

CITIES@HEART

TOWARDS A BALANCED CITY CENTRE

3rd QUARTERLY NETWORK REPORT

July 2024
September 2024



URBACT



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♥ 1. Cities@Heart

Cities@Heart mobilises ten European urban areas. Led by the Greater Paris Metropolis (a public entity with a sound track record in downtown revitalisation policy), network partners work together to understand the way **city centres** function and create a new framework to be used in city centre improvement initiatives.

Quadrilatero Urbano (Portugal)
Granada (Spain)
Sligo (Ireland)
Greater Paris Metropolis (France)
Fleurus (Belgium)
Cesena (Italy)
Celje (Slovenia)
Osijek (Croatia)
Krakov Metropolis (Poland)
Amfiktyonies (Greece)



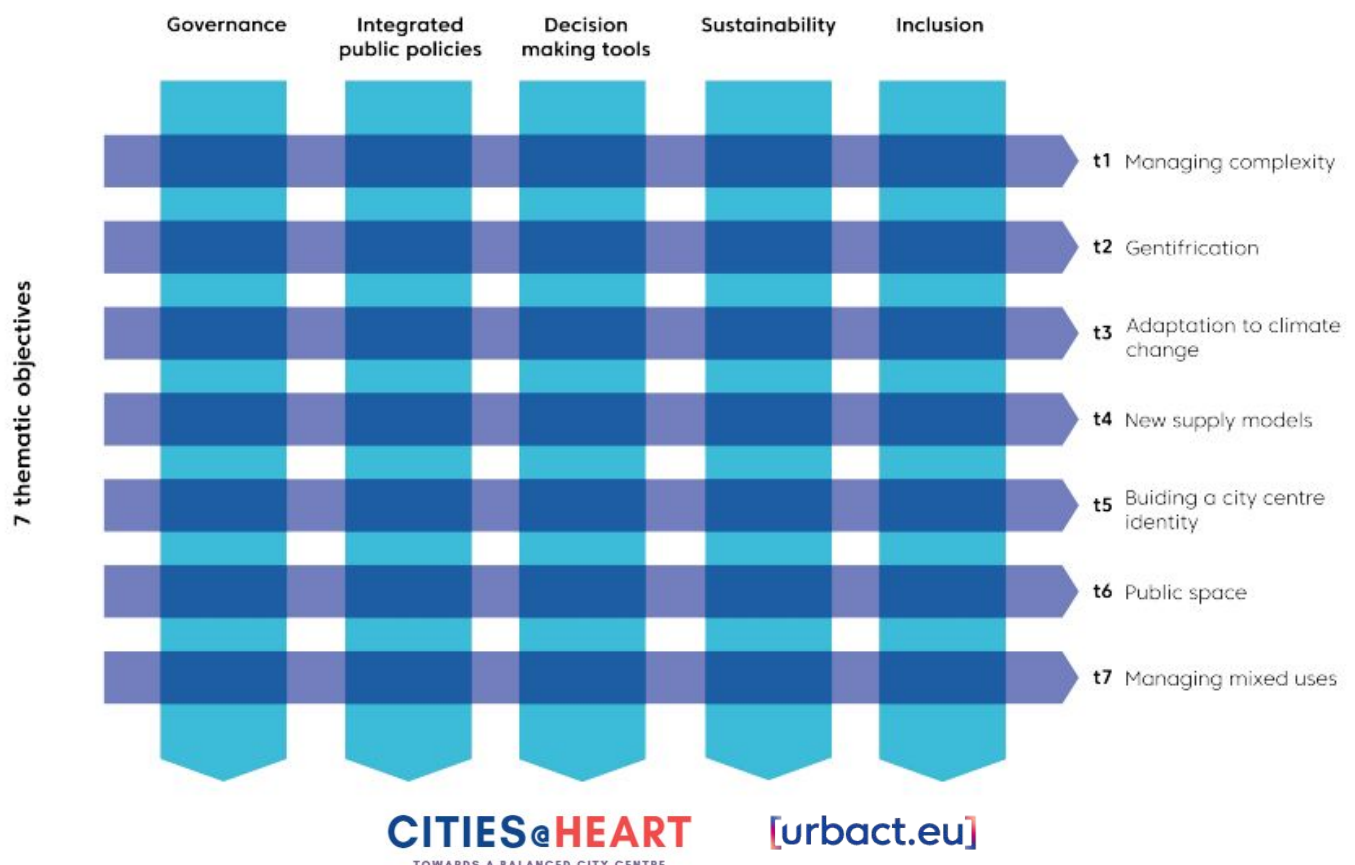
♥ 2. Where are we in our pathway to the City Centre toolbox?

Our roadmap proposes to exchange best practices and define indicators for public policies deployed in the city centre to generate a series of thematic objectives.

After one year of network activity, through meetings and dedicated workshops, we have explored the management of complexity, gentrification, adaptation to climate change, new supply models and the creation of a city centre identity. Governance, integration, decision-making tools, sustainability and inclusion have been transversal drivers of our learning pathway.

The 1st year highlights!

- 3 Transnational meetings
- 5 strategic objectives
- 4 online webinars



♥ 3. What is going on in the network?


During this third quarter, the URBACT Local Groups (ULGs) in each city have been actively engaged in a series of meetings to continue their collaborative work. These meetings have provided a platform to discuss and refine their ideas, with a particular focus on the development and implementation of Small Scale Actions within each city.

By concentrating on these targeted actions, the ULGs aim to create impactful changes that align with the broader goals of the network while considering the specific needs and contexts of their individual cities.





03. Programa de Empoderamento

CITIES aHEART	IAP QU	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.4	 QUADRILÁTERO todos de mesma luta BANCOS BANCAS FAMILIAR GURUPES
Action 01	Identificação de Parceiros e Intervenções	Identificação dos Parceiros	Definir o Matriç de Intervenções	Definir o Matriç de Intervenções	Definir o Matriç de Intervenções	
Action 02	Fornecimento de Serviços	Identificação dos Serviços de Intervenções	Identificação dos Serviços de Intervenções	Identificação dos Serviços de Intervenções	Identificação dos Serviços de Intervenções	
Action 03	Identificação de Parceiros e Intervenções	Identificação dos Parceiros e Intervenções	Identificação dos Parceiros e Intervenções	Identificação dos Parceiros e Intervenções	Identificação dos Parceiros e Intervenções	
Action 04	Identificação dos Parceiros e Intervenções	Identificação dos Parceiros e Intervenções	Identificação dos Parceiros e Intervenções	Identificação dos Parceiros e Intervenções	Identificação dos Parceiros e Intervenções	

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What is going on?

Celje ULG

Celje's IAP will focus on enhancing community engagement and economic vitality by populating ground floor premises with diverse businesses that contribute to placemaking.

Cesena ULG

Cesena's IAP will focus on city centre accessibility from an urban, environmental, economic and social perspective. North-south connections to the city centre will be the main focus.

Ideas

Celje's Small Scale Actions

Onepager with all relevant information for a new providers in city center.

Also accessible through QR code from stickers on window fronts of businesses that were granted co financing from the municipality.

Cesena's Small Scale Actions

Tactical urbanism actions to make visible and high quality access to the heart of the city (renew furniture, greenery, street art)

What is going on?

Fleurus ULG meeting

On the 6th of August, 2024, Fleurus organized a ULG Meeting where key stakeholders discussed the upcoming street art event, Xpression², scheduled for September 21st. This event will feature graffiti artists creating public art to enhance urban spaces as part of the URBACT project. The meeting also covered plans for a larger street art trail aimed at revitalizing the city center, as well as potential collaborations with both local and international street art professionals, including artists from Fleurus' sister city, Lugo, Italy.

Granada ULG meeting

Granada ULG aims at achieving an environmentally, clean and sustainable city centre, that helps to establish a young population and provides a friendly environment for its citizens.

Ideas

Fleurus' Small Scale Actions

The goal would be to start with the creation of a unique mural placed in a highly visible location in the heart of the IAP area.

After the implementation, a "satisfaction survey" will be launched to get feedback on the action.

Granada's Small Scale Actions

Collection of data in collaboration with the smart city department and the URBACT network Let's Go Circular, occupation of a vacant building in the city center with events boosting city center revitalisation.

What is going on?

Greater Paris Metropolis ULG meeting

La Métropole du Grand Paris IAP will focus on helping local authorities in the MGP area to incorporate citizen input into their town centre regeneration policies design, implementation and evaluation.

Krakow Metropolitan Area ULG meeting

On July 17th, 2024, a meeting was held to discuss the Cities@Heart project, focusing on pilot actions within the URBACT program. The session opened with an introduction and an overview of the Cities@Heart project, followed by a presentation on best practices from study visits.

The meeting then explored expected pilot actions for URBACT and included a presentation on the action in Niepołomice and how this methodology could be applied to other municipalities

Ideas

Paris' Small Scale Actions

Workshop to present to town center managers, with straightforward examples and feedback, why and how to integrate stakeholders inputs in their way of working

Krakow's Small Scale Actions

Redesigning of commuting oval access to one elementary school in the city centre. The aim is to change the traffic organisation around the school into a one-way street and engineer the space with placemaking interventions.

What is going on?

Lamia ULG meeting

The ULG meeting in Lamia this quarter consisted of a presentation of the Quadrilatero transnational meeting as well as the discussion of Small Scale Actions to develop in the city.

Osijek ULG meeting

The ULG of Osijek welcomed new members in the ULG meeting of this quarter, where they also talked about the most important challenges to address with the Integration Action Plan and concluded that the most important ones are (t1) managing complexity, (t3) adapting to climate change and (t6) public space.

In addition, the knowledge shared in the Granada TNM was transferred to the ULG members.

Ideas

Lamia's Small Scale Actions

Develop the universal accessibility in the city centre by banning cars in from Friday afternoon to Sunday night.

Osijek's Small Scale Actions

Temporarily make the northern part of Županijska street a pedestrian zone to see if it makes the difference in the number of vehicles (improperly parked ones especially) and the overall appearance of the city center

What is going on?

Quadrilatero Urbano ULG meeting

The ULG meeting this quarter included a workshop with URBACT methodology related to the design of the IAP, which focuses on positioning Quadrilatero Urbano as a center of innovation that integrates sustainability, economic growth, social inclusion, and evidence-based governance.

Sligo ULG meeting

The ULG meeting this quarter included updates on ongoing small-scale actions such as Town Centre Property Use Surveys, which have received approximately 50% responses from key streets in Sligo, and the progress of festivals and events, including the Queen Maeve Festival and the upcoming Summerfest.

Ideas

Quadrilatero's Small Scale Actions

Promote a Autumn/Winter University on City Centre/ Urban Innovation

Sligo's Small Scale Actions

Surveys on Festival and Event business surveys, Consumer surveys, Building surveys and Night Time Economy survey. Footfall data enhanced with new mobile electronic counters

♥ 4. Public Policy Evaluation webinar

On July 8th, the network hosted a webinar centered around public policy evaluation. The main goals were to explore how data can be effectively used to evaluate public policies, develop a list of common indicators that align with the network's needs, and discuss various ways to obtain data through different methodologies and stakeholders.

The webinar brought together different perspectives, making it a valuable session for anyone looking to enhance their understanding of policy evaluation using data.



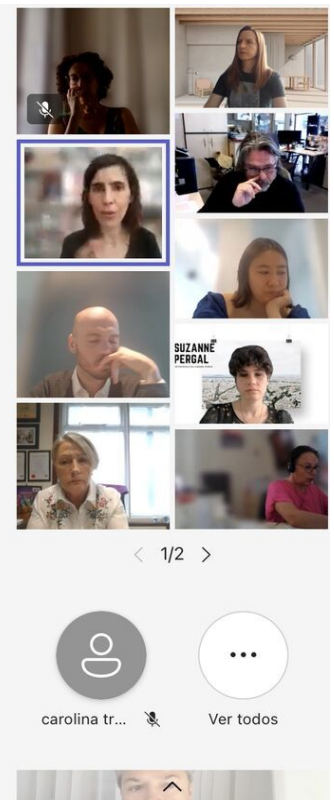
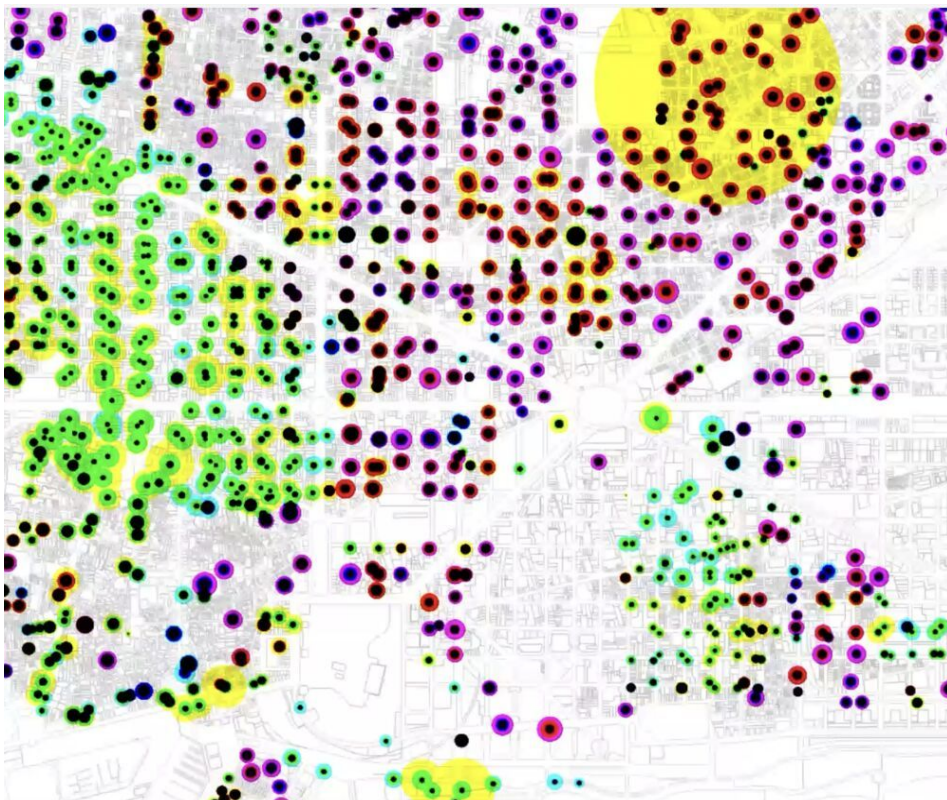
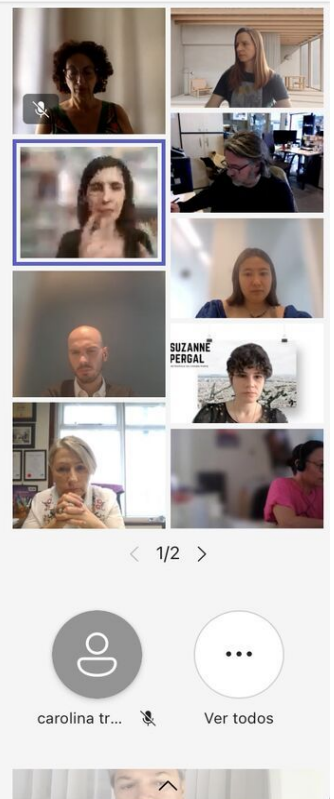
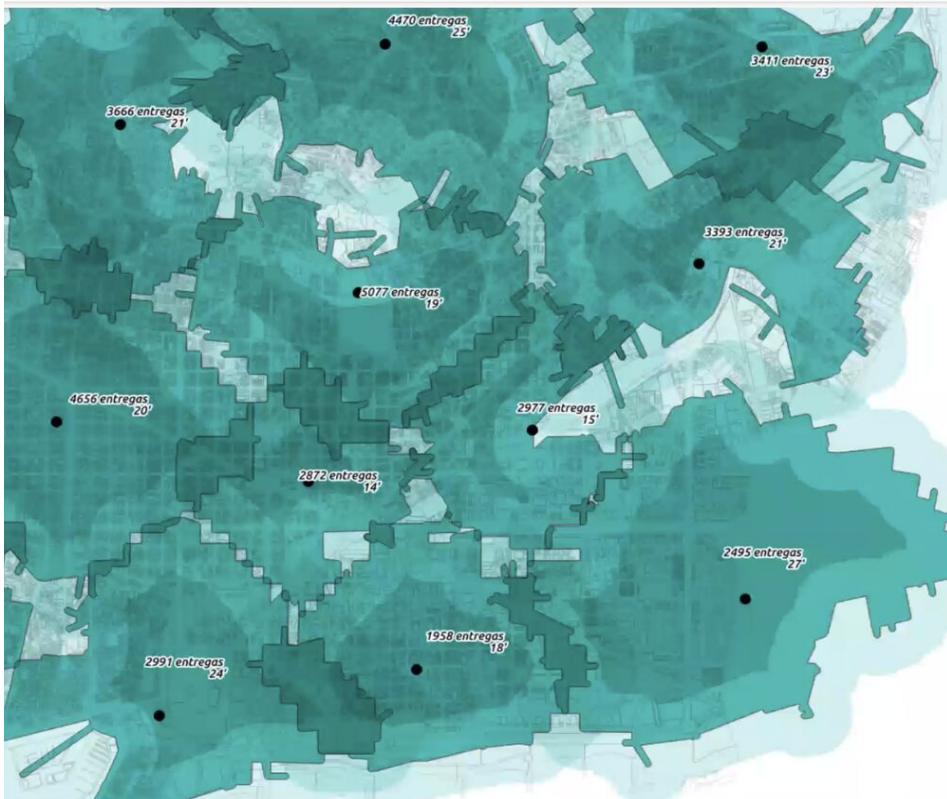
Webinar

Public policy evaluation Basics
New models of supply & building a city centre identity
8th July
Lead Expert : Mar Santamaria

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♥ 5. Good practices

The URBACT methodology reminds us that Rome wasn't built in a day. That's why cities are encouraged to experiment and test solutions proposed in their integrated action plans. This chapter collects best practices developed by the cities of the Cities@Heart network.

Good practices within the network:

- Festiv'été - Fleurus
- Purple Flag - Sligo
- Destination Management Operation - Lamia
- Resilient Realejo - Granada
- Fields of Glory event - Niepolomice
- Municipality of Celje Manifesto - Celje
- HeadOn East Festival - Osijek
- Pop-up Stores Network - Métropole du Grand Paris
- Feira de Barcelos - Quadrilatero Urbano
- Cesena strategic park-and-ride - Cesena

♥ Good practices Fleurus / Festiv'été

Simultaneously, enhancing public spaces through renovation, street art, and mobility improvements, coupled with an upsurge in free city centre events, the programme enriches the living environment and elevates the city's image. Emulating successful strategies from Mons and Lille such as cultural events, sports, and community gatherings (folklore, concerts, seasonal markets, and year-round events) the initiative **breathes life into the city centre, fostering a vibrant and engaging atmosphere.**

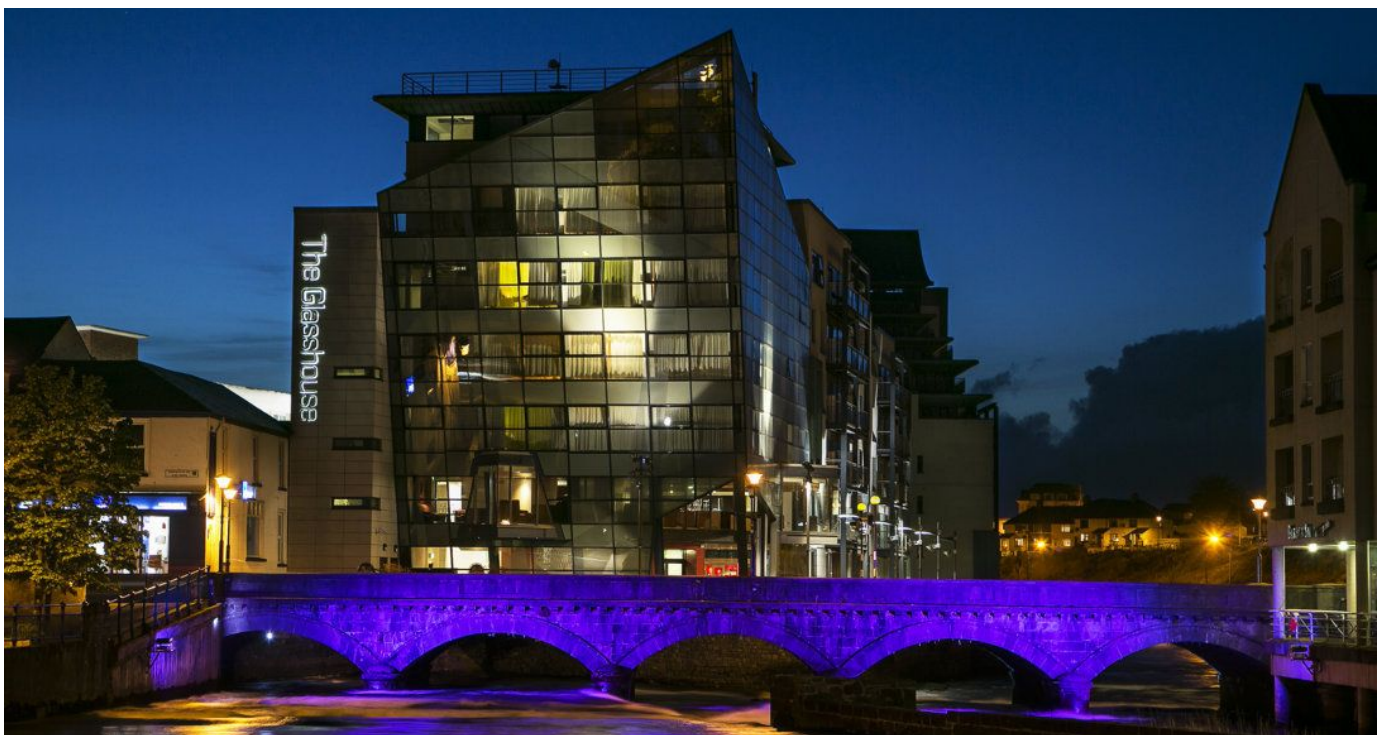
One of these events is the Festiv'été, a festival that transforms urban spaces into meeting places, allowing those who cannot go on holiday to enjoy convivial moments in the heart of the city. It is committed to creating an inclusive and accessible environment for all, with activities for all ages and tastes.



♥ Good practices Sligo / Purple Flag

In 2015 Sligo was the 10th destination in Ireland to be awarded the Purple Flag - the internationally accredited award for excellence in the night-life of a city. A Purple Flag is an award for reaching a standard of **excellence in the evening and night time economy** (ENTE), with a diverse cultural offering – non alcohol dependent and offering family-friendly, safe and vibrant experience to all users.

The Night Time Economy Team, established in 2014, has been dedicated to orchestrating activities and conflict resolution within the city centre. Their efforts have resulted in setting a benchmark of excellence concerning the establishment of inclusive and culturally diverse spaces.



♥ Good practices Lamia / Destination Management Operation (DMO)

Lamia is taking strategic steps to establish itself as a key destination through its innovative Destination Management Operation (DMO). This initiative helps alleviate over tourism in crowded areas by promoting culturally rich, lesser-known cities like Lamia.

As part of the "Solid Greece 2014-2020" Operational Program, supported by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the DMO develops advanced data analysis tools to manage and predict tourism flows, ensuring sustainable growth. By developing a **cohesive place-branding strategy**, **Lamia is fostering local pride and attracting new visitors**, transforming its city center into a vibrant hub for tourism, culture, and business.



♥ Good practices Granada / Resilient Realejo

The Realejo, a picturesque neighborhood in Granada, faces significant challenges. Gentrification is driving families away as old buildings are demolished or refurbished to turn them into lucrative tourist apartments. Pollution is a pressing issue, with Granada ranked as Spain's third most polluted city due to olive tree monoculture and limited public transportation.

Dependency on freight transportation weakens local production, while political neglect exacerbates pollution and uncontrolled tourism. With the aim of reducing these impacts, community initiatives have been developed with a clear positive effect on the lives of the residents. Among them, **temporary occupations of public spaces for markets and the neighborhood's community garden stand out.**



♥ Good practices Krakow Metropolis / Fields of Glory event

In the Metropolia Krakowska, the Fields of Glory event revitalizes Niepołomice's city center by celebrating its rich cultural heritage and beautiful forest surroundings. **The event transforms the castle grounds into a dynamic hub of historical exploration.** The castle serves as the festival's focal point, hosting concerts, workshops, and an evening ball in its courtyard.

Fields of Glory not only draws visitors but also invigorates the city center, celebrating the vibrant traditions and history of Niepołomice. This festival offers an immersive experience that seamlessly blends education, entertainment, and a passion for history.



♥ Good practices Celje / Manifesto

The municipality of Celje has defined [14 actions for a vibrant city centre](#). These initiatives are designed to enhance urban living by promoting active city management, improving pedestrian access, and supporting local businesses and entrepreneurs.

Key actions include closing streets to car traffic for public spaces, co-financing facade renovations, and regulating restaurant terraces for a unified look. The city promotes community engagement through events, floral decorations, and murals celebrating local history. By providing spaces for artists and cultural events, Celje aims to create a lively environment that reflects its unique identity and fosters community.



♥ Good practices Osijek / HeadOn East Festival

The municipality of Grad Osijek has embraced gastronomy as a core element of its city centre strategy. This initiative aims to **enhance urban life by celebrating local culinary traditions and fostering a vibrant downtown atmosphere.**

Key actions include hosting the Head On East Festival, which highlights the gastronomy and cultural heritage of the Slavonije and Baranje regions, promoting local dishes and traditional recipes. The city also supports small business owners and artisans by creating opportunities for food markets and culinary events that attract visitors. By encouraging community engagement through these initiatives, Osijek fosters a lively environment that showcases its unique identity and strengthens connections among residents and visitors.



♥ Good practices Greater Paris Metropolis / Pop-up Stores Network

Since 2018, the Greater Paris Metropolis has operated a program called Living Downtowns that provides technical and financial support for the commercial and craftsmanship revitalization of its 131 constituent cities. This initiative includes key partnerships with the Chamber of Trades and Crafts, through which a network of pop-up stores has been established.

Pop-up stores serve as vital spaces to showcase the expertise of artisans and creators. Consequently, some municipalities have chosen to manage their own shops, allowing creators who usually lack a physical storefront to sell their creations for periods ranging from one week to one month. This network aims to enhance the visibility of these shops, share best practices in management, communication, and layout, and support the establishment of new shops in various municipalities.



♥ Good practices Quadrilatero Association / Feira de Barcelos

In the Municipio de Barcelos, the iconic Feira de Barcelos has been revitalized to enhance the market experience for residents and visitors alike. Every Thursday, the heart of Barcelos transforms into a lively gathering space where local vendors, artisans, and farmers showcase their wares.

Through community-driven initiatives and investments in infrastructure, the municipality supports this historic market, ensuring it remains a **hub of cultural exchange and economic activity**. The revitalization enriches the urban landscape, creating a vibrant atmosphere that encourages social interaction and highlights the region's cultural identity. By fostering these traditions, Barcelos positions as an attractive city that honors its past while embracing modernity.



♥ Good practices Cesena / Strategic park-and-ride

In Comune di Cesena, Italy, the municipality prioritises pedestrians and cyclists in its city centre through innovative initiatives like the Servizio Parkibus Cesena, launched in 1998. This program enhances access to the historic centre, now a pedestrian zone, by providing **affordable parking and efficient public transport**, making it easier for residents and visitors to navigate the area without driving into the busy centre. To further improve accessibility, Cesena has partnered with Start Romagna to create park-and-ride facilities at the city limits. Users can enjoy a car-free experience while shopping or attending events, with free parking and rides costing just €0.50. This initiative fosters a safer, more inviting city centre that encourages cultural events and enriches the community's quality of life.



♥ 6. Upcoming milestones

FOURTH TRANSNATIONAL MEETING **Cesena - October 2024**

Quadrilatero hosted the third trans-national meeting, marking the middle of the planning phase. This phase, which aims to strengthen the practical knowledge and skills of the partners in the defined policy areas, to draw lessons from the exchanges on an ongoing basis and to apply them at local level, will end in October with the **Transnational Meeting in Cesena**.

In Cesena, we will focus on addressing **public space** and **land use**. We will also conduct our **Mid-Term Reflection process**.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

In addition to the transnational meetings, we will be organising other webinars on specific topics of interest to the partners. The following webinars are planned for the next quarter:

LAST-MILE LOGISTICS
18 September 2024

THE YOUTH & THE ELDERLY IN CITY CENTRES
Beginning of December 2024

**Thank you,
And stay posted for more!**



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