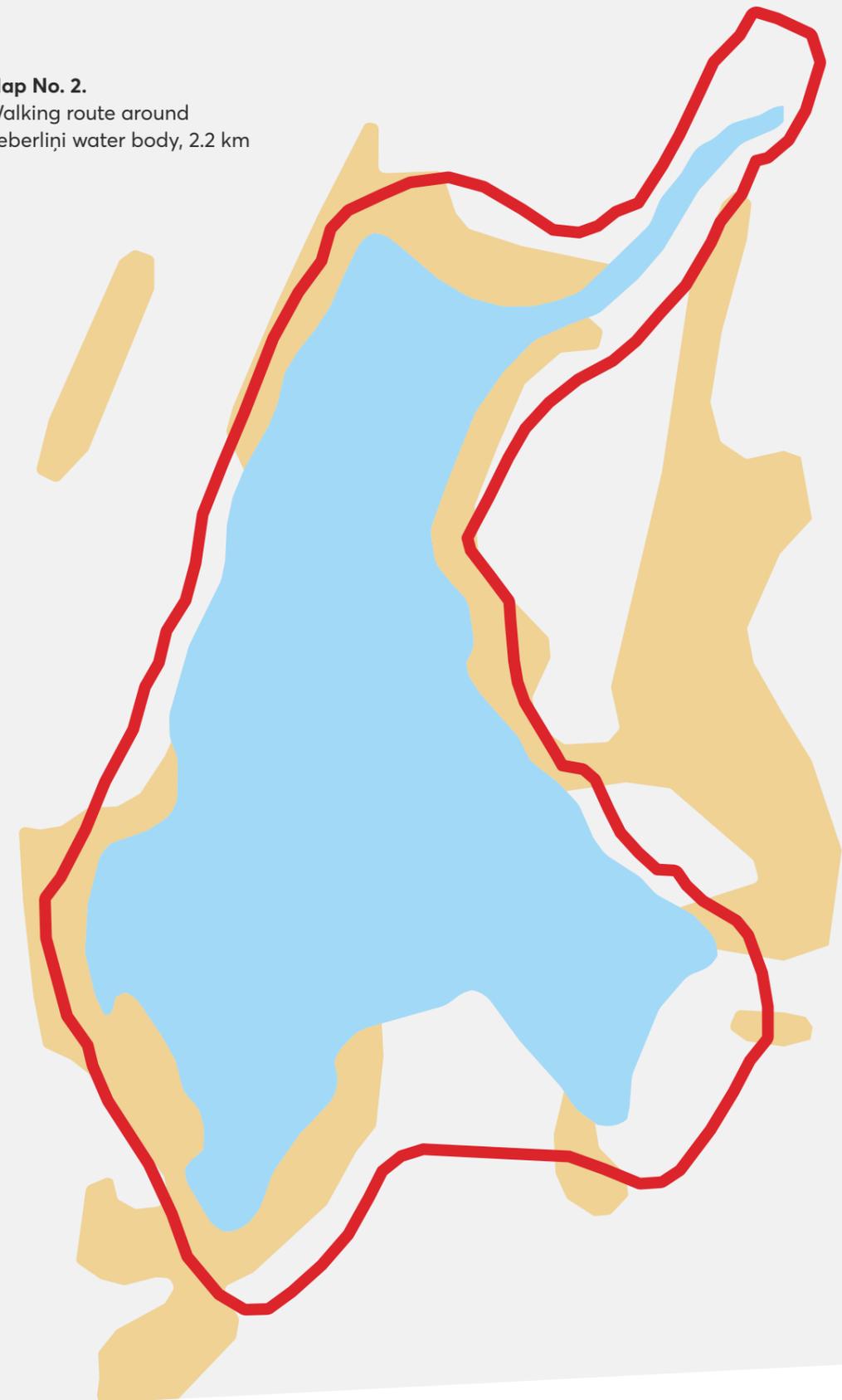
Currently two possible track routes have been established that can be included in further development plans. These routes are the result of URBACT local support group. Although the routes have been marked in the map, they can still be changed and supplemented. It is planned that these routes might be realised and would increase the number of people looking for healthy walk or comprehensive workout.

## Social aspects of development

Development plan can bring additional benefits to Beberliņi park. While developing the new routes and physical activities to citizens, simultaneously new tourism and local business opportunities can arise. Deprived area holds valuable historical sites, which with our effort can be brought back to life. By providing clear path around the park and better access to all territory would increase attendance, tourists and local people would spend their time in the park, assumable couple of hours, in which they would be interested in services that could be provided around. At the moment, 4 business are situated in Beberliņi, but only on one side of

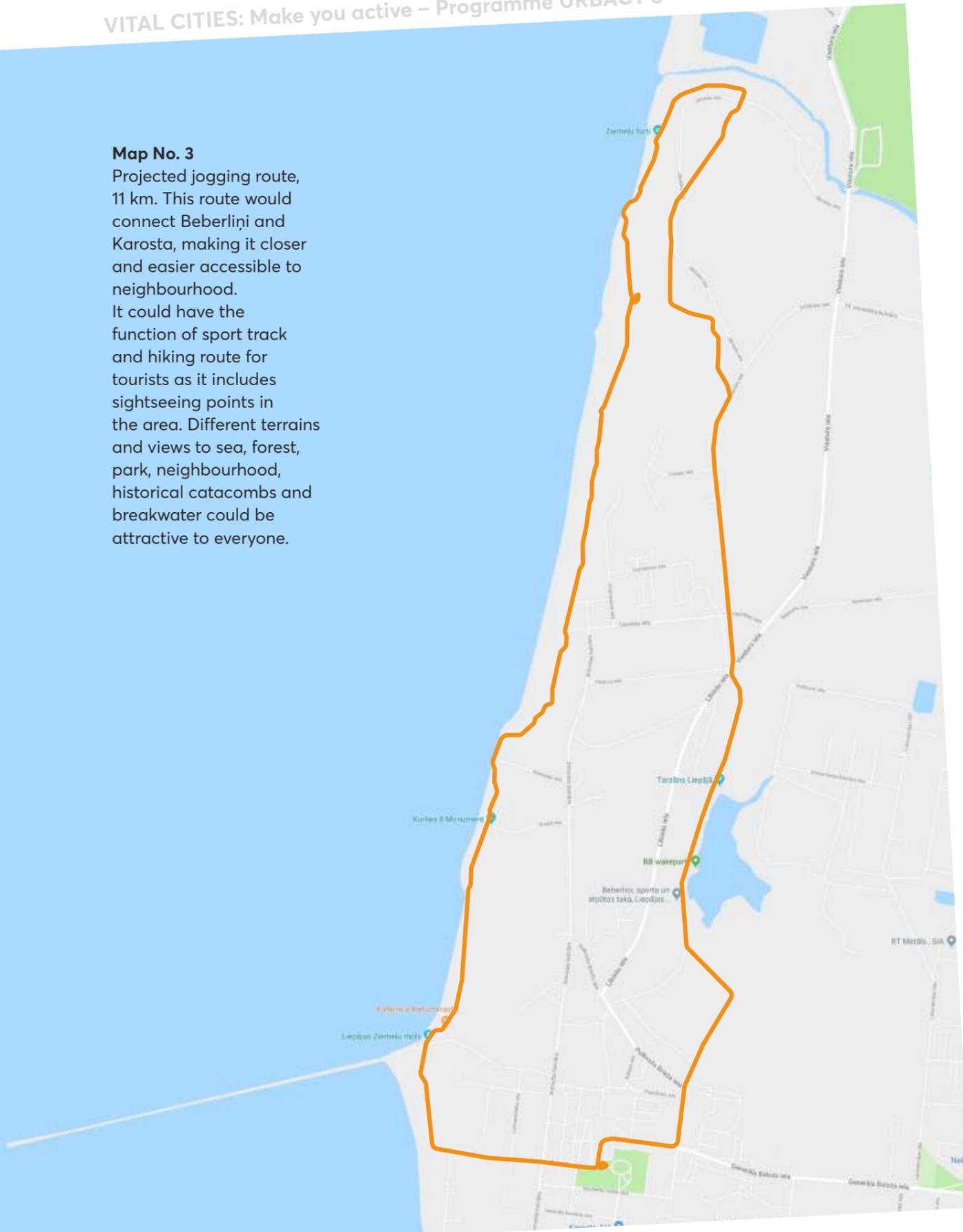
water reservoir, which contains small territory of whole park. Therefore, through physical activities and routes in the park, city can help local citizens to provide various services in Beberliņi, which would involve nature-based innovations, could address historical sites, health and well-being of citizens. Through these activities project can be funded by European funds. All four activities suggested in the IAP can be tied together under one project and implemented in different stages of in project concept.

**Map No. 2.**  
Walking route around  
Beberliņi water body, 2.2 km



**Map No. 3**

Projected jogging route, 11 km. This route would connect Beberliņi and Karosta, making it closer and easier accessible to neighbourhood. It could have the function of sport track and hiking route for tourists as it includes sightseeing points in the area. Different terrains and views to sea, forest, park, neighbourhood, historical catacombs and breakwater could be attractive to everyone.



Activity	Planning/realisation	Responsible institutions	Performance indicators	Planned costs	Possible sources of financing
No.1 Path network in Beberliņi suited for various activities — walking, cycling, jogging, hiking, etc.	2017–2019	Liepāja City Council Sport Department in cooperation with joggin and Nordic walking activists, Liepāja Athletic Club and Cycling Club  Planning and development in cooperation with Liepāja City Council Development Department, Public Utilities Department, Department of Environment, Health and Public Participation	Total number and length of the routes  Number of people using these routes for various activities	50 000 EUR + additional costs for maintenance purpose (These costs are approximate and can change regarding the actions and routes that are going to be implemented)	Municipal budget, HORIZON 2020, Interreg Latvia-Lithuania
No. 2 Tangible information stand showing map of all routes	Based on time-frame of activity No.1	Liepāja City Council Development Department, Public Utilities Department, Department of Environment, Health and Public Participation	Total active users of the routes	5 000 EUR (These costs are approximate and can change in the process)	Municipal budget, HORIZON 2020, Interreg Latvia-Lithuania
No. 3 Providing information online – routes, sightseeing, general information	2019–2020	Various departments of Liepāja City Council (Sport Department, Development Department, IT Department)	Website traffic	25 000 EUR (These costs are approximate and can change in the process)	Municipal budget, HORIZON 2020
No. 4 Marking routes according to their level of difficulty	2017–2019	Liepāja Athletic Club, Cycling Club, Liepāja Sport Administration	Total number and length of the routes Number of suited activities	10 000 EUR (These costs are approximate and can change in the process)	Municipal budget, Interreg Latvia-Lithuania

## Analysis of Risks potentially affecting implementation of project plans

Possibility/Impact	Critical	Significant	Average	Minor
High				
Average				
Low				
Minimal				

### Risks to be avoided

Lack of financial support from the European funds and State budget — the possibility is high and the impact is critical. Still, several activities do not require big financial investment thus the plan could also be partially implemented using the current municipal assets. Activities are not radical and they are taken step by step in the long run, so it is possible to look for financing for the further development in future budgetary plans.

Lack of financing for developing route e-environment — the possibility is high and the impact is significant. One of the most time-consuming scenarios is coordination of the action plan with the competent institutions. Approval of the action plan may be delayed, since Liepāja City Council is working on a new identity, which is an important aspect in relation to updating the municipal website. And a new municipal website is one of the project priorities. Later, the website might include an e-environment comprising routes in Karosta and the possible routes from Liepāja City, as planned within this project.

## Risks to be evaluated and considered

Low activity and lack of ideas in the society — the possibility is high and the impact is average. As evidenced by the current municipal work, the society is not ready to participate in implementing projects if the initiative has been proposed by the city. Therefore, the possibility of low public activity must be considered. Still, the impact it might have is average thanks to the local support group representing a wide range of inhabitants and able to offer solutions beneficial for the locals.

Vandalism in the newly-established routes — the possibility is high while the impact is comparatively low, since several solutions would be implemented to prevent major damage caused by vandalism.

Insufficient information for the public — both the possibility and impact is average. Although this risk would not affect the project significantly, the society still must be informed about plans and the possible leisure activities in Beberliņi and Karosta, by using various communication means.

Lack of human resources for creating routes in Beberliņi — the possibility is low and the impact is significant. The project aims at engaging the locals to provide them with possibility to improve the surrounding environment and sites they would use regularly. If there is low public interest during the project implementation period, the possibility to organise a competition should be considered to stick to the plan.

Delay of the project — the possibility is minimal and the impact is critical. There is a minimal possibility that the Beberliņi project is not implemented, since this territory has been developed for several years already, and it has been included in Liepāja City Sustainable Development Strategy 2030 plan.

Uncoordinated activity by the competent institutions and lack of cooperation with other stakeholders — the possibility is average and the impact is significant. To prevent this risk, a support group has been established which is able to cooperate and engage other target groups.

## Risks not affecting implementation of the plan

None

## European practices:

Improving quality of open public spaces and place availability can boost level of physical activities and improve many aspects of one's life. Therefore, in many European countries municipalities have established open sport grounds and changed the looks of deprived areas and made them as meetings points for the citizens. Practice of Valencia, which has been presented to us in Boot Camo meeting, which took place in November 2016, could in relevance to Liepāja and can be considered for Beberliņi development and other deprived areas in neighbourhoods will be displayed. However, the plan should be adjusted to local needs and possibilities.

to do physical activity. To make circuit available for use in different times of the day and increasing safety of individuals and groups of people who are practising lighting on sensors could be a solution. Similar activities can be done in Beberliņi, as the area provides with different natural surfaces, the forest and water around it can be used as a part for the activities, which can be installed using natural resources. The biggest challenge for Beberliņi would be safety and risk of vandalism as mentioned earlier in the risk analysis, however using help of citizens, by involving them in the making of circuit, could work as trigger not to demolish provided opportunities to train.



Valencia in the city made **5k** circuit across the river for different sports. There were different surfaces, markers for the runners about the distance left and done already, foremost on the track making different workout stations with the instructions, training plans and other relevant information

## 5. Social inclusion through local sport and health events

### Problem

In the neighbourhood Karosta, which is situated in the north of the city centre and is separated by a canal, lives citizens with diverse backgrounds. It consists of many social risk groups, minorities and different income groups. Therefore, there is need to for an annual event to make these people bond through physical activities. At the moment, activities that are organized in the city mainly take place in the city centre or events that are organized in Beberliņi park are primarily focused on specific groups (students and pupils, athletes, private events or military education). In Karosta neighbourhood are

many vacant deprived spots, which can be used and refurbished to gather the local people. These areas are mainly owned by the city or private owners. In case of municipality owned areas it is easier to refurbish and found a use of these areas. In the project context, event was already organized in one of these areas, which was set as a starting point for further activities in collaboration with local community.

### Facts about Karosta

**Population:** Approx. 7000  
(20% of people are pupils)

High rate of minorities  
(Russians, Belarus, Ukranians etc.)

Lower level of income and  
highest risk of poverty in the city

Lack of places to do physical activities  
and below average level condition  
of infrastructure



## Solution



To provoke social inclusion and promote physical activities in the neighbourhood there is a need for annual gathering (physical activities, health and cultural event in one place) where people can participate for free. Event would be organized by Liepaja City Council in collaboration with NGO`s, business owners, volunteers from the neighbourhood and other interest groups, to make it local and accessible to anybody.

First event as a pilot event was organized in August, 2017 as a part of activity in URBACT "Vital Cities" project. City of Liepaja in collaboration with small business owners, NGO "Karosta Kids", coaches and Latvian Health Point organized event on 12th of August. In the first year event name was

"Sand sculpture festival and Health Day in Karosta", which represents main activities held in the event. How this helps people to be more active and included? Firstly, it is organized together with local community and they are the main stakeholders for a success and sustainability of this event.

Main event concept

- Inclusion through sports
- Free of charge
- For all family
- Health check-up
- Promotion of physical activities
- Workshops for kids
- Cultural activities
- Just for Fun games

## Further activities

Plan is to make an annual event in the neighbourhood, however there is a possibility to make an event series to involve more participants and gather diverse groups of people to these events. Event would be financed by municipality and organized in collaboration with volunteers and interested

persons from community. The nature and development of event will be evaluated after each event based on satisfaction, participation rate, involvement from community and financial situation.

## 6. European funds

There are various opportunities from where activities explained above could be financially supported. As city of Liepaja is in Latvia, we have possibility to apply for European grant projects. Even though some of the activities would be implemented using municipal and state budget, most of the suggested actions have necessity for stronger and bigger financial support, which can be gained from European Funds. Therefore, EU projects will be briefly explained and provided with necessary information related to activities that are included in URBACT "Vital Cities" Integrated Action Plan. To better understand the funding and for which activity it is relevant, activities are in chronological order as written in this document:

### Horizon 2020

Horizon 2020 – is the biggest EU Research and Innovation programme. Its` topic is visionary and integrated solutions to improve well-being and health in cities. It promises breakthroughs, discoveries and world-firsts by taking great ideas from the lab to the market. The goal is to ensure Europe produces world-class science, removes barriers to innovation, and makes it easier for the public and private sectors to work together in delivering innovation.

For activities suggested in IAP this can go three fold. As programme are focused on supporting and redeveloping public spaces it is in line with activities in this project, therefore activities No 1., No. 2 and No. 3 can be relevant to have mix of them. As part of the data collection activities can take place in Beberliņi and social support and physical activities events can be organized in the area of Beberliņi. Therefore, under Horizon 2020 financial support all three activities can be resulted, in line with that, the development of

**Activity No 1. –  
Call for re-designed deprived areas  
through community (Policy change)**

**Activity No 2. –  
Tracking and data collection of physical  
activities**

**Activity No 3. –  
Developing Beberliņi —  
Establishing Sports Route in Beberliņi**

**Activity No 4. -  
Social inclusion through local sport and  
health events**

Beberliņi can provide activities for re-designing public spaces and provide new local business possibilities, therefore if correctly written project application, it can cover all four activities. However, it should be embedded in a wider project focussed on testing integrated solutions linked to management approaches, governance models and financing mechanisms to support health and wellbeing in cities through boosting physical activities in the public domain. Such a project could be a continuation of many ideas written in this IAP and within partner projects of VITAL CITIES and could synthesise all main outcomes and recommendations.

To make project work, partnership with three other EU members are necessary to ensure geographic, socio-economic and cultural diversity. The project results should show clear health improvement, well-being and cost-efficiency.

### Interreg Europe

Interreg Europe helps regional and local governments across Europe to develop and deliver better policy. By creating an environment and opportunities for sharing solutions, it aims to ensure that government investment, innovation, and implementation efforts all lead to integrated and sustainable impact for people and place.

Today, the EU's emphasis is very much on paving the way for regions to realise their full potential by helping them to capitalise on their innate strengths whilst tapping into opportunities that offer possibilities for economic, social and environmental progress. To achieve this goal, Interreg Europe offers opportunities for regional and local public authorities across Europe to share ideas and experience on public policy in practice, therefore improving strategies for their citizens and communities.

The programme finances two types of action:

1. Interregional cooperation projects (EUR 322.4 million)
2. Policy learning platforms (EUR 15.3 million)

Through this project, City of Liepāja can develop an innovative data collection method for physical activities, which is in line with 2nd action (data collection system about physical activities). It can ensure that its achieved results are properly utilized and expanded.

It could develop an Action plan for policy improvements related to improve the social cohesion in Liepāja in which data collection and sharing knowledge with other partners on how to approach this is a very important aspect.

This action plan would focus on policy solutions which would enhance the popularity of its innovative approach and consequently improve social cohesion through well-structured and organised physical activity mechanisms and public areas in the city. The Action plan and activities involved can be the stepping ground that could enable to work on provided activities further.

### Interreg Latvia-Lithuania

A strong focus of the programme is on environmental measures. The programme will support natural and cultural heritage in order to further develop sustainable tourism in the region, will promote the more sustainable use of resources, and will tackle environmental problems in particular in urban environments.

The cooperation programme will support entrepreneurship and cross-border labour mobility and will improve the accessibility and efficiency of social services. It also aims at improving the quality of living in the border region through efficient public services and administration.

Actions 2, 3, and 4 have potential with this programme, but 3 (Improving infrastructure and connection with Beberliņi Park) and 4 (Physical activity promotion events in Beberliņi Park) are probably best-suited. The promotion of physical activity in Beberliņi Park and Karosta aligns with SO3.2, which expects activities to focus on building up networks in, amongst other things, healthy lifestyles. Both specific objectives have provisions for the improvement of public infrastructure. This can be utilised in the course of implementing Action 3.

City of Liepāja have been active in cross-border projects and have made a good contact with Lithuanian cities, therefore activities that could include social, physical services which include entrepreneurship and re-development of area, can be promising. There is a need to contact partners from Lithuania to discuss this matter in the details, which could lead to future collaboration. Interreg Latvia-Lithuania programme at the moment is the most promising.

### Creative Europe Programme

Creative Europe Programme - aims to support the European audio-visual, cultural and creative sector. The different funding schemes encourage the audio-visual, cultural and creative players to operate across Europe, to reach new audiences and to develop the skills needed in the digital age. By helping European cultural and audio-visual works to reach audiences in other countries, the programme will also contribute to safeguarding cultural and linguistic diversity.

This scheme offers support to strengthening the capacity of European cultural and creative sectors to operate transnationally and internationally, contribute to audience development with a focus on children, young people, people with disabilities and underrepresented groups, and contribute to innovation and creativity in the field of culture, new business models and promoting innovative spill-overs on other sectors. Activities programme dedicated to building bridges between arts and sports sectors with aims to deliver in audience development, capacity building and economic strengthening.

Regarding funding (grants) for projects, the most relevant instrument of CREATIVE EUROPE for VITAL CITIES is the Culture sub-programme, and in particular, the scheme support to European Cooperation Projects. In the 2015 call for proposals, a total budget of €35,000,000 was allocated, intended to support about 70 cooperation projects. One example of project funded through this action is the EX[S]PORTS. EX[S]PORTS is a cooperation activities programme dedicated to building bridges between arts and sports sectors with aims to deliver innovation in audience development, capacity building and economic strengthening. Through this programme, the City of Liepāja can develop the 3rd and 4th action further if it succeeds to build a bridge between arts (the creative sector in Liepāja) and sports and wellbeing. This could be linked to the development of equipment and the design of public spaces. To be successful, cross-sectional team is necessary and strong collaboration between various departments and organizations in the city, which could include artists, trainers, managers, territory planners and marketers. The team that was gathered in this IAP is not enough, therefore, additional members and specialists are necessary to contact. Development plan of Beberliņi could be the beginning for further talks, to organize and plan activities that could be relevant for Creative Europe programme.

Next call in the programme is closing in January 2019.

### Urban Innovative Actions

Urban Innovative Actions - is an initiative of the European Union that provides urban areas throughout Europe with resources to test new and unproven solutions to address urban challenges. Although research on urban issues is well developed, potential solutions are not always put into practice because urban authorities are reluctant to use their money to test new, unproven and hence risky ideas. Urban Innovative Actions offers urban authorities the possibility to take a risk and experiment with the most innovative and creative solutions.

UIA funds projects that are:

- Innovative: be bold, creative and propose a project that has never been implemented anywhere else in Europe. Demonstrate that your idea is experimental and not part of your normal activities.
- Participative: involve the key Stakeholders that will bring expertise and knowledge to your project, both during the design and the implementation phase of a project.
- Of good quality: define realistic ambitions, coherent activities and effective management. A logically interlinked Work Plan, a coherent and proportionate budget as well as effective management arrangements will make things happen.

- Measurable: how will you describe the change you want to see in your local situation if the project is successful? How would you measure this change? Defining clear results that can be measured and quantified is key.
- Transferable: address an urban challenge that can be relevant to other urban authorities in Europe, draw lessons on your experiment and share them with a wider audience of policy makers and practitioners.

The only thematically relevant option to connect the Liepāja ambitions with the programme is Jobs and skills in the Local Community. Action 2 should be considered for this. As it is described now it is too much focussed on the theme Healthy population which is not an overarching theme in UIA.

However, we need to have a truly innovative implementation plan ready by the end of this year to be able to submit a project for the next years call closing at the end of March.

Liepāja perspective regarding Urban Innovative Actions: In this concept new ideas and collaboration with new media school in Liepāja could in relevance. Mixing already existing ideas and providing them with new approach.



## Summary

Integrated Action Plan is made specifically to suit needs of Liepāja city and has been developed in co-operation with local stakeholders and international partners and includes various recommendations. It includes recommendations to develop Beberliņi park and its connection with Karosta. Another activity in focus to Karosta is regular physical activities events to combat social exclusion. From a broader perspective which benefits whole city are developing database and data analysis system to gather and use information regarding physical activities in Liepāja. Last, but not least is a call for making a platform for re-designing deprived public areas in the city through community initiative, which can be described through slogan "we are responsible for surroundings we live in". In addition, possibilities to gain European support are included, which could be with a help to successfully implement recommendations stated in the Integrated Action Plan.