

URBACT IV

**URBACT**

# **Pioneers Accelerator Operations Guide**

v01\_October\_2024



# Operations Guide

## URBACT Pioneers Accelerator

### Table of contents

<b>Introduction to the Guide</b> .....	2
Who is it for? .....	2
What's Inside? .....	5
The Learning Journey Overview .....	5
The Pioneers Accelerator Key Outputs .....	7
The Pioneers Accelerator Evaluation Framework.....	9
<b>Phase 1: Discover</b> .....	10
1.1 Methodology, tools and activities .....	11
1.2 Communication and stakeholder engagement.....	14
1.3 Outputs .....	15
1.4 Events and trainings .....	15
1.5 Evaluation and monitoring .....	17
Phase 2: Define.....	18
2.1 Methodology, tools and activities .....	19
2.2 Communication and stakeholder engagement.....	20
2.3 Outputs .....	22
2.4 Events and trainings .....	22
2.5 Evaluation and monitoring .....	24
<b>Phase 3: Develop</b> .....	25
3.1 Methodology, tools and activities .....	26
3.2 Communication and stakeholder engagement.....	27
3.3 Outputs .....	28
3.5 Evaluation and monitoring .....	31
<b>Phase 4: Deliver</b> .....	32
Tool Checklist.....	37
ANNEX: Themes and Transversal Topics .....	39



## Introduction to the Guide

URBACT Pioneers Accelerator brings together URBACT specific knowledge by leveraging the experiences of inspiring EU cities along with experts' insights and the cities from IPA countries during the 18-month learning journey. The journey will lead the cities involved through 3 core dimensions of integrated and participatory planning aimed to accelerate positive change in their respective city administrations:

### EMBRACE

At Pioneers Nest level the entire community of pioneers (Around 20 participant cities from IPA countries) embraces the main URBACT Pioneers Accelerator methodological framework focusing on process and operational challenges. The learning will be provided by distinguished specialists around effective approaches, methods and tools and exchange of experiences.

### EXPLORE

The Thematic Expeditions are providing deepening of the knowledge within a thematic cluster - a smaller group of beneficiary cities gathered around a common thematic challenge. These will include a series of deep dive site visits to the selected Inspiring Host Cities from EU.

### ACT

the On-the Ground-Action dimension is where the IPA beneficiary cities will apply the action learning approach, deliver and demonstrate concrete on-site small-scaled action of sustainable transformation for knowledge implementation and validation.

This guide is crafted to assist the URBACT Joint Secretariat and all involved participants with the implementation of activities foreseen in the new **bespoke learning programme - URBACT Pioneers Accelerator (UPA)** designed for the cities from IPA countries. The guide provides key information about the methodological framework of the learning programme - the structure and flow of activities, approaches and the suggested tools. Nevertheless, during the implementation of the learning journey a flexible approach will be applied in order to adapt to any newly emerging needs. This will be possible by conducting ongoing feedback loops with participating cities which are the integral part of the foreseen learning journey.

## Who is it for?

This guide is intended for:

**The Steering Team:** Overseeing the programme's overall progress and delivery. The Steering Team is composed of URBACT Joint Secretariat (JS) staff members supported by the selected expert team (also acting as UPA Guides). The JS staff members are notably responsible for the UPA programme planning, administration and implementation of its activities, this includes providing the support for organisation and coordination of the events and meetings, both online and in-person. **The expert team (UPA Guides) shall support the delivery of the entire methodological framework** including:

- The application of the methodological tools in the local context by providing "Train-the trainer" sessions to all expert service providers.
- Design of necessary supportive tools (Learning templates, knowledge and skills assessment tools etc.) to deliver the programme.
- The evaluation and monitoring of UPA learning journey
- The production of the programme's key output - URBACT Pioneers Playbook.



**Masterclass Specialists:** Selected experts with specific knowledge of the various tailored methodological approaches and tools provided during the UPA learning journey. They will be creating the educational content of the specific Masterclasses and deliver personalised Clinics sessions.

**Thematic (cluster) Experts:** Experienced URBACT experts with relevant thematic expertise responsible for designing and facilitating the exchange and learning within the thematic clusters. The role of Thematic Experts is to guide and maximise the knowledge uptake on specific topics and provide supervision and guidance to the participants as outlined in the UPA learning programme. They will work closely with the UPA Steering Team to ensure the quality of the knowledge transfer, and provide feedback for the Programme Effectiveness Evaluation. They are instrumental in supporting the Local Mentors to ensure the specific thematic knowledge transfer and meaningful implementation of the actions on the ground.

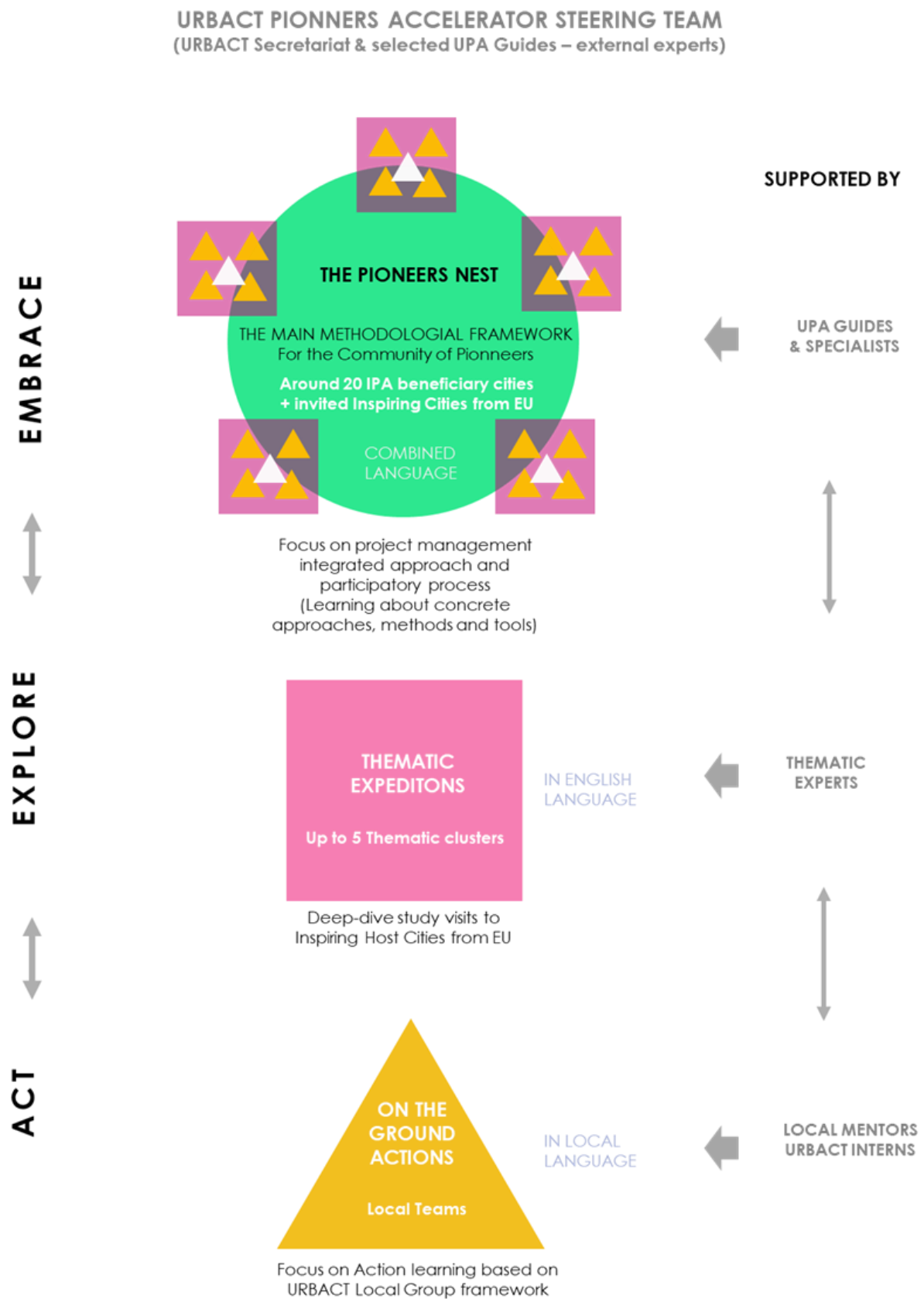
**Local Mentors:** Senior experts in integrated sustainable urban development and facilitation of participatory processes rooted in the local context of the UPA beneficiaries. Their role is to serve as a catalyst for the local understanding of the methodological approaches and thematic challenges. They will be guiding and supporting assigned Local teams from participating cities (preferably in their local language) throughout the process of preparing and executing their local on-the-ground actions. They will introduce the participants to different stages of the UPA journey and cultivate the sense of proactive learning. The Local Mentor will be tasked with reporting to the Steering Team after the completion of each of the methodological framework phases.

**Local Teams and Interns:** URBACT Local Team is a collaborative group of municipal agents from the participating cities. The Local Team shall be consisted of the technical staff experts working in the chosen thematic areas from relevant municipal departments. The Local Team shall include a designated team coordinator and up to two other municipal agents, managers, or even political representatives. The Local team is expected to actively participate in all knowledge uptake activities, development of the local know-how, engaging directly with the local community, and action implementation. The Local Team will be guided by the Local Mentor.

All participant cities will be able to hire an intern/ young graduate to join the Local Team. The major duties and responsibilities of the interns will be to assist the local team with the stakeholder engagement and communication activities. The interns will support the implementation of the communication strategies regarding the on-the-ground action, including helping with the organisation of local activities and production of the digital and in-print communication products. Interns are encouraged to actively brainstorm on the opportunities related to internal communications and branding of the on-the-ground action, and to write, edit and upload multimedia content on the various UPA and local digital communication channels.



Visual summary of the Pionners Accelerator operational model:





## What's Inside?

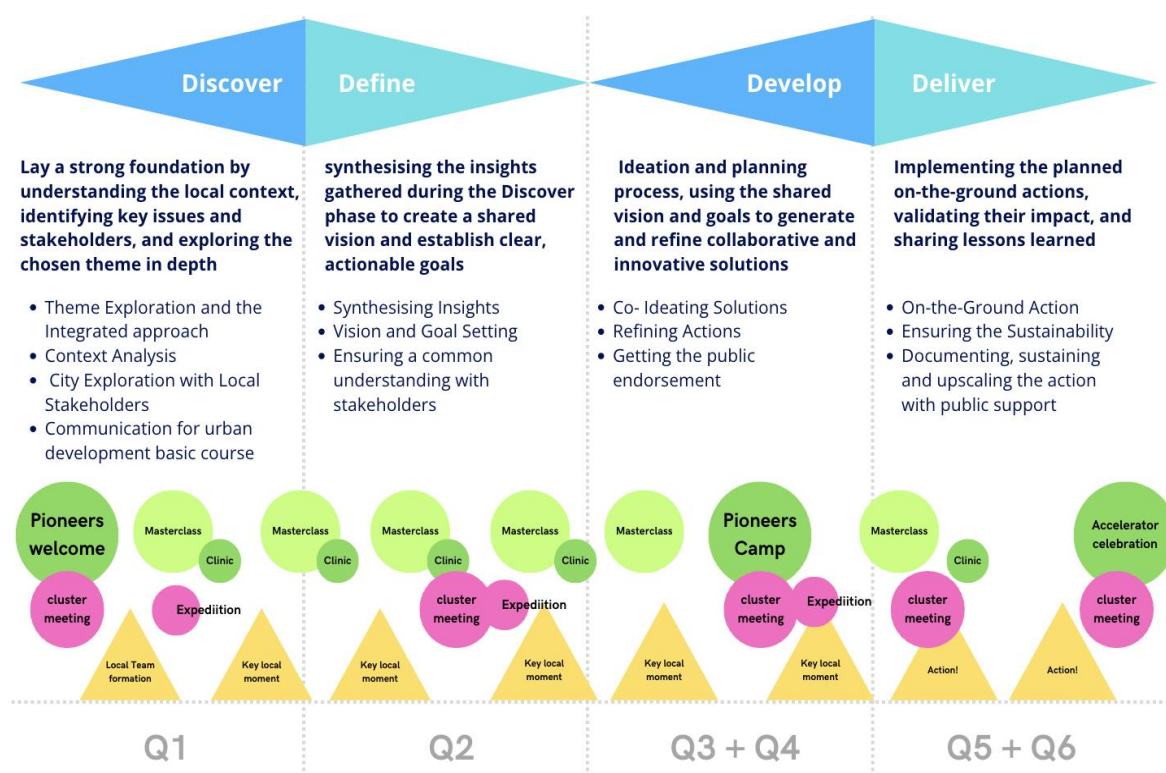
The guide is structured around four key phases—**Discover**, **Define**, **Develop**, and **Deliver**—each with clearly outlined methodology, tools, and activities. Each phase follows the same structure to provide clarity and consistency:

- **Methodology, Tools, and Activities:** Outlines the core methods and practical tools for each phase.
- **Communication and Stakeholder Engagement:** Highlights strategies and activities to engage local stakeholders and ensure clear communication.
- **Outputs:** Lists the concrete deliverables expected by the end of each phase.
- **Events and Training:** A summary of the milestone events, training and knowledge sharing activities in the specific phase.
- **Evaluation and Monitoring:** Provides guidelines for assessing the success and impact of each phase, with specific indicators and tools.

## The Learning Journey Overview

Drawing inspiration from the Double Diamond model of design thinking, the main Pioneers Accelerator Learning Journey methodological framework is divided into four phases: **Discover**, **Define**, **Develop**, and **Deliver**. Each phase is equipped with structured activities and tools designed to support the successful execution of on-the-ground actions that aligns both with local needs and broader European objectives. The framework is in line with the **URBACT Pioneers Accelerator** concept-note elements, integrating the three Pioneers Accelerator Learning Journey core dimensions: **EMBRACE**, **EXPLORE** and **ACT**, including the milestone events and other training moments.

Visual summary of the Learning Journey:





## The types of Accelerator learning events:

**Milestone Events** are in-person gatherings of the Pioneers Nest, marking the key moments of the Learning Journey. These shall gather the entire learning community of the participating cities, their Local Mentors, Thematic (Cluster) Experts, relevant URBACT Specialists, Steering Team and invited speakers (notably the representatives of the inspiring EU cities). The Milestone event is a unique opportunity to combine the learning formats of Embrace and Explore core dimensions with networking and peer-to-peer learning.

Three Milestone Events are foreseen over the whole course of the learning journey; At the launch, at mid-point and at the end. The Milestone events can be combined also with other URBACT flagship in-person events for the purpose of streamlining different URBACT activities and maximizing the knowledge exchange within the URBACT ecosystem.

**Masterclass session** is where an URBACT Specialist presents and shares theoretical knowledge and practical case studies with all members of the participating cities' Local Teams. The Masterclass aims to demonstrate the added value of specific integrated approaches along the methodological steps of the learning programme, and introduce the activities and tools which are going to be further explored and implemented during the Thematic (Cluster) Expeditions and On-the-ground Activities. Masterclasses are the key capacity-building event formats of the EMBRACE core dimension.

Several planned Masterclass sessions shall be part of the in-person Milestone Events whereas the rest of the Masterclass sessions shall take place online.

**Clinic sessions** are possibilities for the URBACT Specialists to offer deepening of the knowledge presented during the Masterclass sessions to the Local Teams with a personalized approach. The format of these sessions will depend on the demand and specific needs coordinated by Local mentors and the Thematic (Cluster) expert. Clinic sessions can also be provided to the wider thematic cluster group if appropriate.

The Clinics sessions shall take place after each respective Masterclass session, in an in-person or online format.

**Thematic Expeditions** are deep-dive exploratory field visits to the inspiring EU Host Cities aimed to offer hands-on knowledge uptake to the thematic cluster - participant cities joined around the common thematic focus. Through Thematic expeditions the participating cities will build the skills and capacities to apply the knowledge on integrated action planning by experiencing first-hand how the action planning has been implemented in other cities.

Thematic expeditions shall be curated and guided by Thematic experts. These shall take place up to 3 times over the whole course of the learning journey.

**Thematic Cluster Meetings** are Pre-and-Post Thematic Expeditions meetings between different participating cities working on the common thematic focus, facilitated by the Thematic (Cluster) Experts. These meetings shall take place before and after the Thematic Expeditions, as a way to prepare and shape the visit to the inspiring EU city, and conduct reflections afterwards about key takeaways.



**Local Team Meetings and Action Labs** are the meetings and activities happening locally with the members of the Local Team and relevant local stakeholders. These are supported by URBACT Local Mentors. The aim of the Local Team Meetings and Action Labs is to learn and develop specific skills through the applications of foreseen approaches and tools introduced and presented at Masterclass sessions and inspiration from the Thematic Expeditions. These shall ensure the proper implementation of the on-the-ground action - concrete small-scale interventions.

Local Uptake Meetings and Action Labs shall be organised in line with the introduction of specific tools and approaches at Masterclass sessions. On-the-ground actions are expected to be implemented in the final phase of the learning journey.

The results of the action learning experience of each methodological Phase shall be documented and presented in an online Dynamic Journal (DJ). Further information, about the key outputs are presented below.

## The Pioneers Accelerator Key Outputs

### The Dynamic Journal (DJ)

The **Dynamic Journal** is a digital, evolving document designed to collect all key insights, reflections, and tools throughout the program. Hosted on a platform like Google Slides (or similar), this journal grows as participants advance through each phase, with new templates for every tool they receive. All beneficiary cities will feed their own DJ with key tool templates filled in in English language (further translations of different tools or materials produced in local language can be added as appropriate).

As cities engage with various activities, they will document their progress in real-time, capturing notes, case studies, and reflections in one easily accessible place. The **Dynamic Journal** not only helps organise information as participants move forward but also serves as a reflective diary, allowing cities to review their journey and easily find key insights and materials. By the end of the program, the **Dynamic Journal** will provide a complete, structured record of the city's path, from initial discovery to concrete action as well as the foresight reflection.

### The Pioneers Accelerator News Articles

News articles with reflective insights for the URBACT website shall be expected at different stages of the learning journey, this includes:

- One article after each Thematic expedition. These articles will be drafted by Thematic (Cluster) Experts
- One article describing each UPA learning phase - Discover, Define, Develop, Deliver. These shall be drafted by the UPA Steering team.
- Additional articles can be proposed describing specific tools embraced throughout the learning journey. These shall be drafted notably by respective Masterclass Specialists.



## The URBACT Pioneers Playbook

The **URBACT Pioneers Playbook** will collate together the outcomes of the Learning Journey. The Playbook is a digital publication containing written and visual content on the URBACT Pioneers Accelerator core dimensions, with examples of the on-site achievements and learning process.

The **URBACT Pioneers Playbook aims to be a practical guide** to help cities (notably from the Western Balkans region) in starting the process of designing and implementing sustainable transformation in urban environments. The Playbook will show the steps on “how to” act in an integrated way, using participatory approach at all stages, based on the examples and learnings from the URBACT Pioneers Accelerator Programme.

The main contributors to the Playbook are the Specialists, Thematic Experts, and Local Mentors drawing key insights from the experience with Local Teams' and the content from respective Dynamic Journals. The Steering team task is to ensure that the book is comprehensive, practical, and adaptable to diverse urban settings across the Western Balkan region.

### The possible components of the URBACT Pioneers Playbook are:

- Vision and Values of the learning programme: presenting the core principles to guide action for sustainable transformation, innovation and impact in the Western Balkan region, following the UPA methodological framework.
- Urban Challenges and Pioneers' Learning Journey: presenting examples how the participating cities have learned from IPA experience, and what kind of knowledge they have developed during the masterclasses, events, workshops and thematic expeditions.
- Actionable Strategies: full feature of the implemented actions on the ground in the UPA participating cities, showcasing innovative small-scale interventions for larger impact in respective thematic fields.
- Prospects for Upscaling: foresight reflections on how to expand action and impact, based on the UPA practice and knowledge developed.
- Supporting Tools: a hand-picked collection of tools on how to get started with sustainable transformation in a city coming from IPA country, and how to join the community of URBACT Pioneers.

The content of the Playbook will be gathered as the learning programme develops over the months, and will contain written and visual material from different deliverables and DJ entries. The curation and final editing of the Playbook will be overseen by the UPA Steering Team. The Playbook shall be presented in its draft form at the final milestone event - the Accelerator Celebration. After the Celebration, the Playbook will be made available and shared on the URBACT website and promoted at different events.



# The Pioneers Accelerator Evaluation Framework

URBACT Pioneers accelerator shall contribute to the overall URBACTIV operational programme objectives. In addition, the specific evaluation framework is foreseen to assess the overall success and impact of the Pioneers Accelerator learning programme. Furthermore, the effectiveness of each phase of the learning journey shall be evaluated on the way with specific indicators and tools in order to provide feedback and make necessary adjustments in the following phases of the learning programme.

## How does the Evaluation Work?

### 1. Knowledge and Skills Assessment:

- **Mini Tests:** Short thematic quizzes at the beginning and end of the phase shall help measure immediate knowledge uptake. These are quick, multiple-choice or short-answer tests.
- **Dynamic Journal Entries:** Participants regularly update the journal, which will be checked for completeness and depth of insights. This offers a continuous gauge of knowledge and reflective thinking.
- **Self-Evaluation:** At registration and at the end of the programme, participants rate their own knowledge, allowing for comparison of perceived growth.

### 2. Program Effectiveness Evaluation:

- **End-of-Phase Surveys:** A quick online survey after each masterclass or phase captures immediate participant feedback on the program's relevance, tool usefulness, and satisfaction.
- **Focus Groups:** Local mentors and the expert group review participant progress at the end of each phase to assess learning and the practical application of skills.
- **Tool-Specific Evaluation:** Different tools proposed will be assessed for completion and utility through participant feedback and Local mentor insights.

## Who is responsible for the evaluation?

### • Knowledge and Skills Assessment:

- **Local Mentors, Thematic Experts** and **Masterclass specialists** are responsible for evaluating participants' knowledge uptake and skills through mini-tests, journal entries, and self-evaluation.

### • Program Effectiveness Evaluation:

- The **Steering Team** and **Local Mentors** (in collaboration with **Interns**), are responsible for evaluating the overall program's effectiveness. This includes conducting surveys, focus groups, and reviewing the completion and utility of the tools.



# Phase 1: Discover

**Phase 1 Discover**, is designed to lay a strong foundation by thoroughly understanding the local context, identifying key issues and stakeholders, and exploring the chosen theme in depth. This phase combines desk research, fieldwork, and interaction with experts to ensure a comprehensive understanding of both EU policy framework and local conditions. The main goal is to equip participants with the knowledge and insights needed to approach urban challenges effectively.

Objective 1: Become acquainted with the overall theme chosen, understand its main elements, and collect inspiring practices.

Objective 2: Understand the specific context and identify key issues, assets, and stakeholders.

👉 Each participant will explore the topic both externally and internally. Externally, by consulting experts and drawing inspiration from best practices; internally, by assessing the city's current status on the topic and identifying key stakeholders involved or to be involved in the process.

For comparison, in URBACT Action planning networks, this phase is akin to the "Get Ready for Action" stage, a condensed version of the baseline study process combined with training.

## PHASE 1 INDEX

- 1.1 Methodology, tools and activities
- 1.2 Communication and stakeholder engagement
- 1.3 Outputs
- 1.4 Events and trainings
- 1.5 Evaluation and monitoring



## 1.1 Methodology, tools and activities

### 1.1.1 Theme Exploration and the Integrated approach

Theme Exploration is a critical initial step in the Discover phase, focused on providing participants with a comprehensive understanding of the chosen theme from both external and internal perspectives. This involves a combination of desk research, interactive masterclasses, and local context analysis to equip participants with the necessary knowledge and tools to engage effectively with the theme. By creating connections between the different themes and taking in consideration multiple stakeholders, the participants will also be able to better understand the integrated approach. Through this process, participants will gain insights into best practices, EU policy frameworks, and the specific local dynamics related to the theme.

#### **Why is it done?**

The purpose of Theme Exploration is to ensure that participants are well-versed in the thematic context of their projects. By exploring the theme externally, participants learn about best practices and policy frameworks at a European level, allowing them to align their projects with broader objectives and adopt innovative approaches. Participants have the opportunity to learn from different experts and practitioners and to be guided by the Thematic expert that will follow the whole process.

#### **Activity 1: Theme knowledge uptake**

- **Tool 1: Reflective Note Taking Guidelines**

The Note Taking Guidelines will help participants feed effectively their Dynamic Journal to document key insights, ideas, and reflections related to the specific theme. These guidelines are made of guiding questions that will encourage participants to not only record information but also actively reflect on their learning, assess their knowledge, and identify gaps throughout the process. The questions will also guide the participants to assess the degree of integration of the different practices. By following these guided questions, participants will engage more deeply with the material, enhance their critical thinking, and gain a more comprehensive understanding of the topic.

#### **Dedicated tool**

Inspired from the academic research, where note taking guiding questions are often provided for understanding articles and different publications. Two examples:

- [Note taking template](#)
- [Learning center note taking template](#)

- **Tool 2: Case Study Canvas**

The Case Study Canvas is a simple template that allows participants to collect and document case studies in a structured, uniform manner. By using consistent categories for each case, participants can easily compare different examples, analyse their effectiveness, and draw meaningful conclusions, also about their level of integration. This tool helps in organising information systematically and facilitates cross-case analysis to identify best practices and lessons learned.



**URBACT** collects good practices with a respective call, and collects valuable comfortable information from each case. <https://urbact.eu/good-practices>

Other Examples:

- [Figma Case Study Canvas](#)
- <https://sites.psu.edu/pedagogicalpractices/case-studies/>

### 1.1.2 Context Analysis

This activity aims to ground the participants' understanding of the theme within their specific local context. By engaging in data collection and interacting with local experts, participants can identify unique challenges and opportunities that might not be apparent from a broader perspective. Additionally, building a local group of stakeholders engaged in the process is crucial for fostering collaboration, gaining diverse insights, and ensuring that the project is well-supported by those who have a direct interest in its outcomes. Context analysis focuses on understanding the specific dynamics of the city by engaging directly with local stakeholders and analysing the local environment. This involves a combination of immersive city exploration and targeted data collection to identify unique challenges, opportunities, and stakeholder perspectives.

#### ***Why is it done?***

The purpose of Context Analysis is to ensure that participants have a deep, practical understanding of the city's unique characteristics and challenges under the selected theme. By engaging with local stakeholders and conducting field research, participants can uncover insights that are not available through desk research alone. This approach helps to build a comprehensive picture of the local context, fostering more relevant and impactful urban projects that are tailored to the specific needs and opportunities of the city.

#### **Activity 2: Theme Exploration in the Local Context**

- **Tool 1: Data Collection guidelines**

The Data Collection guidelines are designed to assist participants in systematically gathering data relevant to their city's context. It provides guiding questions and prompts to help participants identify key information and "fill the gaps" where data may be lacking. This ensures that each city ends up with a comprehensive set of data and a clear understanding of any missing information that needs further exploration. The data collected will give a general overview of the city in terms of size, demographics, geographic positions etc. Other data will be strictly connected with the chosen cluster themes.

#### **Dedicated tool**

- **Tool 2: Interview Guidelines**

The Interview Guidelines are designed to help participants conduct effective qualitative research by providing a structured approach to interviewing key stakeholders. These guidelines outline the key questions to ask, as well as tips on how to



engage stakeholders and capture valuable insights related to the selected theme. This tool ensures that interviews are conducted consistently across different cities, facilitating the collection of comparable qualitative data.

**References:**

- [Strategies-of-effective-interviewing \(hbr.org\)](https://hbr.org/strategies-of-effective-interviewing)
- [Stakeholder engagement interview guide \(humanrights.dk\)](https://humanrights.dk/stakeholder-engagement-interview-guide)

### Activity 3: City Exploration with Local Stakeholders

- **Tool 1: City Safari**

The CitySafari is an interactive exploration tool that encourages participants to explore different areas of their city alongside local stakeholders. This tool involves guided walks and informal conversations with residents to uncover diverse experiences and challenges related to the selected theme. The aim is to gain fresh perspectives on the city's dynamics and identify hidden assets and issues that might not be apparent from a distance.

**Reference:** [Citizen Science Toolkit](#)

- **Tool 2: Stakeholder Mapping**

Stakeholder Mapping, specifically using the URBACT Stakeholders Ecosystem Mapping tool combined with the Power/Interest matrix tool, is a visual exercise designed to help participants identify and map out the key stakeholders within their city relevant to the chosen theme. This tool guides participants in categorising stakeholders based on their level of influence, interest, and engagement in the urban development process. By creating a detailed ecosystem map, participants can better understand the relationships, power dynamics, and potential synergies among stakeholders. This mapping process is crucial for identifying key partners, potential allies, and areas where further engagement is needed, enabling more strategic and inclusive urban planning efforts.

**URBACT TOOLBOX**  [Stakeholders-ecosystem-map](#)



## 1.2 Communication and stakeholder engagement

### 1.2.1. Communication for urban development basic course

In this phase of the project, communication activities serve two primary purposes:

- 1) To equip participants with fundamental communication skills and an understanding of the importance of a well-crafted communication strategy, and
- 2) To actively engage local stakeholders and announce the commencement of the project, emphasising the city's commitment to the process.

Therefore, the activities will include both training sessions to build skills and practical exercises to apply these skills in real-time.

#### Activity 4: Let's start talking

- **Tool 1: Project Poster**

The Project Poster is a long-used URBACT tool that helps communicate key aspects of the project both locally and at the European level. This tool is designed to raise awareness and generate interest among local stakeholders while also providing a clear sign of engagement with the EU programme. By prominently displaying the project's connection to URBACT and the EU, the poster gives visibility to the financial resources utilised and demonstrates transparency and accountability. Participants learn to design effective project posters that convey essential information in a visually engaging format, enhancing their communication strategy.

**URBACT example:** Cities involved in different URBACT networks create a project poster to expose outside of their office or during meetings.

- **Tool 2: Launch Meeting Invite**

The Launch Meeting Invite is a tool aimed at formally announcing the start of the project to local stakeholders and ensuring their participation. It provides templates and guidance for creating compelling invitations that can be delivered via email, social media, or printed materials. To maximise engagement, the invite process can include creating an RSVP form to manage attendance, drafting appealing social media feeds, organising the meeting agenda to ensure clarity and focus, and coordinating logistics effectively to provide a smooth and professional experience. This tool emphasises the importance of a well-organised launch meeting as a foundational step in building stakeholder relationships and commitment to the project's success.

 **Dedicated tool**



## 1.3 Outputs

The following outputs will serve as concrete deliverables from first Phase, documenting each city's progress and ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the theme and local context:

### Dynamic Journal filled in with:

- **Reflective notes about the topic:** Reflections and key insights documented during the theme exploration.
- **Case Study Canvas:** At least three case studies documented in a structured, comparable format.
- **Data Collection:** Comprehensive data on the city related to the selected thematic focus (area of intervention), gathered through local research.
- **Insights from at least one interview:** These can be also from the Thematic expedition.
- **Pictures from the City Safari:** Visual documentation of the city's exploration, showing specific areas, challenges, and community insights.
- **Stakeholder Map:** A detailed map showing key local stakeholders and their connections, based on the Stakeholder Mapping exercise.

### Communication and Stakeholder engagement Outputs:

- **Project Poster:** A photo of the project poster displayed publicly, demonstrates the city's engagement with the project and the EU program.
- **Stakeholder Meeting Notes (Media feeds):** A summary of at least one stakeholder meeting, highlighting key discussions, decisions, and next steps in the form of a media feed.

Local Mentors are the responsible experts to guide the local team's outputs in this phase. The Local Mentors work closely with the interns in the final edit of the outputs. Specialists and Thematic Experts are in charge of supporting the local teams with their work on deliverables, e.g. during personalised Clinics consultations.

## 1.4 Events and trainings

Events and training in the Discovery phase of the learning programme are aimed to "set the scene" for the Learning Journey of the pioneers involved and start building the momentum towards the implementation on the ground of the acquired knowledge. During the series of events and training (as shown in the table overview below) the participants will gain an introduction to the chosen thematic clusters and the cross-cutting themes, how the thematic challenges can be addressed and seen as opportunities, and how to create the shared visions and learn from examples of other cities. The events combine masterclass-style of knowledge transfer with experiential hands-on learning through e.g. field visits, group works and dialogues with experts.

The events and trainings in this first methodological Discover phase start with a "Pioneers Welcome", a first in-person meeting of the Pioneers accelerator.



## Overview Table of the Events Phase 1: Discovery

	Phase 1: Discovery				
	Event type	Event objective	Methodological steps (S) and activities (A) to be applied	Mentorship	When?
E M B R A C E	<b>Pioneers Welcome</b> (the first in-person meeting of the Pioneers Nest)	The introduction to the programme, initial work on Thematic Exploration and networking;	S 1.1.1. Theme Exploration and the Integrated approach Includes: Plenary activities (e.g. Masterclasses) key note presentations, Thematic Knowledge uptake (e.g. Thematic Cluster group meeting) and "Train the Trainer" activities.	Steering Team, Specialists	Month 01
	<b>Masterclass (MC 1) &amp; Clinics (C1)</b> (In-person and online)	MC1 - Provide understanding of the chosen Theme externally and internally through lessons by Specialists	S 1.1.2. Context analysis S 1.2.1. Communication for urban development basic course	Steering Team, Specialists	Months 01 to 02
E X P L O R E	<b>Thematic Cluster Meeting &amp; Thematic Expedition</b> (online and in-person deep dives)	Focused Theme knowledge uptake with the Thematic Experts	A 1: Theme knowledge uptake A 3: City Exploration with Local Stakeholders	Thematic Experts and Inspiring EU City hosting the thematic expedition	Months 01 to 02
A C T	<b>Local Team Meeting #1</b>	Local Team work on localised knowledge development within the chosen Theme	S 1.1.2. Context analysis A 2: Theme exploration in the local context A 3: City Exploration with Local Stakeholders  S 1.2.1. Communication for urban development basic course A 4: Let's start talking	Local Mentors	Months 02 to 03
	<b>Action Lab #1</b> (with stakeholders)	In-person activities involving local stakeholders	Launch Meeting - implementing Tool 2 of the A 4 Let's start talking	Local mentors and interns	Month 3



## 1.5 Evaluation and monitoring

**Evaluation Table for Knowledge and Skills Assessment:**

Objective	Indicators	Measurement Tools	Who?
<b>1. Knowledge on Specific Theme</b>	Improved understanding of key concepts related to the theme	Mini Tests: Thematic quiz before and after the Masterclass or Thematic expedition activities	Thematic Experts and MC 1 Specialists
	Ability to apply concepts to local context	Dynamic Journal Entries: Reflective notes on the topic after key activities	Steering team
<b>2. Local Context Analysis Skills</b>	Ability to gather and organise local data effectively	Data Collection Review: Assessment of data completeness and quality in the Dynamic Journal	Local Mentors
	Stakeholder mapping accuracy and relevance	Stakeholder Map: Reviewed for coverage and detail	Local Mentors
<b>3. Engagement of Local Stakeholders</b>	Stakeholders identified and involved in the process	Meeting Records: Notes (Media feeds) from stakeholder engagement sessions	Interns and Local Mentors

**Evaluation of the Pioneers Accelerator programme effectiveness**

Objective	Indicators	Measurement Tools	Who?
<b>1. Relevance and Impact</b> of key milestone events and Masterclasses	Participant satisfaction with relevance and content of key Information sessions and Masterclasses	End of Event Survey: Quick participant survey	Steering Team
<b>2. Quality of Tools and Activities</b>	Participant engagement with tools (Dynamic Journal, Case Study Canvas)	Tools Completion Rates: Check completeness of Dynamic Journal	Steering team and Local Mentors
		Focus Group with Local Mentors: Discussion after phase to assess tool effectiveness	Steering team



# Phase 2: Define

**Phase 2: Define** is focused on synthesising the insights gathered during the Discover phase to create a shared vision and establish clear, actionable goals. Through collaborative and creative efforts, this phase ensures that the goals are aligned with both local needs and broader European objectives, providing a clear direction for urban development initiatives.

---

**Objective:** Synthesise insights and define a shared vision and clear, actionable goals.

---

🔗 This phase involves analysing the collected information to clarify the specific challenge the city will address in the next stage. It concludes with the formulation of a “How Might We” question, agreed upon by the involved stakeholders.

## PHASE 2 INDEX

- 2.1 Methodology, tools and activities
- 2.2 Communication and stakeholder engagement
- 2.3 Outputs
- 2.4 Events and trainings
- 2.5 Evaluation and monitoring



## 2.1 Methodology, tools and activities

### 2.1.1 Synthesising Insights

Process of Synthesising Insights shall include the collaborative reflection with key stakeholders about the findings from the Discover phase. By working together, the aim is to identify patterns and key insights, helping to narrow down the most pressing urban challenges and opportunities for intervention. The dedicated Masterclass will notably focus on providing inspiring cases, examples related to the use of the tools than can make this process more effective.

#### Activity 1: Insight Jam Session

- **Tool 1: SWOT Analysis**

The SWOT Analysis tool allows participants to assess the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats related to their city's specific context and selected theme. This exercise is ideally conducted with local stakeholders, ensuring that different perspectives are included in the evaluation.

**URBACT TOOLBOX**  Resourcing: [Making-inventory](#)

**URBACT Examples:** Many URBACT Network Baseline studies include a SWOT analysis for each city.

- **Tool 2: Insight and Opportunity Map**

The Insight and Opportunity Map visually organises the data collected during the Discover phase, layering key insights on top of the initial information. By identifying needs, barriers, and opportunities, this tool helps participants unlock resources and reimagine solutions to urban challenges. The map highlights critical insights, including motivations and potential impacts, transforming raw data into actionable strategies for the city's development.

**References:** <https://servicedesigntools.org/tools/synthesis-wall>

### 2.1.2 Vision and Goal Setting

This process focuses on identifying opportunities, creating a shared vision, and setting actionable goals. Participants will engage in activities designed to uncover underlying issues, project future possibilities, and establish clear, measurable objectives. The goal is to align diverse perspectives and collaboratively work towards a unified vision with well-defined goals.

#### Activity 2: Challenges-Vision-Goals Workshop

- **Tool 1: Problem/ Solution Tree**

The Problem Tree is a visual tool used to depict a current problem along with its causes and effects. It helps participants develop a clear and shared understanding of the issue at hand, highlighting how different factors interconnect and contribute to the problem. The solution tree helps to uncover what can be done to address the causes and reduce the effects identified.



## URBACT TOOLBOX [Analysing-problems: problem-tree](#)

- **Tool 2: Newspaper of Tomorrow**

The Newspaper of Tomorrow tool allows participants to envision the future and create a collective vision on a specific topic. This tool is particularly valuable when diverse stakeholders collaborate, as it helps to align different perspectives and interests by projecting a unified future scenario. It encourages creative thinking and ensures that all voices are considered in shaping the shared vision.

## URBACT TOOLBOX [Analysing-problems: Newspaper-tomorrow](#)

- **Other 'Imagine Future' exercises can be considered:**

Reference: [What if Storytelling](#)

### Activity 3: How Might We?

This activity concludes Phases 1 and 2 by guiding participants to focus on a significant question that will direct the search for solutions in the next phase. The "How Might We" (HMW) questions are designed to keep the exploration open to potential solutions, avoid making assumptions about what can or will be achieved, and emphasise the importance of collaborative effort and teamwork.

- **Tool 1: HMW Canvas**

The HMW Canvas facilitates multiple steps in developing various HMW questions from different perspectives. It helps participants define the question clearly and understand how it can be framed in different ways, encouraging diverse approaches and insights.

Reference: [Problem-definition-canvas \(Skills of modern age\)](#)

## 2.2 Communication and stakeholder engagement

### 2.2.1. Ensuring a common understanding with stakeholders

During Phase 2, communication and stakeholder engagement play a key role in aligning diverse perspectives and ensuring that the vision and goals developed are both inclusive and actionable. Clear and effective communication helps ensure that all stakeholders understand the project's direction and feel involved in shaping the outcomes. By engaging stakeholders in defining the vision and setting goals, cities can create a shared sense of ownership and collaboration, laying the groundwork for stronger support in the subsequent phases.

### Activity 4: Creative communication and Data Visualisation Workshop

This activity focuses on effectively communicating the project's vision, progress, and outcomes to local stakeholders and the community (with creative communication approaches). It aims to ensure that all parties are informed, engaged, and able to contribute to the project's success.



The Data Visualisation Workshop is designed to transform complex data and insights into clear, engaging visual formats. This tool aids in communicating key findings and progress to stakeholders in an easily understandable and actionable way. Effective visualisation can enhance the vision pitch by making data more relatable and compelling.

### **Tool 1: Vision Pitch**

The Vision Pitch tool helps participants succinctly and compellingly present the project's vision and goals to decision makers and local stakeholders. By leveraging insights from the Data Visualisation Workshop, the Vision Pitch can more effectively articulate the purpose, benefits, and expected outcomes of the project, facilitating better alignment and support from the community.

Project or vision pitches (e.g. supported with slide decks) are used a lot in the business world for getting investments and financing, in this case, public consensus and recognition are the aim of the pitch, as well as an internal agreement of the direction to take.

### **Dedicated tool**

#### **References:**

<https://www.designkit.org/methods/create-a-pitch.html>

<https://www.emerge-creatives.com/post/design-thinkers-example-to-elevator-pitch>



## 2.3 Outputs

The following outputs will serve as concrete deliverables from Phase 2, documenting each city's progress and ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the theme and local context:

### Dynamic Journal filled with:

- **SWOT ANALYSIS:** A filled in SWOT with the relevant data on the city in reference to the chosen Theme
- **Insight and Opportunity Map:** Reflections and key insights derived from analysing various data and information.
- **Problem/ Solution Tree:** A completed Problem and/or Solution Tree, including a copy and a photo of the team working on it.
- **Newspaper of Tomorrow:** At least one example of the Newspaper of Tomorrow, along with photos from the workshop. OR At least Three "What if" stories along with photos from the workshop.
- **"How Might We" Questions:** 1-3 defined HMW questions documented in the journal.

### Communication and Stakeholder engagement Outputs:

- **Vision Pitch:** A slide deck for presenting the project and its vision moving forward.
- **Stakeholder Meeting Notes (Media feeds):** A summary of at least one stakeholder meeting, including key discussions, decisions, and next steps.

Local Mentors are the responsible experts to guide the local team's in filling in the Dynamic Journal. The intern responsibility is to support the Vision Pitch and keep up with the Meeting Notes (Media feeds). The Specialists and Thematic experts will review the different exercise (tools) entries in the Dynamic Journal at the end of the phase and report to the Steering Team.

## 2.4 Events and trainings

The listed events of the Define phase are there to help the participating pioneer cities "lock in" what they want to achieve within the selected theme and understand who will benefit from the potential action and the impact it can have. The Masterclass events in this phase shall take place online, whereas activities shall happen in-person on the ground, as internal workshops of the Local Team and Action Labs with relevant stakeholders.



## Overview Table of the Events Phase 2 Define

	Phase 2: Define				
	Event type	Event objective	Methodological steps (S) and activities (A) to be applied	Mentorship	When?
E M B R A C E	<b>Masterclass (MC2) &amp; Clinics (C2)</b>  (On-line sessions)	Synthesizing Insights and helping to narrow down the most pressing urban challenges and intervention opportunities	S 2.1.1 Synthesizing Insights	Specialists	Month 4
		Learning how to create a shared vision and set actionable goals	S 2.1.2 Vision and Goal Setting	Specialists	Month 4 to 5
	<b>Masterclass (MC3) &amp; Clinics</b>  (On-line sessions)	MC3 - Learning about how to ensure that the vision and goals are actionable and clear to all stakeholders	S 2.2.1 Ensuring a common understanding with stakeholders	Specialists	Month 5 to 6
A C T	<b>Local Team Meeting #2</b>  (can be several)	Focused work on Insights definitions, Vision and Goal setting in local context and communication strategies for shared Vision and Goal	A 1 Insight Jam Session A 2 Challenges-Vision-Goals Workshop A 3 <i>How might We?</i>  S 2.2.1 Ensuring a common understanding with stakeholders	Local Mentors	Month 4 to 6
	<b>Action Lab #2</b> (with stakeholders)	In-person work with local stakeholders	A 4 Creative Communication and Data Visualisation Workshop	Local mentors and interns	Month 6



## 2.5 Evaluation and monitoring

### Evaluation Table for Knowledge and Skills Assessment:

Objective	Indicators	Measurement Tools	Who?
<b>1. Synthesizing Insights</b>	Identification of key insights from the Discover phase	<b>SWOT Analysis Review:</b> Check completeness and relevance of entries	Local mentor and Steering team
	Recognition of opportunities and challenges	<b>Insight and Opportunity Map:</b> Review of how well insights are mapped to actionable opportunities	Local mentor
<b>2. Defining Vision and Goals</b>	Clear articulation of a shared vision	<b>Problem Tree Review:</b> Evaluate clarity and complexity of the problem and root causes	Local mentor
	Actionable goals aligned with city needs	<b>Newspaper of Tomorrow:</b> Assess how well future scenarios align with city needs and vision	Local mentor
	Creation of focused HMW questions that are solution-oriented	<b>HMW Canvas Review:</b> Assess if HMW questions are open-ended, collaborative, and action-focused	Local mentor and Steering team

### Evaluation of the Program's Effectiveness:

Objective	Indicators	Measurement Tools	Who?
<b>1. Effectiveness of Tools</b>	Participant engagement with tools (SWOT, Problem Tree, HMW Canvas)	<b>Tool Completion Rates:</b> Track progress and quality of Dynamic Journal entries	Steering Team and Local mentors
<b>2. Stakeholder Engagement</b>	Active involvement of local stakeholders in defining vision	<b>Stakeholder Meeting Notes, social media feeds:</b> Review of stakeholder feedback and participation	Interns and Local mentors
<b>3. Satisfaction with Program Structure</b>	Participant feedback on pacing and structure of the phase	<b>End of Phase Survey:</b> Quick participant survey on structure, tools, and satisfaction	Steering team
<b>4. Expert Evaluation</b>	Assessment of participants' progress and capacity-building	<b>Focus Group with Local Mentors:</b> Discussion on participants' progress, tools' effectiveness, and goals alignment	Steering team



# Phase 3: Develop

**Phase 3: Develop** emphasises the ideation and planning process, using the shared vision and goals to generate and refine innovative solutions. This phase promotes creativity and collaboration with stakeholders to ensure that the proposed actions are both feasible and supported by the community.

---

**Objective:** Ideate and plan the city's on-the-ground action.

---

🔗 Each participating city shall generate various solutions to the challenge identified earlier, select the most appropriate one, and collaboratively plan its implementation including the definition of specific objectives for impact assessment.

## PHASE 3 INDEX

- 3.1 Methodology, tools and activities
- 3.2 Communication and stakeholder engagement
- 3.3 Outputs
- 3.4 Events and trainings
- 3.5 Evaluation and monitoring



## 3.1 Methodology, tools and activities

### 3.1.1 Co- Ideating Solutions

In this activity, participants begin with the previously crafted "How Might We" (HMW) question from Phase 2 and engage in a creative brainstorm to generate a wide range of concrete ideas for on-the-ground actions. The workshop encourages participation from both the project team and local community, promoting diverse perspectives and innovative thinking.

#### Activity 1: Brainstorm Session

- **Tool 1: Brainstorming Techniques**

Reverse brainstorming will be introduced to enhance creativity, encouraging participants to think from different perspectives before focusing on realistic solutions. The goal is to generate many ideas, which will then be organised into clusters or themes for further refinement. All ideas shall be recorded in the **Dynamic Journal**.

#### Activity 2: Collaboration Idea Lab

This workshop facilitates collaboration between participants and local stakeholders to co-create and prioritise the generated ideas. By involving stakeholders, participants ensure that the selected solutions are both feasible and supported by the community.

- **Tool 1: Idea Prioritization Matrix**

The matrix is used to evaluate and rank the generated ideas based on key criteria such as impact, feasibility, and alignment with strategic goals.

**References:** <https://www.nngroup.com/articles/prioritization-matrices/>

- **Tool 2: Co-Creation Canvas**

The Co-Creation Canvas allows participants to collaboratively refine the top 3 ideas, providing details on potential implementation strategies, stakeholder roles, and required resources.

 **Dedicated tool**

### 3.1.2 Refining Actions

In this final step, participants develop a detailed action plan, outlining the necessary timing, resources, roles, specific objectives and outputs to ensure successful implementation of the chosen idea.

#### Activity 3: Building a Clear Action Plan



- **Tool 1: Action Canvas**

The Action Canvas provides a comprehensive overview of the action plan, ensuring that the objectives, roles, and strategies are clear and well-aligned with the project goals. The Action Canvas connects the HMW question with specific objectives, concrete action and result indicators.

**URBACT TOOLBOX**  [Planning-actions: Refining-action](#)

- **Tool 2: Action Tables**

Detailed Action Tables are created to specify each step of the implementation process, including timelines, resources, and responsibilities. These tools ensure that the project plan is well-organised and ready for execution.

**URBACT TOOLBOX**  [Planning-actions: Action-table](#)

- **Tool 3: The integrated approach reality check**

The design of this tool will be based on the insights from the URBACT Study on Integrated Action Plans carried out in 2022.

 **Dedicated tool**

## 3.2 Communication and stakeholder engagement

### 3.2.1. Getting the public endorsement

In Phase 3, communication and stakeholder engagement are crucial for ensuring that the best ideas are not only selected through community involvement but also backed by local resources and support. This phase emphasises transparent decision-making and active citizen participation, helping civil servants build skills in co-creation and public engagement. By collecting opinions and commitments from citizens and civic organisations, participants ensure that the chosen ideas are feasible, supported, and ready for action.

#### Activity 4: Idea Presentation and Voting Campaign

This activity focuses on presenting the top 3-5 ideas to the public in an engaging and accessible way. The goal is to allow citizens to vote or rank their priorities, encouraging broader participation in the decision-making process. This not only gives citizens a voice but also helps local civil servants practise transparent communication and public engagement.

- **Tool 1: Idea Presentation Boards with Voting Mechanism**

The **Idea Presentation Boards** are simple visual displays (digital or physical) that outline the 3-5 top ideas, clearly presenting the benefits, feasibility, and potential impact of each. Citizens are invited to **vote** for their preferred ideas or rank them based on priority. This tool encourages transparency and provides citizens with an opportunity to directly influence the final decision. The voting can be done online via a platform, or in person during public events or workshops.



## Dedicated tool

### Activity 5: Community Resource Commitment Form

This activity focuses on not only collecting opinions but also securing resources from civic organisations and citizens who are willing to contribute to the implementation of the chosen actions. It shifts the conversation from consultation to collaboration, actively engaging the community in the execution of the action plan.

- **Tool 2: Community Resource Commitment Form**

The **Community Resource Commitment Form** (digital or physical) allows civic organisations and individual citizens to pledge their availability, resources, or skills to support the implementation of the chosen ideas. Whether through volunteering, offering expertise, or providing in-kind support, this tool enables cities to gather practical resources and ensure that the selected actions have a stronger foundation for success.

## Dedicated tool

## 3.3 Outputs

### Dynamic Journal Filled With:

- **Brainstorm Session Notes:** Documentation of the brainstorm session, including all generated ideas, clustered into themes or categories for further refinement.
- **Co-Creation Canvas:** Detailed descriptions of the top 3 selected ideas, including implementation strategies, stakeholder roles, and required resources.
- **Action Plan Overview:** A completed Action Canvas providing a comprehensive outline of the final action plan.

### Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Outputs:

- **Idea Presentation:** Digital or physical presentation displaying the 3 top ideas, presented in a clear and engaging format, along with feedback or voting results from citizens.
- **Community Resource Commitment Form Results:** A summary of pledged resources, including contributions from civic organisations and citizens (e.g., volunteers, in-kind support), to support the implementation of the selected ideas.
- **Stakeholder Meeting Notes (Media feeds):** A summary of stakeholder engagement during the idea refinement process, including key insights, feedback, and contributions.

Local Mentors and Interns will help the Local Teams produce the relevant and required content for the dynamic Journals. The Specialists and Thematic Experts will conduct personalised support during the Clinics sessions and review the Dynamic Journal at the end of the phase and report to the Steering Team. The Specialists are responsible for the educational content of the Masterclasses whereas the Thematic experts take part in guiding the Teams during the on-site Thematic expeditions.



### 3.4 Events and trainings

The events and training in this phase will combine theoretical knowledge transfer with practical field visits and in-person formats to help participating cities achieve the next level in the acceleration towards actions in thematic fields. The events are focusing on the techniques to develop viable ideas for implementation, taking care that developed ideas result in solutions to problems holistically, inclusively, quickly and cost-effectively.

**Overview Table of the Events Phase 3: Develop**

	<b>Phase 3: Develop</b>				
	<b>Event type</b>	<b>Event objective</b>	<b>Methodological steps (S) and activities (A) to be applied</b>	<b>Mentorship</b>	<b>When?</b>
<b>E M B R A C E</b>	<b>Masterclass (MC4) &amp; Clinics</b> (On-line)	Providing knowledge to support generation and prioritisation of concrete ideas leading to integrated action	S 3.1.1 Co-Ideating Solution	Specialists	Month 7 to 8
<b>E X P L O R E</b>	<b>Thematic Expedition #2 &amp; Thematic Cluster Meeting</b> (on-site and online)	Focused deep dive into developing actionable solutions	A 1: Brainstorming Techniques  A 2: Collaboration Idea Lab - inspiration for co-creation experiential learning	Inspiring EU Host city and Thematic Experts	Month 7 to 8
<b>A C T</b>	<b>Local Team Meeting #3</b>	Local Team working on developing ideas for local context and chosen Theme	<u>S 3.1.1 Co-Ideating Solutions</u> A 1: Brainstorming Techniques A 2: Collaboration Idea Lab - co-creation on the ground Theme Inspiration	Local mentors	Month 8 to 9
<b>E M B R A C E</b>	<b>Masterclass (MC5) &amp; Clinics</b> (On-line)	Building knowledge and skills in transparent decision making and co-creation with citizens and stakeholders	S 3.1.2 Refining Actions part 1 S 3.2.1 Getting the Public Endorsement	Specialists	Month 10 to 11



	Phase 3: Develop				
	Event type	Event objective	Methodological steps (S) and activities (A) to be applied	Mentorship	When?
	<b>Local Team Meeting #3</b>	Local Team working on developing ideas and defining Actions	A 3: Building a clear Action plan	Local Mentors	Month 10
<b>A C T</b>	<b>Action Lab #3</b> (with stakeholders)	Local Team learning on public engagement in local context and Building a clear action plan for the Theme	S 3.2.1 Getting the Public Endorsement A 4: <i>Idea Presentation and Voting Campaign</i>	Local mentors	Month 10
<b>E M B R A C E</b>	<b>Pioneers Camp</b> (Second Milestone event)	Turning point in learning journey, insights so far and final preparations for on the ground Actions	S 3.1.2 Refining Actions part 2  Action co-planning and implementation as the main topic of the event, with training sessions and peer-review workshops (of draft Action plans), debriefs and cluster meetings	Inspiring EU Host city and Thematic Experts	Month 11
<b>E X P L O R E</b>	<b>Thematic Expedition #3 &amp; Thematic Cluster Meeting</b> (on-site and online)	Peer learning how to build a clear action plan	A 3: Building a Clear Action Plan - action co-planning experiential learning A 5: <i>Community Resource Commitment Form and Check on Integrated Approach</i>	Host city and /or Thematic Experts	Month 11 to 12
<b>A C T</b>	<b>Action Lab #4</b> (with stakeholders)	3.2.1. Getting the public endorsement	A 5: <i>Community Resource Commitment Form and Check on Integrated Approach</i>	Local mentors	Month 12



### 3.5 Evaluation and monitoring

**Evaluation Table for Knowledge and Skills Assessment:**

Objective	Indicators	Measurement Tools	Who?
<b>1. Prioritising and Refining Ideas</b>	Clear refinement of the top 3 ideas	Co-Creation Canvas: Assess the detail and practicality of the final 3 ideas selected for implementation	Local mentors
<b>2. Developing a Detailed Action Plan</b>	Creation of a comprehensive action plan with timelines and responsibilities	Action Canvas and Action Tables: Review completeness and clarity of the action plan, ensuring it includes all necessary elements (roles, resources, timelines)	Local mentors, Thematic experts (during Pioneers Camp) and Steering team

**Evaluation Table for the Program's Effectiveness:**

Objective	Indicators	Measurement Tools	Who?
<b>1. Effectiveness of Tools</b>	Participant engagement with tools (Brainstorming, Prioritization Matrix, Action Canvas)	<b>Tool Completion Rates:</b> Track progress and quality of completed tools (Dynamic Journal entries, Action Plan)	Steering team and Local Mentors
<b>2. Stakeholder and Community Engagement</b>	Stakeholder participation in refining and selecting ideas	<b>Stakeholder Meeting Notes in social media entrees:</b> Review stakeholder contributions and feedback during co-creation sessions	Local mentors and Interns
<b>3. Program Structure and Satisfaction</b>	Participant feedback on the structure and pacing of Phase 3	<b>End of Phase Survey:</b> Quick participant survey on tools, stakeholder engagement, and overall satisfaction with the phase	Steering Team
<b>4. Expert Review and Feedback</b>	Mentor assessment of participants' progress and skill development	<b>Focus Group with Local Mentors:</b> Mentors discuss the progress of participants, the quality of ideas, and the clarity of action plans	Steering Team



# Phase 4: Deliver

**Phase 4: Deliver** is centred on implementing the planned actions, validating their impact, and sharing lessons learned. This phase ensures that the projects are not only executed but also assessed for scalability and sustainability, contributing to broader urban development goals in line with the European sustainable urban development framework.

---

**Objective:** Implement, validate, share, and prepare for next steps with foresight reflection.

---

📖 In simple terms: the city will now implement the action and evaluate its results.

## PHASE 4 INDEX

- 4.1 Methodology, tools and activities
- 4.2 communication and stakeholder engagement
- 4.3 outputs
- 4.4 Events and trainings
- 4.5 Evaluation and monitoring



## 4.1 Methodology, tools and activities

### 4.1.1 On-the-Ground Action

This activity focuses on the execution of the on-the-ground action. The goal is to ensure that all resources are available and that the action is implemented within the given timeframe, involving all relevant stakeholders in the process.

#### Activity: Pilot Project Implementation

- **Tool 1: Pilot Project Checklist**

The **Pilot Project Checklist** is a simple project management tool (a sort of a visual roadmap based on gantt chart) designed to help cities ensure that they have all the necessary resources and that the implementation fits within the given timeline. The checklist can be shared with involved stakeholders to promote transparency and accountability. It serves as a step-by-step guide to keeping the project on track and ensuring smooth execution.

 **Dedicated tool**

### 4.1.2 Ensuring the Sustainability

This activity focuses on evaluating the results of the implemented action, both during and after execution. The aim is to assess whether the project can be scaled and sustained over time, contributing to longer-term urban development strategies.

#### Activity: Monitoring and Evaluation

- **Tool 1: Evaluation Grid**

The **Evaluation Grid** helps track the project's results at different stages—before, during, and after the action. It includes clear indicators for each sub-action and provides space for documenting lessons learned. The grid allows cities to assess the impact of their action in real time and collect data for ongoing improvements, ensuring that projects are not only implemented successfully but also provide valuable insights for future actions.

**URBACT TOOLBOX**  [Implementing: Monitoring-performance-table](#)

## 4.2 Communication and stakeholder engagement

### 4.2.1. Documenting, sustaining and upscaling the action with public support

This activity involves communicating the results of the action to a wider audience, ensuring that both the process and outcomes are visible and shared. The goal is to engage citizens, stakeholders, and decision-makers by highlighting the successes and lessons learned.



### Activity: Showcasing the Action

- **Tool 1: Storytelling Tool-kit**

The **Storytelling Tool-kit** provides cities with various options for showcasing their project to the public. Whether through posters, videos, or other creative formats, this toolkit helps participants visualise and communicate their process and results effectively. By sharing their stories, cities can inspire others, promote transparency, and build momentum for future projects.

#### **Dedicated tool**

## 4.3 Outputs

### Dynamic Journal Filled With:

- **Pilot Project Checklist:** A completed checklist showing that all necessary resources were available and that the project was executed within the given timeframe.
- **Evaluation Grid:** A filled-out evaluation grid documenting the action's results, including before, during, and after data, as well as any lessons learned and areas for improvement.

### Other Outputs:

- **Storytelling Outputs:** Visual or multimedia products (e.g. posters, videos) created using the Storytelling Tool-kit to showcase the project's process and results to the public and stakeholders.

The production of Storytelling outputs will be supported by the Interns, in collaboration with the Local Mentors. The Local Mentors will help Local Teams with the content for the Dynamic Journal and the Specialists and Thematic Experts will review the Dynamic Journal at the end of the phase and report to the Steering Team. The Specialists are responsible for the educational content of the Masterclasses.

## 4.4 Events and trainings

The Delivery phase is the phase where the whole Pioneers Accelerator Learning Journey comes to life through demonstration of on-site action in the participating cities. The events and training are there to support this process. Celebration event is foreseen to reflect on the achieved results after the months of intensive learning and co-creative process of the Local Uptake Teams.



## Overview Table of the Events Phase 4: Deliver

	Phase 4: Deliver				
	Event type	Event objective	Methodological steps (S) and activities (A) to be applied	Mentorship	When?
<b>E M B R A C E</b>	<b>Masterclass (MC6) &amp; Clinics</b> (On-line sessions)	Knowledge transfer needed for the execution of on-the-ground action, ensuring that all resources are available	S 4.1.1. On the Ground Action S 4.1.2. Ensuring the Sustainability S 4.1.1. Documenting Sustaining and upscaling the action with public support	Specialists	Month 13
<b>E X P L O R E</b>	<b>Thematic Cluster Meetings #4</b> (can be combined with Clinics sessions)	Focused exchanges on how to ensure the sustainability of planned action and how to upscale the action	S 4.1.2. Ensuring the Sustainability A 2 Monitoring and evaluating S 4.2.1. Documenting sustaining and upscaling the action with public support	Thematic Experts (Specialists)	Month 13 to Month 16
<b>A C T</b>	Local Uptake team Meeting #5	Preparation and implementation of the action-on-the-ground in local context	A 1 Pilot Project Implementation S 4.1.2. Ensuring the Sustainability A 2 Monitoring and evaluating	Local Mentors	Month 13 to Month 15
	<b>Action Lab #4</b> (with stakeholders)	On the ground Action implemented	S 4.2.1. Documenting sustaining and upscaling the action with public support A 3 Storytelling Toolkit and Workshop	Local Mentors	Month 16
<b>E M B R A C E</b>	<b>Pioneers Accelerator Celebration</b>	Final event to celebrate successes of the Pioneers learning journey	Plenary activities and demonstrations of the achieved results. All involved participants shall be invited. (This event can be merged also with URBACT knowledge events if appropriate)	Thematic Experts, Local Mentors, Steering Team	Month 18



## 4.5 Evaluation and monitoring

**Evaluation Table for Knowledge and Skills Assessment (Phase 4: Deliver):**

Objective	Indicators	Measurement Tools	Who?
<b>1. Knowledge on Specific Theme</b>	Improved understanding of key concepts related to the selected theme	<b>Mini Tests:</b> Thematic quiz on the specific knowledge	Thematic Experts and Steering Team
<b>2. Implementing the On-the-Ground Action</b>	Ability to apply concepts to local context	<b>Dynamic Journal Entries:</b> Reflective entries at the end of the program	Local mentors and Steering Team
<b>3. Monitoring and Evaluating Action Results</b>	Ability to track and document action results before, during, and after implementation	<b>Evaluation Grid Review:</b> Assessment of completed grids, including data collection and impact analysis	Local Mentors
	Participants identify lessons learned and key takeaways	<b>Documentation of Lessons Learned:</b> Review of reflections on action outcomes and improvements	Local Mentors and Interns
<b>4. Communicating and Showcasing the Action</b>	Ability to effectively communicate the project results	<b>Storytelling Outputs Review:</b> Assessment of posters, videos, or other storytelling formats	Local Mentors and Steering Team

**Evaluation Table for the Program's Effectiveness (Phase 4: Deliver):**

Objective	Indicators	Measurement Tools	Who?
<b>1. Effectiveness of Tools</b>	- Participant engagement with tools (Pilot Project Checklist, Evaluation Grid, Storytelling Tool-kit)	<b>Tool Completion Rates:</b> Review of completed checklists, evaluation grids, and storytelling outputs	Steering Team and Local Mentors
<b>2. Results of the On-the-Ground Action</b>	- Tangible results and impact of the action	<b>Results Evaluation:</b> Based on evaluation grids and mentor feedback, assess the effectiveness of the action	Steering Team and Local Mentors



<b>3. Stakeholder and Community Engagement</b>	Level of community and stakeholder involvement in the action and storytelling process	<b>Stakeholder Feedback:</b> Gather feedback from stakeholders on their involvement and the visibility of the project	Local mentors and interns
<b>4. Program Structure and Satisfaction</b>	Participant feedback on the final phase and overall experience	<b>End of Program Survey:</b> Final participant survey on the entire program, including Phase 4. It shall include URBACT IV indicators.	Steering team
<b>5. Expert Review and Feedback</b>	Mentor assessment of participants' overall performance and project success	<b>Focus Group with Local Mentors:</b> Mentors discuss participants' project implementation, lessons learned, and next steps	Steering team

## Tool Checklist









**Existing tool**










**To develop or adapt**

### Phase 1: Discover






-  **Note Taking Guidelines** - Helps participants document key insights and reflect on their learning.
-  **Case Study Canvas** - Template to collect and compare case studies in a structured format.
-  **Data Collection Guidelines** - Assists participants in gathering relevant data about their city context.
-  **Interview Guidelines** - Structured questions for conducting interviews with local stakeholders.
-  **City Safari Tool** - Guides participants through immersive city exploration with local stakeholders.
-  **Stakeholder Mapping** - Visual tool to identify and map key stakeholders using the URBACT Stakeholders Ecosystem Mapping tool.






## Phase 2: Define

-  **SWOT Analysis** - Helps assess the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in the city context.
  -  **Insight and Opportunity Map** - Visualizes key insights and opportunities derived from data collected in Phase 1.
  -  **Problem Tree** - Visual tool for identifying the root causes and effects of a specific problem.
  -  **Solution Tree** - A visual overview of the range of projects or interventions that need to occur to solve the core problem
  -  **Newspaper of Tomorrow** - A creative exercise for envisioning future scenarios and defining a shared vision.
  -  **What If** - visualisation of hypothetical scenarios
  -  **HMW (How Might We) Canvas** - Helps formulate actionable "How Might We" questions that guide the ideation process.
- 

## Phase 3: Develop

-  **Brainstorming Techniques** - Reverse brainstorming to generate a wide range of creative ideas for on-the-ground actions.
  -  **Idea Prioritization Matrix** - Matrix to evaluate and prioritise ideas based on impact, feasibility, and strategic goals.
  -  **Co-Creation Canvas** - Tool for refining the top 3 ideas collaboratively, detailing strategies and stakeholder roles.
  -  **Action Canvas** - A comprehensive overview of the action plan to ensure clarity in execution.
  -  **Action Tables** - Detailed tables outlining each step of the implementation process, including timelines and responsibilities.
- 

## Phase 4: Deliver

-  **Pilot Project Checklist** - Project management tool to ensure all resources are available and tasks are completed within the timeframe.
-  **Evaluation Grid** - Helps track actions results before, during, and after implementation, including data collection and impact.
-  **Storytelling Tool-kit** - Provides options (e.g., poster, video) for visually sharing the process and results with a wider audience.



## ANNEX: Themes and Transversal Topics

As part of the URBACT Pioneers Accelerator, cities will focus on addressing urban challenges by selecting from 6 themes:

- Sustainable Mobility
- Waste Management
- Urban Nature
- Jobs and SME Support
- Sustainable Tourism Development
- Culture

Each theme represents a crucial area of sustainable urban development challenges in IPA countries, and the programme is designed to help cities improve their strategies and actions within these fields.

In line with URBACT IV Programme cross-cutting priorities, some transversal topics will be integrated into the learning of each topic. In particular:

- Environmental Sustainability (e.g. air quality, energy efficiency, green spaces etc.)
- Social Inclusion (e.g. gender, disabilities, migration, age etc.)
- Digitalisation (e.g. smart cities, citizen participation, digital services etc.)

These transversal topics are applied across all themes, ensuring that cities adopt a holistic approach to urban development that is sustainable, inclusive, and future-oriented.

### Primary and Secondary Topics

In the application form, cities are asked to select a **primary theme** that represents their main area of focus for the program. In addition, they can choose a **secondary theme** that is closely related or supports their primary focus. This allows cities to approach their urban challenges in a more integrated way, considering the interconnections between different urban sectors.

For example, a city may select **Sustainable Tourism** as the primary theme and **Sustainable Mobility** as the secondary theme to explore how improved mobility can enhance the tourism experience.

#### Example:

- **Primary topic:** Sustainable Tourism Development
- **Secondary topic:** Sustainable Mobility

*The city is interested in improving soft mobility for tourists, promoting walking tours, connecting public transport, and enhancing accessibility.*



## 1. Sustainable Mobility

### Description:

Cities in the IPA region face significant challenges in implementing sustainable urban mobility policies. Air quality in the Western Balkans frequently exceeds safe limits, with pollution levels surpassing daily, yearly, and even hourly maximum thresholds. This problem is aggravated by the widespread use of fossil fuels and car dependency for short-distance commuting, contributing to the deteriorating quality of life.

Public transport systems in these cities are often inefficient while increasing traffic and outdated street infrastructure make public spaces unsafe and uncomfortable for cyclists and pedestrians. A common issue is the loss of small green spaces, small neighbourhood parks and green squares as they are increasingly replaced by parking areas.

Improving urban mobility in the region includes making public transport more efficient and accessible, reducing traffic congestion, optimising parking solutions, and reclaiming streets for pedestrians and cyclists.

Knowledge transfer under this theme focuses on aligning the region's sustainable urban mobility goals with the EU's ambitions. Aligned with the **European Green Deal** and the **Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy**, which aim to reduce carbon emissions in the transport sector and promote greener, smarter mobility solutions across European cities. It also seeks to develop solutions that are responsive to local contexts, promote behaviour change, and support the renewal of degraded public spaces, ultimately creating a greener, healthier future. URBACT already has a good base of Knowledge in this thematic area and a dedicated Knowledge Hub webpage with insights on [Mobility](#).

### Examples of Actions:

- **Installing Bicycle Racks:** Install secure bike racks in key areas to encourage cycling, with a focus on improving air quality.
- **Designating Car-Free Zones:** Create car-free zones in busy areas, improving walkability and accessibility for people with disabilities.
- **Creating Priority Lanes for Public Transport:** Marking and promoting priority lanes for buses or trams to improve the efficiency of public transportation and reduce travel times.



## 2. Waste Management

### Description:

The linear "take-make-waste" model of industrialization and consumption is strongly present in the IPA region and has a significant impact on urban environmental protection and waste management practices. Most cities are lagging behind European standards due to a lack of policies, funding, and the capacity to handle large amounts of waste, including food waste, which has become a growing concern in urban areas. **The EU Circular Economy Action Plan and the Waste Framework Directive**, both of which aim to reduce waste, increase recycling rates, and promote sustainable waste management practices across Europe.

Waste generation has increased sharply in recent decades, but the infrastructure to manage waste has not kept pace. This theme includes the focus on improving urban waste management, reducing food waste, exploring the circular economy, and promoting public awareness campaigns around cleanliness, recycling, and resource efficiency. The goal is to create cleaner, more sustainable urban spaces by addressing waste at its source, promoting (food) waste reduction, and encouraging responsible behaviour among residents.

URBACT has a good knowledge base around this topic. [Let's go circular](#) is an ongoing action planning network paving the way for a sustainable, just and productive transition of cities towards a functioning Circular Economy. Previous URBACT Networks URGE and Resourceful cities also dealt with Construction waste and urban waste respectively.

### Examples of Actions:

- **Setting Up Recycling Stations:** Establish well-marked recycling stations in public areas, including food waste collection bins to encourage proper waste separation and promote composting.
- **Launching a Food Waste Reduction Initiative:** Work with local businesses, restaurants, and schools to reduce **food waste** through **donation programs** for surplus food and community kitchens. URBACT has a dedicated knowledge hub space on [Food](#) related policies and practices.
- **Organizing Clean-Up Campaigns:** Launch a community-driven clean-up day to remove litter from parks, streets, and public spaces, raising awareness about waste management.



### 3. Urban Nature (Environment Protection)

#### Description:

The IPA countries and generally the South East Europe region are some of the most critical global areas when it comes to climate change, according to the 2021 OSCE report. The region will become increasingly vulnerable to heatwaves, droughts and other extreme weather events as global temperatures rise. The rising temperatures and drastic changes in urban microclimates are additionally increased by the rapid densification of the cities, resulting often in the loss of green areas, parks and trees, affecting the quality of life and health of the citizens.

This theme is dedicated to the protection, creation, and better utilisation of green areas within urban environments. It involves small-scale interventions that enhance urban green spaces, making cities more sustainable, livable, and enjoyable for residents. The focus is on increasing green coverage, promoting biodiversity, and improving the quality of public spaces.

This theme is in line with the **EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030**, which focuses on restoring nature in urban areas, promoting green spaces, and enhancing biodiversity as part of the **European Green Deal**. URBACT has a large collection of examples on [Climate action](#), a wealth of knowledge from past and ongoing URBACT Networks focusing on green policies and the Urban Agenda for the EU, a partnership on [Greening Cities](#).

#### Examples of Actions:

- **Creating Pocket Parks:** Convert small, underused urban plots into pocket parks with seating, plants, and play areas, providing green space in dense urban environments.
- **Launching Tree-Planting Initiatives:** Organise community tree-planting events to increase urban green coverage, enhance biodiversity, and provide shade and beauty.
- **Improving Park Amenities:** Install benches, lighting, or fitness equipment in existing parks to encourage more frequent and diverse use of green spaces.



## 4. Jobs and SME Support

### Description:

The trend of the rapid growth of urban centres is happening in the IPA countries region as well as around the world. The cities in the region are considered to be major attractors, promising prosperity and job creation, usually at the expense of the surrounding rural areas. Access to service and proximity to urban amenities e.g. health services or education are among the major attractors, but there are also challenges in this process, such as the creation of enough quality jobs in the urban centres.

Supporting local commerce and entrepreneurship, especially in food and consumer goods sectors, is vital for the economic sustainability of many cities in the region. This theme reflects the objectives of the **EU Cohesion Policy** and the **European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)**, which focus on reducing disparities between regions by fostering entrepreneurship, and supporting local economic growth. Actions under this theme can help stimulate the local economy, support small businesses, and create a vibrant, entrepreneurial community. The Urban Agenda concluded a partnership on the topic of [Jobs and Skills in the Local Economy](#). URBACT has a great collection of good practices on the [Productive City](#).

### Examples of Actions:

- **Creating Pop-Up Markets:** Organise temporary markets in underused urban spaces where local entrepreneurs and small businesses can sell their products.
- **Offering Micro-Grants for Storefront Improvements:** Provide small grants or incentives for local shops to improve their storefronts, making commercial areas more attractive to customers.
- **Launching a "Buy Local" Campaign:** Initiate a marketing campaign encouraging citizens to support local businesses, highlighting the economic and social benefits of shopping locally.



## 5. Sustainable Tourism Development

### Description:

As the public sentiments against mass-tourism models rise across traditional tourist hot spots across Europe, the South East Europe and Balkans regions may have a good chance to get more active in developing new innovative approaches on the road to sustainable tourism models. There is a possibility to develop small-scale, personalised and unique formulas in this sector, in combination with the less-known tourist routes representing the living cultural heritage of the region. In urban areas, sustainable tourism development relies on the less-known cultural and architectural heritage and urban spaces.

Enhancing tourism involves creating accessible, engaging, and well-branded urban spaces that attract visitors while being accessible to residents. This theme considers the **EU Strategy for Sustainable Tourism** and the **European Tourism Manifesto**, which encourage the development of sustainable, innovative, and inclusive tourism models to preserve cultural heritage and improve local economies. An ongoing partnership is working on [Sustainable tourism](#) as part of the Urban Agenda for the EU. Previous Action Planning Network in URBACT, [Tourism Friendly cities](#) explored the sustainable impact of tourism on integrated urban development. This theme focuses on interventions that improve signage, tours, and the overall tourist experience. The uniqueness of the urban features, such as urban blue/green infrastructure, etc.

### Examples of Actions:

- **Installing Sustainable Tourism Signage:** Stimulate new approaches to sustainable tourism by placing clear, informative guides that point to the less known, but valuable intangible cultural and natural heritage and local landmarks.
- **Developing Themed Walking Tours:** Create self-guided walking tour maps or apps that focus on specific themes, such as local history, food, or architecture.
- **Enhancing Public Spaces:** Improve the accessibility of public spaces for tourists and residents with disabilities, such as adding ramps, benches, and digital guides.



## 6. Culture

### Description:

As the cultural landscape changes rapidly across Europe, cities have become the main spots for new understanding of the culture, how different audiences and “consumers of culture” are developed, and how they interact with urban space. <https://urbact.eu/networks/kairos> New technologies are changing lifestyles, and inevitably transforming how culture is accessed and produced. This brings opportunities for the cities in the Western Balkans region.

This theme aligns with the **New European Agenda for Culture** and the **Creative Europe Programme**, which aim to promote cultural heritage, audience engagement, and the integration of culture into urban development. It focuses on leveraging culture to enhance public spaces, engage audiences, and preserve heritage. Cultural actions can enrich the urban environment and foster a stronger sense of community identity. A partnership within the Urban Agenda for the EU tackling [Culture and cultural Heritage](#) provides good base for understanding possible policies. Furthermore, past and ongoing URBACT networks notably [Access C-Change](#), [Kairos](#), [Archetics](#) provide examples of practices where culture has been used as the leverage for more effective implementation of policies tackling social inclusion, climate action, creation of jobs, local economy etc.

### Examples of Actions:

- **Organising Public Art Installations:** Create temporary art installations in public spaces, encouraging community engagement and beautifying the urban environment.
- **Hosting Pop-Up Cultural Events:** Plan small, spontaneous cultural events, such as street performances, workshops, or exhibitions, that bring culture to the streets and boost local economy.
- **Preserving Intangible Heritage:** Launch a community storytelling project that documents and shares local traditions, folklore, or culinary heritage through digital or physical mediums which can improve the touristic offer.