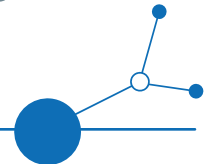




CATALOGUE OF NEWLY DEVELOPED SOLUTIONS

Deliverable 2.3.2



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A. Introduction

New solutions aim at **improving the current tools** that were studied within the study clusters and tested via pilot actions which demonstrated the adaptability of selected best practices to other metropolitan contexts. Thanks to the elevation of selected tools to a new level, their **replicability to other territories is enhanced** and all five solutions strengthen metropolitan cooperation and governance.

Deliverable 2.3.2 called “**Catalogue of newly developed solutions**” gathers the sub-reports on five new solutions into a single document. Its goal is to present five newly developed solutions corresponding to each selected tool, examined in study clusters and adapted through pilot actions. Every sub-report was prepared by the metropolitan area developing new solution in cooperation with members of the corresponding cluster. Furthermore, new solutions serve as one of the project’s outputs, Output 2.2 “**MECOG-CE Solutions**”.

This document builds upon the previous work carried out within the project. The outcomes of study clusters were crucial for gaining a better understanding of tested tools, while the pilot actions provided necessary results on the testing of the adaptability of these tools into the context of partner metropolitan areas. These components of the project enabled partners to develop solutions by redesigning and enhancing the current best practices. Therefore, this deliverable represents a major step within the second work package which was also a significant part of the whole project.

New solutions contributed to the fulfilment of the **Common Metropolitan Vision** thanks to the several steps achieved not only during their development but also within the next steps related to their future implementation. Furthermore, new solutions are excellent examples that use the opportunity identified in the vision and articulated as “Deep and cooperative knowledge sharing and exchange contribute significantly to spreading the benefits derived from the diverse experiences, pushing the frontiers of metropolitan cooperation.” With their thematic focus, developed solutions targeted some of the **identified challenges and opportunities** for metropolitan areas in Central Europe. These efforts are guided by the overarching goal “to establish sustainable and resilient metropolitan areas committed to societal leadership and social responsibilities,” as stated in the Common Metropolitan Vision.

The deliverable includes three main parts. The first one is **methodology** which explains the process of developing new solutions and creation of the document. This part provides several steps which led to the development of each sub-report dedicated to new solution, and the guidance provided by the Work Package 2 (WP 2) leader, the City of Brno. The methodology also includes an explanation of the objectives and the core of these solutions and related required work.

The second part represents all collected **sub-reports on new solutions**. This is an essential part of the deliverable. Each sub-report is described in separate sub-chapters and includes the information provided by the partners responsible for its development. Therefore, each sub-report has the same structure, making them comparable.



The conclusion as the third main part contains the summary of all sub-reports. The new solutions represent a crucial step of the whole project and the last one of the second work package. These innovative solutions improving the existing best practices enhance metropolitan cooperation and governance in the long term to meet the needs of partners. The solutions, together with pilot actions, will be reflected in the subsequent third work package, which will focus on the development of the **Strategy for strengthening metropolitan cooperation and governance in Central Europe** and the creation of **Action plans for each metropolitan area** involved in the project.



B. Methodology

This deliverable was created by the WP 2 leader, the City of Brno, in cooperation with members of each cluster, mainly the metropolitan areas developing new solutions as they were responsible for the creation of each sub-report. The methodology provides a detailed **description of the development of new solutions** which led to the design of the **innovative and unique improvements of the tested tools making them replicable to other metropolitan areas**.

The new solutions specify how to **elaborate, redesign and improve the current tool or best practice** in order to enhance metropolitan cooperation and governance, addressing not only the needs of project partners, but also other metropolitan areas in Europe. Each sub-report describes a unique and innovative solution and provides **guidelines on its implementation that enables enhancing capacities** for integrated territorial development and strengthening the efficiency in tackling the most pressing challenges. The development of solutions included adapting the practices to **suit the specific conditions and challenges** in metropolitan areas, ensuring their relevance and applicability. Therefore, each MECOG-CE solution is **replicable to other metropolitan areas** across Europe.

The deliverable is based on the previous work within the WP 2. At first, each metropolitan partner selected five tools which were most interesting for them and this selection was described in Deliverable 2.1.1 **“Summary of the selected key tools and practices by each partner.”** On this basis, partners formed five study clusters which were focused on eight tools that were most desired. The formation was thoroughly described in Deliverable 2.1.2 **“Forming the study clusters and their methodology.”** The outcomes of these clusters, mainly their learning phase about selected tools, can be found in Deliverable 2.2.2 **“Reports on study cluster outcomes.”** Then, partners developed five pilot actions, each focusing on one selected tool. The results of all pilot actions are described in Deliverable 2.2.3 **“Report on pilot actions.”** The solutions build upon these results, with each one focusing on one of the five selected best practices that were studied and tested within the respective study cluster.

Moreover, new solutions address some of the identified challenges for metropolitan areas in Central Europe described in Deliverable 1.1.1 **“Identification of challenges specific for Central European metropolitan areas.”** These include, for example, adaptation to climate change, ensuring sustainable mobility, lack of competencies and instruments for planning on the metropolitan dimension, or fragmented administrative structure. Thanks to the positive impact of new solutions on metropolitan cooperation and governance, they contributed to the fulfilment of the **Common Metropolitan Vision** and its several parts, showing the metropolitan strengths and empowerment. Each sub-report describes concretely the contribution of each solution.

To ensure the **joint development of solutions**, partners collaborated within study clusters which provided a space for sharing proposals, opinions and remarks. Furthermore, partners thoroughly discussed all five proposals of new solutions within a transnational partner meeting in Berlin on 27th February 2025 and this meeting enabled proper joint development of each solution. The overall development of new solutions lasted from November 2024, starting from initial conceptual work on solutions, to March 2025.



The City of Brno, as the WP 2 leader, provided guidance to all partners on new solutions and the creation of the sub-reports. This also included the development and provision of the **template for the creation of new solutions for partners** which was shared with partners on 6th January 2025. The template provided required information on new solutions with concrete descriptions guiding the project partners. It focused on describing the concept of a new solution with the main elements, its innovativeness, or ways in which it improves the selected tool. It also required the description of joint development, features strengthening metropolitan cooperation, ways in which metropolitan stakeholders can be involved, or the solution's replicability to other metropolitan areas. Metropolitan partners developing particular solution were asked to provide planned uptake of corresponding solution in their metropolitan area. Last not but least, the template also included the part which required the summary of the whole new solution. All necessary information and descriptions for partners were available in the provided form (see [Annex 1](#)).

It was emphasized by the WP 2 leader that the metropolitan areas developing new solutions would be responsible for the completion of the template, but also that the consensus on the template information should be reached among members of each cluster. These partners and members of each cluster are listed in each sub-report. Partners were encouraged to complete the template by **14th March 2025 at the latest** and submit it to the lead partner. The WP 2 leader then commented on the provided templates and suggested minor improvements. These improvements were incorporated by the partners and finalised forms were gathered in the project SharePoint in the second half of March 2025. On their basis, the WP 2 leader developed the deliverable as the completed templates represent its major part.

This methodological approach was fundamental to achieving the overarching goals of the development of new solutions and the whole MECOG-CE project.



C. The catalogue of newly developed solutions

Partners **developed five new solutions** that are focused on the improvement of tested tools. Building on the results of pilot actions and in-depth learning within the clusters, they have a strong potential to strengthen metropolitan cooperation and governance.

The following sub-chapters represent each new solution within the project, namely:

- **Bottom-up process-oriented stakeholder involvement,**
- **Cooperation platform for the development of metropolitan public transport,**
- **Engaging metropolitan stakeholders in strategic planning process**
- **Food cooperation for metropolitan areas,**
- **Innovative Metropolitan Prototyping.**

Partners completed the template created by the WP 2 leader, the City of Brno, and all information provided by the partners in these templates generated each sub-chapter. The required information includes:

- initial information about the new solution,
- the concept of the new solution including its main elements and innovativeness,
- joint development and project management,
- impact of the new solution on strengthening metropolitan cooperation and governance,
- replicability of the new solution to other metropolitan areas,
- uptake of new solution by partner metropolitan areas,
- summary of the new solution.

1. Bottom-up process-oriented stakeholder involvement

1.1. Initial information about the new solution

<p>Study cluster and the members developing a new solution</p>	<p>Strengthening metropolitan institutionalization through developing joint opinions supporting informal and dialogical planning processes</p> <p>Members of the cluster:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Joint Spatial Planning Department Berlin-Brandenburg, ▪ City of Warsaw, ▪ City of Brno.
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The pilot action tested, and the tool chosen	<p>Pilot Action: Informal and participatory planning approach to the vision process for the Metropolitan Area Berlin-Brandenburg</p> <p>Tool chosen and improved: Organization of workshops (City of Warsaw)</p>
The new solution	Bottom-up process-oriented stakeholder involvement

1.2. The concept of new solution

Description of new solution	<p>The new solution is suitable for metropolitan areas currently strongly characterized by formal planning. Informal participation must be integrated into planning to a greater extent than in the past. It can be used flexibly and in line with the situation by adapting it to specific spatial conditions. This takes the form of negotiation processes and cooperative collaboration. It is important to involve a large number of different stakeholders and thus change the governance structure of the region. Planning practice is therefore best achieved by combining formal and informal instruments. Sovereign planning takes a back seat in favour of cooperative network action.</p> <p>What is new in this sense is the extent to which informal participation is included, both in terms of the selection of participants and, above all, the topics: stakeholders should be put in a position to contribute their topics (identified “white spots”). This makes it possible to establish the challenges and their solutions in a spatially specific manner as topics of regional development and to adapt the governance structure accordingly. This also strengthens the sense of community.</p>
Main elements	<p>The comprehensive concept of the new solution contains two key elements: “white spots” and “governance.” These are not to be considered independently of each other but are interrelated and build on each other: White spots are about “What?”, and governance about “Who?”</p> <p>The first step is to identify the appropriate point in time at which the new solution can be integrated into existing planning practice. For example, when strategically important agreements or legally binding planning documents are due to be revised. This is regularly the case everywhere. The next step in opening up this updating process is to expand the circle of stakeholders to include those who were previously not involved or not sufficiently involved. Particularly noteworthy here are non-state actors from the local level, science,</p>



	<p>civil society, or economy, such as small and medium enterprises. A targeted address and invitation can be made for this purpose. Their topics, including needs and objectives, are current “white spots” from the perspective of those legally responsible for planning. Their integration into the updating process contributes to a more comprehensive approach to regional development.</p> <p>Integration here also means identifying the appropriate spatial framework. Topics can be important for the entire metropolitan region, but sometimes only for sub-regions. Urban-rural relationships and axis concepts, i.e. areas for which specific development concepts are drawn up, should be particularly emphasized.</p> <p>This linking of specific topics, introduced in a bottom-up mode, with specific areas, defined cooperatively, enables the development of the appropriate governance structure in a further step. The main idea behind this: It is not something that exists independently of the challenges and solution approaches. This must be developed from the goal, the goal defines means and ways. Secondly, the cooperation should be spatially defined, i.e. take place in the spatial framework that is best suited to tackling the problem. Governance here is understood as flexible and temporary. At the next superior authority level (of regional planning), it is necessary for this structure to be accepted and integrated into the planning system (e.g. information loop, monitoring, continuous reporting). In the medium term, closer interdigitation of the structures can be considered. A SWOT analysis of the recent situation can contribute to this.</p> <p>In both elements, workshops are used, and the methods are based on Design Thinking, break-out sessions and plenum sessions, world café.</p> <p>The linking of these informal steps, as described here, forms the new solution. The metropolitan region presents itself as a learning region that engages in cooperative and communicative regional development. Participation is upvalued.</p>
<p>Innovativeness and uniqueness of new solution</p>	<p>The new solution aimed at the participation of stakeholders and their interests represents an innovative approach in the sense of being used in areas/regions where strong participation has not been part of regional development strategies yet. Innovative is the use of the new solution, inevitably unique in the way it is adopted in questions of a range of stakeholders, spatial design and topics raised and addressed. The influence on the regional government structure</p>



	can also be seen as an innovation. It guarantees the long-term benefit of the new solution.
Improvement of the selected tool	<p>The new solution is thoroughly based on the results of the pilot action and improves the workshop/participation tool created by the City of Warsaw in several ways. It was shown that the concept in general is important and suitable for stakeholder involvement on a deeper level. The approach also shows its strength where formal planning needs to be strengthened and improved by informal instruments and where there is no regional parliament or similar body that represents regional interests.</p> <p>Reflecting on the tool during the regional stakeholder meeting made it possible to improve and further develop the pilot action into the new solution. Feedback from regional experts and scientists led to significant improvement of the pilot action and existing tool. For example, the new solution takes white spots as identified prior to the workshop, not as a result. This allows a clear description of the problem and working on solutions. The subsequent events then serve to continue working on solutions. This improvement strengthens the perspective of the stakeholders compared to the state government because their interests are more at the centre of the tool. A second improvement of the pilot action was made by expanding the white spots to spatial aspects. This is perceived as a good linkage to the governance issue, which is the second topic of the pilot action. In summary one can say that the new solution enables better stakeholder participation by addressing their (overseen) needs within a suitable spatial framework (entire metropolitan area, axes) and then offering a governance structure where informal participation processes are fundamental.</p>

1.3. Joint development and project management

The process of development of new solution	The new solution was jointly developed between the members of the cluster. JSPD served as the main creator because it was the executor of the pilot action. Therefore, it drafted the concept of new solution together with the State Chancellery of Brandenburg. The results of the regional stakeholder meeting on pilot action on 5 February 2025 were incorporated into the development of the new solution. The transnational partner meeting in Berlin, which took place on 26-28 February 2025, was crucial for the joint development of new solution: Metropolitan partners presented their proposals of new solutions and then, all of them discussed the proposals during the
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	interactive session. Based on the outcomes of this meeting, JSPD finalised the solution in the first half of March 2025.
Methods of work	JSPD drafted the solution based on the results of the pilot action which showed that there is a need for informal instruments supporting the process of regional development. The proposal was created by JSPD together with the State Chancellery of Brandenburg. The methods of joint development included world café during a transnational partner meeting in Berlin, sharing the documents online and providing written comments and remarks on them.
The reflection of the initial work set-up and time plan	In terms of the new solution, the initial work set-up and time plan were achieved with small changes such as a month delay in the development. However, these changes did not affect the overall development of the new solution and its timely submission.
Problems and deviations	There were no problems or deviations during the development of the new solution which would cause delays in its finalisation and the whole project.

1.4. Strengthening metropolitan cooperation and governance

Impact on metropolitan cooperation and governance	<p>The new solution has a significant impact on metropolitan cooperation as it aims to involve several stakeholders of the metropolitan area from different sectors who have not yet been significantly involved (public authorities, scientific community, small and medium-sized enterprises) and establish informal participation processes in addition to formal tools.</p> <p>The given activities will have a positive impact on strengthening the development process and finally the governance structure. Furthermore, voluntary stakeholder involvement will have a positive impact on the enhancement of urban-rural cooperation, and it will also build trust in the territory and its governance - something which has to be revived constantly.</p>
Involvement of metropolitan stakeholders	The key feature of the new solution is the active participation of stakeholders from the metropolitan area. It aims to involve groups that have not previously been involved in the regional development process to this extent. Their targeted invitation at the beginning opens up new subject areas through which the commitment of those involved is secured. The process of strategic regional development, which used to be dominated top-down despite participation procedures, is now more bottom-up. The new solution thus enlarges the circle of stakeholders and stabilizes their participation. Formal



	instruments of regional planning are more closely interlinked with informal instruments.
Contribution to the Common Metropolitan Vision	<p>The new solution on bottom-up participation is in line with the Common Metropolitan Vision and contributes to its fulfilment. There can be found linkages to almost every part of the vision.</p> <p>The Vision describes metropolitan areas as “balanced, inclusive and sustainable” through active participation of citizens and stakeholders, “anchoring” and “guiding” local government “by effective cooperation and community attachment.” Furthermore, “Metropolitan Partnership and Identity” speaks about spatial collaboration in the way that the government encourages engagement and cooperation with an effect on urban and more rural parts of the metropolitan region. In general, emphasis is given to the collective work of a government engaging in cooperative efforts and citizens and businesses are participating.</p> <p>The new solution furthermore contributes to the fulfilment of the “Strengths and Commitments” chapter, where addressing potentials and opportunities is mentioned as crucial, establishing spaces for (social) innovation. The new solution is aimed to be significantly more integrative than previous processes, thereby offering improved capacity to address current challenges.</p> <p>The strongest linkages are to the third part, “Metropolitan empowerment.” As said, “Metropolitan strategies, policies and instruments play a crucial role in identifying, evaluation and addressing key challenges.” This is exactly what the new solution is putting into practice, emphasizing the relationship between agendas and institutional frameworks and the importance of active involvement of citizens and businesses in the design and implementation of shared goals. The strategic shift to soft(er) forms of governance is carried out by the new solution.</p>

1.5. Replicability to other metropolitan areas

Replicability to metropolitan territories	The concept of stakeholder involvement is replicable to other metropolitan areas or territories by adopting the general concept and fitting it to specific contexts in terms of regional governance. It is particularly suitable where a top-down strategy has been pursued in the past and more bottom-up work is now required for the development of a regional development strategy. The size of the region is less important.
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	<p>Values and topic - The White spots topic marks a sensitive point that brings together the interests of stakeholders and the initiator/regional government. The solution is based on the insight that the knowledge is available and must be activated for sustainable, inclusive regional development. Therefore, the topics are specific to each territory.</p> <p>Financial and organisational aspects - No extensive financial or organisational resources are needed to implement the new solution. In the further course, the implementation will depend on the intensity and extent of the use of the new solution, and how much money is needed. However, the associated costs should remain within a manageable range.</p> <p>Management structure and staff - There is no need for a special management structure or a big staff. The initiators must organize the first workshops and ensure that the results are taken up.</p> <p>Involvement of stakeholders - The success of the new solution depends on how well it succeeds in involving new stakeholders. The importance of their participation and the seriousness of the search for white spots must be communicated to them. It must be clear to the stakeholders that their participation is part of a larger process of strategic regional development.</p> <p>Legislative framework - As part of informal planning processes, the new solution should be highly transferable to other metropolitan areas. It is designed to support formal processes, it can be implemented wherever it is needed. No special legislative framework is needed, the solution fits into the existing legal framework.</p>
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1.6. Uptake of new solution

Uptake of new solution	<p>JSPD and the State Chancellery of Brandenburg as executors of pilot action created a concept for the new solution of integrating stakeholders and their topics in the process of refacing the overall strategic framework. However, the perspective went beyond that right from the start: The aim is to have a lasting participation of all relevant stakeholders and with that a better understanding of the needs and goals of future regional development processes.</p> <p>The new solution is highly flexible. This means it can not only be used in questions of the entire metropolitan area but also for subareas like smaller regions or development axes. The latter in</p>
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	<p>particular can be the ideal area of application because they need the bottom-up engagement to brought to life. This means that both the topics and the form of cooperation must be defined; Top-down only support can be given. What is described here also applies to border regions/cross-border cooperation or regions that lie at the interface with neighbouring metropolitan regions. These will become increasingly important in the coming years. A flexible concept of participation that takes the interests and needs of all stakeholders seriously is very useful in any aspect.</p>
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1.7. Summary of new solution

Summary	<p>The comprehensive concept of the new solution “Bottom-up process-oriented stakeholder involvement” includes two key elements: “white spots” and “governance.” These are part of a cooperative development and participation process in which new groups of stakeholders with their specific issues and challenges are integrated into the general regional planning process. The consequence of this is that the governance structure must be adapted so that it can meet the new objectives.</p> <p>The more intensive participation process therefore initially leads to more topics being considered and integrated into regional planning than before. It gives it a broad basis among stakeholders and in civil society, which increases acceptance of regional planning and strategic development goals. The sense of community and regional responsibility and, ultimately, trust in democratic processes and institutions are strengthened.</p> <p>The new solution is highly transferable. It can only be applied on a region-specific basis. It helps to integrate overlooked topics and stakeholders into the planning process.</p> <p>In the federal state of Brandenburg, regional development is currently being reorganized after the state elections. In this process, JSPD is an anchor of stability with its legally binding instruments that ensures the connection to Berlin. The new solution is ready for use as soon as the political framework conditions are in place. The joint cabinet meeting of Brandenburg and Berlin in May 2025 will deal with the future handling of the overall strategic framework.</p>
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2. Cooperation platform for the development of metropolitan public transport

2.1. Initial information about the new solution

<p>Study cluster and the members developing a new solution</p>	<p>Strengthening Metropolitan Governance through Integrated Public Transport Management.</p> <p>Members of the cluster:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The City of Warsaw; ▪ Stuttgart Region Association; ▪ Joint Spatial Planning Department Berlin-Brandenburg; ▪ The Charles University; ▪ The University of Silesia in Katowice; ▪ Metropolitan Research Institute.
<p>The pilot action tested, and the tool chosen</p>	<p>Pilot action: Possibilities of Integrating Bus Transport in the Warsaw Metropolis</p> <p>Tool chosen and improved: Integrated Metropolitan Transportation System (Stuttgart Region and Capital Region Berlin-Brandenburg)</p>
<p>The new solution</p>	<p>Cooperation platform for the development of metropolitan public transport</p>

2.2. The concept of new solution

<p>Description of new solution</p>	<p>A cooperation platform for the development of metropolitan transport is an integrated, collaborative space designed to facilitate cooperation among stakeholders involved in the planning, development, and operation of public transport system. The goal of this platform is to improve the efficiency, sustainability and inclusivity of the metropolitan public transport system. By fostering collaboration, the platform encourages the exchange of best practices and innovative solutions.</p>
<p>Main elements</p>	<p>The new solution brings together a wide range of stakeholders such as transport planners, local governments, transport operators, transport organizers and county-commune unions. This ensures that all perspectives are considered when making transport decisions. Instead of having separate organizations making independent</p>



decisions in their own area, it encourages communication and data-sharing among all participants and local government units.

The overall concept of the new solution “Cooperation platform for the development of metropolitan public transport”:

The key components that form the core structure of the new solution are designed to facilitate a comprehensive and collaborative approach to improving public transport in metropolitan areas. This solution is aimed at metropolitan regions that are seeking innovative approaches for either implementing new public transport systems or unifying existing ones across the area.

In this context, the executive body of the metropolitan entities or governing body responsible for the region’s transport infrastructure will initiate the formation of a formal working group – referred to as the “Cooperation Platform.” Every member of the platform brings valuable insights and expertise to the table, ensuring that all perspectives are considered when designing effective transport solutions.

The primary goal of this cooperation platform is to foster an open and collaborative environment where all participants can work together to identify common challenges, share innovative ideas, and formulate actionable solutions. By regularly convening through cyclical meetings, the group will engage in ongoing dialogue, discussing key transport issues (fragmentation of public transport systems, coordination across municipalities, unified fare and information systems, sustainability and reduced car dependency, traffic management, infrastructure investment and maintenance, accessibility and inclusivity, technological integration, stakeholder collaboration), exploring best practices, and aligning strategies for a cohesive transport network across the metropolitan area. These meetings will serve as a space for negotiation, decision-making, and coordination among the various stakeholders involved in public transport. Through these interactions, the platform will develop a unified vision for the region’s transportation system, ensuring that any proposed solutions are sustainable, efficient, and beneficial for the entire metropolitan community.

In order to expand on the decision-making process and how it will function within the Cooperation platform for the development of metropolitan public transport, it is important to consider the balance between formal structures and voluntary collaboration. This aspect of the solution can be shaped through various decision-making mechanisms, which can differ depending on the context and



	<p>needs of each metropolitan area, for example: transport master plans, operational and financial plans, and regulatory frameworks. Decisions could be made by building consensus among the stakeholders. In this approach, major decisions such as infrastructure investments or route changes would be made based on a collaborative agreement with the goal of achieving alignment on a shared vision without imposing rigid rules. To tackle specific challenges like technological integration, accessibility, or sustainability, smaller working groups or task forces could be formed within the cooperation platform. These groups would operate more autonomously and focus on specific areas of transport planning, providing recommendations that can then be reviewed and approved by the larger group. Within these task forces, leadership could rotate, ensuring that all stakeholders have an equal opportunity to contribute and that decisions are not overly centralized.</p> <p>Each metropolitan area may face unique challenges, so the decision-making processes might vary from region to region. Some areas may prioritize formal decision-making, while others may rely more heavily on voluntary collaboration. The platform should allow for flexibility, enabling each region to adapt the structure to fit its specific needs and governance models.</p> <p>Ultimately, the establishment of this cooperation platform will enable metropolitan areas to overcome transport-related challenges in a collaborative and transparent manner, leading to the creation of more integrated and accessible public transport systems that meet the needs of all residents and visitors.</p>
<p>Innovativeness and uniqueness of new solution</p>	<p>The uniqueness of the platform lies in its collaborative approach to transport planning. By facilitating communication and data-sharing among all participants the platform creates an inclusive and transparent environment. This openness allows for a better understanding of transportation needs, challenges, and opportunities. Moreover, the platform's collaborative nature empowers individuals and organizations to contribute to decision-making processes. Rather than imposing top-down decisions, the platform enables active participation from all interested parties, allowing their actual needs and expectations to be taken into account. This model offers greater flexibility and quicker responses to changing conditions. Participants can share information, experiences and propose solutions that are tailored to local challenges. The result is a more efficient, sustainable and equitable transport system that benefits all parties involved.</p>



Improvement of the selected tool

The results of the pilot action played a pivotal role in the development of the new solution, the **Cooperation platform for the development of metropolitan public transport**. By analysing and assessing the experiences of regions like Stuttgart and Berlin Brandenburg, the pilot action offered critical insights into the integration of various transport systems and the challenges associated with creating an efficient, user-friendly, and sustainable metropolitan public transport network.

The pilot action provided valuable data on issues such as harmonizing ticketing systems, optimizing line numbers and stop names, and improving data management, all of which were key areas requiring enhancement in the Warsaw Metropolis. The successful integration of bus systems in the Stuttgart Region provided a valuable benchmark. Additionally, insights from Berlin Brandenburg's data collection and sustainable planning strategies played a key role in shaping the platform. These insights highlighted practical challenges, such as local regulatory differences, varying transport usage patterns, and the need for flexibility in system design to accommodate the region's diverse infrastructure.

Drawing from these tools, the cooperation platform was developed as a solution not only to address these challenges but also to foster a more collaborative and adaptive transport system for the Warsaw Metropolis and other interested metropolitan areas. The solution was carefully tailored to meet the unique needs and challenges of the various metropolitan areas.

Improvements and innovations of the new solution compared to existing tools:

- **enhanced collaboration:** It serves as a dynamic tool for improving coordination ensuring that different transport services work together more efficiently.
- **flexibility:** The cooperation platform design allows for the integration of various transport modes (e.g., buses, trains, trams) in a way that can be scaled as the network expands or as the region's needs evolve.
- **bottom-up action:** Unlike traditional top-down approaches often seen in public transport systems, the new platform encourages involvement from the entities it serves.
- **collaboration between transportation entities and local government units:** The new platform fosters closer collaboration between local governments and a variety of stakeholders,



	<p>including consulting companies and transport organizations. This multi-stakeholder collaboration ensures that the transport system is not only efficient but also equitable, including those of the marginalized.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ sustainability: The new solution also enhances sustainability by incorporating more efficient, eco-friendly transport options, aligned with the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans.
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2.3. Joint development and project management

<p>The process of development of new solution</p>	<p>The new solution was jointly developed between the members of the study cluster: Strengthening Metropolitan Governance through Integrated Public Transport Management and during the Regional Stakeholder Meeting in Warsaw Metropolitan Area on December 2, 2024. The City of Warsaw in co-operation with Warsaw Metropolis Association coordinated the whole process.</p> <p>The concept for the new solution was officially presented at a project meeting held in Berlin on February 27, 2025. During this meeting, members of the project had the opportunity to engage with the proposal, ask questions, and provide feedback. This interactive exchange provided valuable insights into the potential impact of the proposed solution.</p> <p>Following the presentation, participants engaged in a series of intensive workshops, where all actively discussed the proposed solutions in detail. These workshops were organized in smaller groups to encourage focused, collaborative discussions, enabling each participant to contribute their expertise and insights. The aim was to refine the concept and explore various approaches to ensure the solution would be both effective and feasible.</p> <p>Based on the feedback and insights gathered during the meeting and workshops, the City of Warsaw finalized the new solution by the first half of March 2025.</p>
<p>Methods of work</p>	<p>The City of Warsaw developed the new solution based on the pilot action, which demonstrated the need to accelerate efforts toward integrating public transport across the Warsaw Metropolitan Area.</p> <p>The “Transport in the Warsaw Metropolis” conference, held on December 2, 2024, at the Targowa Creativity Center, was a central event for engaging with stakeholders. The conference brought together 112 participants, including representatives from the Warsaw Public Transport Authority (ZTM), county-commune unions,</p>



	<p>local governments, transportation experts, and local media. These discussions served as a platform to assess the current state of public transportation and to explore potential future developments, particularly in terms of integration and connectivity. Throughout the conference, numerous participants expressed the need for ongoing collaboration to further integrate public transport in the metropolitan area. The willingness of stakeholders to continue working together was a key outcome of the discussions, highlighting a strong commitment to long-term cooperation and planning.</p>
<p>The reflection of the initial work set-up and time plan</p>	<p>In terms of the new solution, the initial work set-up and time plan were successfully achieved as planned. The months from December 2024 to March 2025 were dedicated to the evaluation of the pilot action. During this period, the focus was on assessing the transferability of the pilot results and analysing the feasibility of implementing the outcomes across different metropolitan regions in Central Europe. Additionally, this phase involved the joint development of a new solution for metropolitan public transport in the region.</p>
<p>Problems and deviations</p>	<p>There were no problems or deviations during the development of the new solution which would cause delays in its finalisation and the whole project.</p>

2.4. Strengthening metropolitan cooperation and governance

<p>Impact on metropolitan cooperation and governance</p>	<p>The new solution, cooperation platform for the development of metropolitan public transport, significantly strengthens metropolitan cooperation and governance by fostering a collaborative, inclusive, and efficient framework for transport planning and management. It aims to address key challenges such as fragmentation, inefficient coordination, and the lack of inclusivity in decision-making processes, which are often experienced in metropolitan areas with complex transport networks. The platform not only enables more efficient public transport systems but also contributes to long-term sustainability, equity, and adaptability.</p>
<p>Involvement of metropolitan stakeholders</p>	<p>The involvement of metropolitan stakeholders is a central aspect of the new solution. The platform is designed to be highly collaborative, ensuring that a wide range of stakeholders are actively engaged in its development, implementation, and ongoing evolution. This inclusive approach fosters ownership, enhances the quality of decision-making, and increases the likelihood of successful outcomes.</p>



	<p>Stakeholder list:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ local and regional governments (they play a crucial role in shaping the public transport system, setting policies, and providing funding); ▪ transport operators and authorities (transport operators, including public transport authorities, train companies, bus operators, and other private and public service providers, are critical for ensuring that the cooperation platform leads to practical improvements in the transport system); ▪ technology and data providers (given the importance of data sharing and technology in the operation of the cooperation platform, technology providers and data management experts will be key participants in its development and implementation); ▪ private sector, businesses and transport providers (private sector players, including businesses involved in logistics, car-sharing, bike-sharing, and other mobility services, will be key partners in creating a truly integrated transport network); ▪ citizens (the active involvement of citizens ensures that the transport system reflects the real needs of its users, particularly in terms of accessibility, affordability, and convenience, e.g. citizens provide opinions and suggestions through surveys or public events focused on the integrated system; transport preferences and mobility behaviours can also be analysed indirectly through indicators like traffic intensity, bus stop frequency, or bus line availability).
<p>Contribution to the Common Metropolitan Vision</p>	<p>The cooperation platform for the development of metropolitan public transport aligns well with the Common Metropolitan Vision (CMV), especially in areas of governance, collaboration, sustainability, and inclusivity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ governance and metropolitan cooperation: CMV emphasizes the importance of effective governance and cooperation among diverse stakeholders within metropolitan regions. The platform fosters this by creating a collaborative environment where city planners, local authorities, transport operators, and citizens can co-create solutions for metropolitan public transport. ▪ sustainability and efficiency: Both CMV and the platform prioritize environmentally sustainable solutions. The platform promotes eco-friendly transport options, aligning with CMV's commitment to environmentally responsible urban development.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ inclusivity and equity: CMV stresses the need for balanced and inclusive development, ensuring all social groups have access to essential services. The platform supports this by encouraging equitable transport services that are accessible to diverse communities, including marginalized groups.■ integration and mobility: CMV underscores the need for integrated transport systems and efficient mobility across metropolitan areas. The platform's focus on integrated ticketing, harmonized routes, and scalable transport modes directly contributes to these goals, improving connectivity across the metropolitan area and potentially other regions. <p>In summary, the platform addresses the core principles of CMV by promoting inclusive, sustainable, and well-coordinated transport solutions that enhance metropolitan cooperation and governance.</p>
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2.5. Replicability to other metropolitan areas

<p>Replicability to metropolitan territories</p>	<p>The new solution is intentionally designed with replicability in mind, aiming for ease of adaptation not only within the Warsaw Metropolis but also for other metropolitan areas, both within and outside the project scope. The adaptability and scalability of this solution make it a valuable model for other MAs striving to enhance their urban mobility.</p> <p>Below is an overview of key elements that can be leveraged to transfer this solution to other metropolitan areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ collaborative decision-making - the new solution emphasises cooperation between various stakeholders and creates a model that can be easily applied to other cities. The platform promotes transparency, joint planning, and coordinated implementation, which is critical for effective transport management in any metropolitan area.■ sustainable mobility - the new solution focuses on a sustainable approach to urban mobility in order to generate solutions that improve the quality of life of residents and encourage them to use public transport that is convenient for them.■ compatibility - the new solution can be adapted to the current transport situation of the metropolitan area and focus on the challenges that are most important. Metropolitan areas, regardless of their current level of public transport development, can still benefit from the new solution.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ user-centric design - the new solution focuses on a positive user experience, with easy access to information and intuitive interfaces, making it adaptable for any MA seeking to improve public transport. ▪ adaptable legal frameworks - the new solution is designed to be flexible, allowing it to adjust to different policies, service standards or funding models. This makes it suitable for various types of MAs with different governance structures. ▪ free/low cost and voluntary - it does not require large financial investment, and each local government unit can decide independently whether to participate in the platform.
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2.6. Uptake of new solution

<p>Uptake of new solution</p>	<p>An example of using the new solution - a cooperation platform in the Warsaw Metropolitan Area.</p> <p>The pilot action and the "Analysis of the Possibilities of Integrating Bus Transport in the Warsaw Metropolis" clearly highlight the pressing need for a unified metropolitan transportation system in the Warsaw Metropolitan Area. This system must be accessible to all residents and tailored to meet their needs. The proposed solution, a collaborative platform, aims to address these challenges. The platform will serve as a forum for dialogue, bringing together representatives from each of the 9 counties within the Warsaw Metropolis, the City of Warsaw, and the major transportation organizers and authorities. This focus group, though small, will represent a diverse range of stakeholders, enabling swift, efficient, and effective decision-making on crucial transport development issues.</p> <p>The group was formed by the Board of the Warsaw Metropolis Association, with the first meeting scheduled to take place in the first quarter of 2025. The upcoming meeting will serve as an introductory session, where participants will discuss the key principles of cooperation, a preliminary schedule of activities, and the thematic scope of the team's work. The tasks ahead will be outlined to ensure a clear understanding of the platform's objectives and expected outcomes. Participants will also be introduced to the internal metropolitan team at the Warsaw Public Transport Authority, who will be responsible for formal issues and group work. This will provide clarity on the roles and responsibilities of each team member. Additionally, the frequency and schedule of</p>
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	<p>subsequent meetings will be established to ensure effective communication and ongoing progress throughout the group's work. Following this initial session, subsequent meetings will be organized on a regular basis, depending on the evolving needs of the region, until a formal metropolitan union is established or until the goal of creating an efficient, integrated public transport system across the Warsaw Metropolis is successfully realized. At the same time, efforts are underway to develop a legal framework for the region - the "metropolitan act." This legislation is intended to lay the foundation for the creation of a metropolitan union, which will play a crucial role in enabling and facilitating the financing and coordination of public transport services across the metropolitan area.</p>
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2.7. Summary of new solution

<p>Summary</p>	<p>The new solution, the cooperation platform for the development of metropolitan public transport, is an integrated, collaborative tool designed to enhance the planning, development, and operation of public transport systems across metropolitan areas. The platform fosters a collaborative space for key stakeholders: city planners, government authorities, transport operators, environmental groups, technology providers, and citizens, to share data, exchange ideas, and actively participate in transport decision-making. Its primary goal is to improve the efficiency, sustainability, and inclusivity of metropolitan transport networks, ensuring all perspectives are considered.</p> <p>This platform stands out due to its collaborative nature. Unlike traditional, top-down transport planning approaches, it encourages bottom-up involvement from local governments, businesses, and citizens, creating a more inclusive and transparent process. The platform promotes flexibility, allowing for scalable integration of various transport modes (buses, trains, trams) and adaptability to regional needs. It also emphasizes sustainability by supporting eco-friendly solutions aligned with Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans.</p> <p>The platform improves existing tools by offering enhanced coordination among different transport services, allowing for harmonized ticketing, optimized routes, and better data management. It fosters stronger collaboration between local authorities, transport operators, and private entities, ensuring more efficient and equitable transport systems. Additionally, it provides greater flexibility for responding to changing transport conditions and expanding networks.</p>
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The platform strengthens governance by creating a dynamic environment where multiple stakeholders can co-create solutions, building trust and commitment among participants. This collaboration reduces fragmentation, improves decision-making, and leads to a more effective transport system that meets the needs of all users, including marginalized groups.

The new solution is designed to be replicable in other metropolitan regions due to its flexible structure. It can be adapted to different transport situations, legal frameworks, and governance models, making it suitable for metropolitan areas of varying sizes and levels of public transport development. Key elements such as collaborative decision-making, sustainable mobility, and a user-centric design ensure it can be easily implemented elsewhere.

The cooperation platform is already being put into action in the Warsaw Metropolitan Area, addressing critical transportation challenges identified in the pilot action and the "Analysis of the Possibilities of Integrating Bus Transport in the Warsaw Metropolis". These assessments highlighted the urgent need for a unified, accessible, and efficient metropolitan transportation system that meets the diverse needs of residents across the region. The platform will serve as a dynamic forum for dialogue among representatives from each of the 9 counties within the Warsaw Metropolis, the City of Warsaw, and key transportation organizers and authorities. This focus group, though small in size, includes a broad spectrum of stakeholders, ensuring that decisions are well-informed and reflect the region's diverse needs. By fostering collaboration among local governments, transport providers, and other key actors, the platform is designed to accelerate the creation of an integrated, user-friendly public transport system.

This approach to metropolitan transport planning can be a model for cities across Europe and beyond, enabling more efficient, inclusive and sustainable transport systems.



3. Engaging metropolitan stakeholders in strategic planning process

3.1. Initial information about the new solution

<p>Study cluster and the members developing a new solution</p>	<p>Semi-structures and dialogues for the improvement of metropolitan cooperation</p> <p>Members of the cluster:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the Metropolitan City of Turin; ▪ the City of Brno; ▪ Joint Spatial Planning Department Berlin-Brandenburg; ▪ the City of Ostrava; ▪ the Charles University; ▪ the University of Silesia in Katowice; ▪ the Metropolitan Research Institute.
<p>The pilot action tested, and the tool chosen</p>	<p>Pilot action: Structured dialogue for evaluating the strategic planning process in the Metropolitan City of Turin</p> <p>Tool chosen and improved: Questionnaire among mayors of the BMA (City of Brno)</p>
<p>The new solution</p>	<p>Engaging metropolitan stakeholders in strategic planning process</p>

3.2. The concept of new solution

<p>Description of new solution</p>	<p>The new solution that was developed within the <i>Semi-structures and dialogues for the improvement of metropolitan cooperation</i> study cluster represents a tool aimed at allowing the metropolitan authority to consult metropolitan stakeholders on strategic planning, in a way that is structured, recurring, functional to the performance of a formally assigned task and well-integrated into the strategic planning processes that are led by the authority.</p> <p>The tool was developed on the basis of the pilot action that was carried out by the Metropolitan City of Turin within the <i>Semi-structures and dialogues for the improvement of metropolitan cooperation</i> study cluster, by adapting the questionnaire among mayors that was developed by the City of Brno to the context of the Metropolitan City of Turin and to its specificities.</p>
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	<p>The new solution innovates the original tool with regards to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ its purposes and the processes it feeds into; ▪ its target.
<p>Main elements</p>	<p>The new solution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ consists of a questionnaire targeted at metropolitan stakeholders including political representatives of metropolitan municipalities, private sector stakeholders, civil society and community organizations, as well as academic and research institutions; ▪ concerns strategic planning: the survey aims at consulting stakeholders on the effectiveness of their involvement in the elaboration of the metropolitan strategic plan through participatory planning processes, on the progress achieved towards the goals set by the metropolitan strategic plan in force and on any needs that should be taken into consideration when updating said plan; ▪ is periodically administered by the metropolitan authority formally in charge of strategic planning. <p>Its adoption by a metropolitan authority thus requires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a competence in strategic planning: the metropolitan authority should be in charge of strategic planning. For example, in the case of the Metropolitan City of Turin (and more generally of Italian Metropolitan Cities), strategic planning is a task formally assigned by Law (Law 56/2014); ▪ the execution of the following steps: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. defining the goals of the survey: the questionnaire could pursue three goals: the evaluation of the effectiveness of the participatory planning processes that the metropolitan area periodically carries out in order to collaboratively draft its metropolitan strategic plan; the assessment of the progress achieved towards the goals set by the said plan; to gather the feedback needed for its update. The goals of the survey should anyway be adapted to the needs and specificities of the metropolitan area. The first step for the adoption of the new solution is thus represented by the identification of the goals and scope of the survey to be administered;



	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. identifying stakeholders: all relevant metropolitan stakeholders should be mapped out, including municipal governments, business associations, NGOs, research institutions, residents and advocacy groups, etc. They should be prioritized based on their influence and interest; 3. adapting the questions based on the goals of the survey, keeping in mind that the questions should be clear, concise, unbiased and aligned with the survey’s goals; 4. conducting a pilot test (if possible), so as to identify ambiguities, technical issues, etc. and to optimize clarity and engagement; 5. administering the survey and monitoring responses: participation should be encouraged through reminders and re-calls; 6. analysing results to identify trends, priorities and areas of concern. Responses could be segmented based on stakeholder categories and visualised; 7. integrating feedback: results should be summarized and shared with stakeholders (e.g. through a public presentation, or a brief report) and integrated into the strategic planning process by ensuring they feed into the next update of the metropolitan strategic plan or into its next version. Additional feedback could be sought through follow-up discussions; 8. evaluation and optimization of the process: assessing the process after each round of administration of the survey is key in order to optimize the process and improve the tool over time.
<p>Innovativeness and uniqueness of new solution</p>	<p>Regularly administering a survey targeted at all relevant metropolitan stakeholders offers significant benefits for metropolitan governance and cooperation by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ fostering enhanced stakeholder engagement: a recurring survey represents a structured mechanism for ongoing dialogue, enhancing stakeholder involvement in strategic planning; ■ demonstrating a commitment to participatory governance and creating a culture of collaborative decision-making; ■ ensuring that the metropolitan strategic plan and any consequent metropolitan policy reflect the real needs and priorities of



	<p>metropolitan stakeholders, fostering trust and greater legitimation of the metropolitan authority;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ increasing metropolitan awareness; ■ ensuring that metropolitan strategic plans evolve based on stakeholder input, making them dynamic documents that are elaborated through a bottom-up rather than a top-down approach. <p>A recurring metropolitan stakeholder survey promotes an effective strategic planning and ensures that long-term visions remain relevant, inclusive, and adaptable to change. By institutionalizing stakeholder engagement, metropolitan authorities can foster cooperation, enhance policy coherence, and better drive sustainable urban development.</p>
<p>Improvement of the selected tool</p>	<p>The new solution stems from the experimentation that was carried out through the pilot action that was implemented by the Metropolitan City of Turin within the <i>Semi-structures and dialogues for the improvement of metropolitan cooperation</i> study cluster, by building on what was learned thanks to it. It derives from the tailoring of the good practice that was studied to the project context and the receiving context and clearly innovates it (particularly in terms of goals).</p> <p>The pilot action allowed the Metropolitan City of Turin:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. to better understand the “Questionnaire among Mayors” that was developed by the City of Brno; 2. to assess whether it could usefully be transferred into the context of the Metropolitan City of Turin without any major changes; 3. to ascertain that, given the existing differences between the Brno Metropolitan Area (and the role that the City of Brno plays in it) and the Metropolitan City of Turin, especially concerning their differing levels of institutionalization, the questionnaire developed by Brno would best respond to the needs of the Metropolitan City of Turin if adapted to the goal of involving metropolitan stakeholders in strategic planning processes; 4. to develop a survey inspired by the “Questionnaire among mayors,” but pursuing different goals and targeted at a wider array of metropolitan stakeholders. <p>The results of the pilot action can be considered to be:</p>



1. the **knowledge that was acquired** by the learning MA and the other members of the study cluster on the tool that was developed by the City of Brno;
2. the **assessment of the transferability** of the “Questionnaire among mayors;”
3. the **development of an adapted version** of the said questionnaire, focusing on the engagement of metropolitan stakeholders in strategic planning processes (especially in the monitoring of the Metropolitan Strategic Plan and its annual update).

The new solution is represented by the tool that was co-designed on the basis of the pilot action, stemming from the original tool from the Brno metropolitan area, but innovating it in the following way:

1. the City of Brno voluntarily developed the “Questionnaire among mayors” to acquire a better knowledge of the needs of the metropolitan municipalities, so as to direct metropolitan cooperation and the City’s efforts towards such needs. It could be thought of as a tool resulting from a **free initiative** of the City of Brno aimed at advancing the cause of a **greater institutionalization of metropolitan cooperation in Czechia. The tool does not fulfil an institutional purpose nor stems from a formally assigned task.** On the other hand, the survey that was co-designed on the basis of the pilot action, which represents the new solution, will serve as a tool for the institutionalized metropolitan areas to better perform the task of equipping the metropolitan area with a metropolitan strategic plan guiding the development of the area over a given period. For example, such a **task** (strategic planning and, more generally, detecting and interpreting the needs and vocations of its territories) **was formally assigned to Italian Metropolitan Cities by Law.** As such, **the survey feeds into a process (that of drafting, monitoring and updating the plan) that serves an institutional purpose;**
2. the “Questionnaire among mayors” is **exclusively targeted at metropolitan Mayors**, whereas the survey representing the new solution is addressed to metropolitan Mayors, other political representatives of metropolitan municipalities, as well as other stakeholders from the public, private, third and academic sectors.



3.3. Joint development and project management

<p>The process of development of new solution</p>	<p>The new solution was jointly developed within <i>the Semi-structures and dialogues</i> study cluster. The Metropolitan City of Turin played the main role, since it executed the pilot action which the new solution stemmed from. Before the transnational partners meeting that took place in Berlin from the 26th to the 28th of February 2025, the Metropolitan City of Turin shared with the members of the cluster a general illustration of its concept for a new solution, so as to allow the cluster members to prepare for the discussion to be held in Berlin. The transnational partners meeting represented a crucial step in the joint development of the new solution since it provided the Metropolitan City of Turin the opportunity to formally present its proposed new solution and to discuss it within the partnership during the interactive session that took place on the 27th of February. The new solution was then finalised by the Metropolitan City of Turin in the first weeks of March based on the exchange of opinions and remarks that had taken place in Berlin.</p>
<p>Methods of work</p>	<p>The Metropolitan City of Turin drafted its proposed new solution based on the results of the pilot action that was executed within the cluster. The proposal was discussed internally within the Economic Development Department between the European projects and programmes office and the Strategic planning office. The proposal was then assessed by members of the cluster and discussed among partners in Berlin. Written exchanges also took place.</p>
<p>The reflection of the initial work set-up and time plan</p>	<p>The initial work set-up and time plan were overall respected. The proposal was ready to be discussed within the partnership before the Berlin transnational partners meeting and the sub-report concerning the new solution was finalised by mid-March 2025.</p>
<p>Problems and deviations</p>	<p>No problems or deviations were experienced.</p>

3.4. Strengthening metropolitan cooperation and governance

<p>Impact on metropolitan cooperation and governance</p>	<p>The tool will allow metropolitan areas to strengthen the involvement of stakeholders in the monitoring and updating of their strategic plans. This will in turn improve metropolitan cooperation and allow for a more effective metropolitan governance.</p> <p>Follow-up activities will be key to ensure that the opinions collected through the survey are properly taken into consideration and that respondents perceive their participation in the survey as useful.</p>
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<p>Involvement of metropolitan stakeholders</p>	<p>Stakeholders will play a key role in the uptake of the new solution since they will represent the target group to which the surveys will be addressed. Their participation in the survey will be fundamental for the new solution to be successfully implemented.</p> <p>Presenting the tool to metropolitan stakeholders before putting it to use might help maximise their involvement and participation.</p>
<p>Contribution to the Common Metropolitan Vision</p>	<p>The recurring administration of a survey targeted toward metropolitan stakeholders can positively contribute to the achievement of the goals outlined in the Common Metropolitan Vision. The Common Metropolitan Vision emphasizes the importance of strengthening metropolitan cooperation and governance in order to ensure that metropolitan areas can play a key role in promoting the sustainable, resilient and inclusive development of European societies and economies. This requires continuous dialogue, adaptive policymaking, and strategies that reflect the actual needs and priorities of the residents and stakeholders of the metropolitan area. The systematic engagement of stakeholders in metropolitan strategic planning processes ensures that metropolitan strategies remain dynamic, relevant, and aligned with real-world challenges and opportunities.</p> <p>The new solution aligns most closely with the goals set in the following parts of the Common Metropolitan Vision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Balanced, Inclusive and Sustainable</i>: a stakeholder survey ensures that strategic plans reflect real needs rather than being dictated by a top-down approach. It promotes collaborative governance, ensuring that diverse social and economic groups contribute to metropolitan planning. ■ <i>Diverse and Complex Community</i>: by engaging a broad spectrum of stakeholders, a recurring survey promotes cooperation among metropolitan authorities, businesses, and civil society. ■ <i>Metropolitan Partnership and Identity</i>: the new solution reinforces bottom-up governance, ensuring that planning is not only data-driven but also democratically legitimate. It enhances transparency and public trust, making metropolitan governance more accountable to its residents.

3.5. Replicability to other metropolitan areas

<p>Replicability to metropolitan territories</p>	<p>The new solution appears easily transferable to other institutionalized metropolitan areas, especially the Italian</p>
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	<p>Metropolitan Cities, which could adopt it as a new tool for the involvement of stakeholders in participative strategic planning processes. It could also be usefully transferred into other metropolitan areas in which the metropolitan authority is formally assigned a competence on strategic planning, or in which the main urban centre intends to develop a strategic plan (or strategic guidelines) targeted at the whole metropolitan area through bottom-up coordination with its hinterland.</p> <p>Other metropolitan areas can adopt the tool as such, along with the methodology for its development, administration, result evaluation and follow-up.</p>
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3.6. Uptake of new solution

Uptake of new solution	<p>The new solution (the tool developed through the adaptation and innovation of the “Questionnaire among Mayors”) will be first used by the Metropolitan City of Turin in the spring of 2025. Thanks to the pilot action, which resulted in the development of a survey to be administered by the Metropolitan City of Turin, the new solution is indeed ready to be implemented.</p> <p>It will then become an ordinary tool for consulting stakeholders and mapping their opinions, improving their involvement in strategic planning. It will be used in the context of every annual update of the Metropolitan City’s Metropolitan Strategic Plan. Further improvements can be envisaged, depending on the results of its first administration and on whether new and differing needs emerge.</p> <p>Members of the study cluster and all partners of the MECOG-CE project will be kept informed.</p>
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3.7. Summary of new solution

Summary	<p>The new solution “Engaging metropolitan stakeholders in strategic planning process” represents a structured way to involve metropolitan stakeholders in strategic planning and to enhance metropolitan cooperation. Developed within the <i>Semi-structures and dialogues for the improvement of metropolitan cooperation</i> study cluster, the solution provides a systematic, recurring mechanism for metropolitan authorities to consult stakeholders and integrate their input into strategic planning processes.</p>
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	<p>The new solution stems from the results of the pilot action that was jointly developed within the study cluster, starting from the original tool, represented by the <i>Questionnaire among Mayors</i> from the City of Brno. The new tool, which was designed to assess the effectiveness of participatory planning processes, track progress toward strategic goals, and identify emerging needs for updating metropolitan strategic plans, expands the original scope of the Questionnaire among mayors to include a wider range of stakeholders and innovates it in terms of the goals it pursues and the processes it feeds into.</p> <p>The main benefits of the new solution for metropolitan governance and cooperation include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ strengthening metropolitan governance by fostering structured, ongoing stakeholder engagement; ▪ enhancing participatory decision-making, ensuring that metropolitan policies reflect real stakeholder priorities; ▪ improving transparency and legitimacy, reinforcing trust in metropolitan authorities; ▪ ensuring adaptability of strategic plans and responsiveness to metropolitan challenges. <p>The new solution’s replicability is highlighted as a key strength, making it easily transferable to other metropolitan areas, particularly where strategic planning is a formal responsibility of metropolitan authorities. Its long-term sustainability is ensured through its integration into the process aimed at regularly updating the metropolitan strategic plan based on stakeholder feedback. The uptake of the new solution by the Metropolitan City of Turin will be ensured by spring 2025.</p> <p>Ultimately, this tool aligns with the Common Metropolitan Vision, reinforcing bottom-up governance, inclusive metropolitan cooperation and adaptability of metropolitan strategic plans.</p>
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4. Food cooperation for metropolitan areas

4.1. Initial information about the new solution

<p>Study cluster and the members developing a new solution</p>	<p>Engagement of metropolitan stakeholders in the agri-food sector through Food Districts, its members:</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ City of Brno; ▪ Metropolitan City of Turin; ▪ City of Ostrava; ▪ Stuttgart Region Association; ▪ GZM Metropolis; ▪ the Charles University; ▪ the University of Silesia in Katowice; ▪ Metropolitan Research Institute.
The pilot action tested, and the tool chosen	<p>Pilot action: Potential for food cooperation and its governance network in the Brno Metropolitan Area</p> <p>Tool chosen and improved: Food Districts (Metropolitan City of Turin)</p>
The new solution	Food cooperation for metropolitan areas

4.2. The concept of new solution

Description of new solution	<p>The topic of local production, distribution, and consumption is becoming increasingly important for territories as it has positive impacts on the local economy, environment, health and well-being of the residents. The metropolitan level seems to be appropriate to address this topic as it strengthens urban and rural relations. Cities represent the centres of consumption whereas rural areas in their hinterland play a significant role in production. Therefore, a strong partnership at the metropolitan level is needed to properly enhance food cooperation. A possible lack of competencies and legal framework however cannot support the potential partnership. In that case, the establishment of voluntary cooperation is a suitable option which will reinforce the local production, distribution, and consumption in the territory. The goal of this cooperation should be to support the local economy, increase the involvement of local farmers and producers, reduce environmental burdens through short supply chains, and strengthen the sustainability and efficiency of the production, distribution and consumption of local food. The solution outlines the steps that can be taken to establish this cooperation and possible stakeholders to be involved.</p>
Main elements	The overall concept of the new solution “Food cooperation for metropolitan areas:”



■ The process of establishment of cooperation:

1. The recommended precondition for the establishment of cooperation is the analysis of the territory. This analysis should include the natural characteristics of the territory, local production in terms of crops and livestock farming and identification of stakeholders from different sectors (both supply and demand side). It should also contain a description of current strategic and conceptual documents, an identification of the benefits and impacts of food cooperation for the territory, and an analysis of the current initiatives in the territory aimed at the topic. Finally, the analysis should propose possible steps and topics of food cooperation. All this data is important for several reasons. Based on the data, relevant stakeholders for the cooperation are defined, initiatives to be further coordinated are identified, and possible steps are outlined. Analysis shall include a SWOT analysis describing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Thus, the decisions of food cooperation are data-driven.
2. Once the analysis is finalised, there should be an initial larger event (e.g. workshop, conference). The most active identified stakeholders from all sectors should be invited to discuss the results of the analysis, and then, to outline possible steps and prioritize the proposed topics of food cooperation (or they can suggest another topic). Besides the topics, stakeholders should also discuss their possible involvement in the structure of informal food cooperation. This event should provide valuable inputs for the further establishment of informal cooperation.
3. Thus, it is necessary to open a process of listening and animation of the territory (public and private stakeholders) that will culminate in the establishment of voluntary cooperation. It is important to continuously monitor the views and activities of these stakeholders (e.g. through their meetings, events, communication with them, or desk-top research). The main goal is to build trust between stakeholders and the metropolitan entity.
4. The results of the initial event and listening/animation phase should be processed and the proposal for an informal structure of cooperation should be made. It is recommended to have one information and coordination working group (WG) and



then separate groups for each selected topic. The WG Information and coordination should focus on the coordination of all activities in the territory related to the topic. It will therefore serve as a main body of cooperation. Stakeholders will inform each other about their planned activities and together decide on possible actions. Then, separate WGs for each topic should be established to move forward activities related to the theme of the WG. It is recommended to have around three WGs focusing on selected topics. Each WG shall define the goals of cooperation and 2-3 year-long action plan describing concrete activities to be elaborated by mutual collaboration. The food cooperation is complex so it should include stakeholders from different sectors:

- > metropolitan authority;
- > local (municipalities, municipal associations) and regional public authorities;
- > local action groups (institutions combining public and private sectors in smaller and rural territories, only if they are active in the metropolitan area);
- > NGOs (various interest organisations in the field of education, and environmental protection);
- > private sector (mainly professional agricultural organisations representing agricultural and agro-industrial enterprises);
- > chambers of commerce, industry, crafts and agriculture;
- > research institutions and universities.

This approach allows for balanced interests of all sectors, also from the demand and supply sides. Each WG should include relevant stakeholders for each topic, e.g. representatives of schools for the topic of public catering or association of organic farmers for the topic of sustainable agriculture. The selection of stakeholders and their number in WGs also depend on the local context of the metropolitan area as the establishment of cooperation should reflect a bottom-up approach.

■ Topics of cooperation:

Stakeholders should agree on the most important topics for their territory according to the needs and objectives of each area (identified in the analysis). However, the essential topic should



be information and coordination which serves as an overarching theme for other ones. The objective is to build and consolidate network and promote cooperation between the proposed system of actors. The other topics depend on the selection by actors.

The proposed topics for cooperation include:

- Support for the promotion of local production in public catering,
- Protection, development and promotion of the production and local supply chains,
- Adaptation to climate change and sustainable agriculture,
- Promotion of innovations and technological infrastructure,
- The social dimension of the agri-food sector (inclusion of disadvantaged groups in food cooperation, development of social enterprises in agriculture, or support for beginning farmers),
- Food security,
- Reduction of food waste,
- Territory and landscape preservation through agriculture, agribusiness and food,
- Marketing and promotion of local production and farmers,
- Focus on specific food category which would be the centre of food cooperation (e.g. meat, cereals, vegetables, wine).
- Possible ways to the further formalisation of the cooperation:
The formalisation of the cooperation can be a further step in the metropolitan areas with favourable conditions and stakeholder support. This formalised cooperation should include:
 - establishment of governing bodies, their structure and members;
 - creation and approval of the strategic plan, guidelines and rules of the cooperation;
 - introduction of financial mechanisms, e.g. membership fees, and resources from other levels;
 - the regular setting of the budget and annual reports on activities;



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ implementation of activities from the approved strategic plan.
Innovativeness and uniqueness of new solution	<p>The new solution aimed at voluntary and informal food cooperation represents an innovative and unique approach for several metropolitan areas where this type of cooperation does not exist, and a formalised and institutionalised cooperation structure is not possible/favoured due to legal bases. It outlines steps and aspects which should be considered during the establishment of cooperation. Even though several metropolitan areas do not have sufficient competencies to solve this issue, thanks to informal voluntary cooperation they can strengthen the local economy, improve the environment, positively influence the health and well-being of residents, support tourism, or ensure food security.</p>
Improvement of the selected tool	<p>The new solution is thoroughly based on the results of the pilot action and improves the Food Districts tool in several ways. The pilot action showed that there is a need for a governance structure focusing on food cooperation, but a formal structure based on a legal framework as in Turin is not possible. Therefore, the pilot action proposed to establish some type of voluntary governance network. The new solution builds on these results and outlines concretely the establishment of such a voluntary cooperation structure. The major redesign and improvement of the Turin’s tool lies in the fact that the new solution represents voluntary cooperation and does not require a legal framework. Therefore, it can be implemented in many metropolitan areas interested in the establishment of such cooperation. Among other improvements, there is an inclusion of the demand side in the cooperation (e.g. institutions of public authorities, school or municipality canteens) or an outline of more detailed topics for cooperation.</p>

4.3. Joint development and project management

The process of development of new solution	<p>The new solution was jointly developed between the members of the cluster. The City of Brno served as the main creator because it was the executor of the pilot action. Therefore, it drafted the concept of new solution and sent it to the partners on 29 January 2025. Other members of the cluster had the opportunity to raise questions online and prepare further ones for the transnational partner meeting in Berlin which took place on 26-28 February 2025. This meeting was crucial for the joint development. Metropolitan partners presented their proposal of new solutions and then, all of them discussed the</p>
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	proposals during the interactive session. Based on the outcomes of this meeting, the City of Brno finalised the solution in the first half of March 2025.
Methods of work	The City of Brno drafted the solution based on the results of the pilot action which showed that there is a need for an informal governance structure. The proposal was created internally by the Department of ITI Management and Metropolitan Cooperation. The methods of joint development included world café during a transnational partner meeting in Berlin, sharing the documents online and providing written comments and remarks on them.
The reflection of the initial work set-up and time plan	In terms of the new solution, the initial work set-up and time plan were achieved with small changes such as a month delay in the development. However, these changes did not affect the overall development of the new solution and its timely submission.
Problems and deviations	There were no problems or deviations during the development of the new solution which would cause delays in its finalisation and the whole project.

4.4. Strengthening metropolitan cooperation and governance

Impact on metropolitan cooperation and governance	The new solution has a significant impact on metropolitan cooperation as it aims to connect several metropolitan stakeholders from different sectors (public authorities, local action groups, private/agri-food sector, academic sector, NGOs) and establish voluntary governance of food cooperation among them. They shall collaborate on enhancing the local production, distribution, and consumption in the whole metropolitan area. The given activities will have a positive impact on the local economy, employment, health of the local population and more sustainable land use. Furthermore, voluntary food cooperation governance will have a positive impact on the enhancement of urban-rural cooperation, and it will also build trust in the territory. The new solution also outlines further formalisation of cooperation which could strengthen metropolitan cooperation and governance in the long term.
Involvement of metropolitan stakeholders	The nature of food cooperation itself is about the inclusion and connection of metropolitan stakeholders in the territory. At first, relevant stakeholders are identified through analysis of the territory. Then, they are involved in the larger event, the process of listening and animation, and finally in the working groups. Within WGs, they will together create and implement solutions aiming at addressing selected topics through food cooperation. The thorough involvement



	<p>of metropolitan stakeholders is therefore crucial for the proper implementation of this new solution.</p>
<p>Contribution to the Common Metropolitan Vision</p>	<p>Food cooperation for metropolitan areas is in line with the Common Metropolitan Vision and contributes to its fulfilment. There can be found linkages to almost every part of the vision, the strongest ones are to the Metropolitan Partnership and Identity; Balanced, Inclusive and Sustainable; Diverse and Complex Community; Recognition and Appreciation as the food cooperation focuses on building sustainable, cooperative, functionally integrated and diverse metropolitan areas through metropolitan solutions.</p> <p>New solution aimed at food cooperation also demonstrates the metropolitan strengths stated in the Common Metropolitan Vision, for example, metropolitan areas as Hubs and Societies show that they are an appropriate level for solving the topic of food cooperation as they are home to a significant number of citizens and businesses creating a complex ecosystem. Moreover, metropolitan areas offer Solutions for enhancing local production, distribution, and consumption in a spatially collaborative way at the metropolitan dimension.</p> <p>The establishment of voluntary governance of food cooperation contributes to Metropolitan empowerment as it highlights the importance of the metropolitan level so that they are more emancipated and recognised. Metropolitan Institutionalization is enhanced thanks to the soft form of cooperation and food cooperation is also built on expertise and capacity as it requires thorough analysis, smart data-driven policies and knowledge sharing among diverse groups of actors.</p>

4.5. Replicability to other metropolitan areas

<p>Replicability to metropolitan territories</p>	<p>The concept of food cooperation for metropolitan areas is replicable to other territories as it can be tailored to different contexts and needs. It is important to consider the level of agriculture production as the areas without significant agriculture industry may not be appropriate for this solution.</p> <p>The concrete elements of the solution which should be considered for its replication by other metropolitan territories:</p> <p>Values and topics - The cooperation aims at enhancing local production, consumption, and production with positive impacts on several aspects. Concrete topics are based on the interest of metropolitan stakeholders, solution outlines several of them, but the</p>
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	<p>final selection is on them and reflects the context and needs of the territory.</p> <p>Financial and organisational aspects - The solution and the establishment of the cooperation do not require extensive financial or organisational resources at the level of the metropolitan area or its core city. The following activities and long-term projects which are not part of the solution will require more resources.</p> <p>Management structure and involvement of stakeholders - The structure of cooperation relies on the involvement of stakeholders. The identified stakeholders should be based on the analysis, process of listening and animation of the territory, or larger event as there can be identified stakeholders missed in the analysis. The responsibilities of each stakeholder, the number of WGs, and the frequency of meetings are up to the agreement between stakeholders.</p> <p>Legislative framework - Voluntary food cooperation for metropolitan areas represents an option which does not rely on the legal framework or regulations. Therefore, it should be highly transferable to other metropolitan areas. Moreover, if the legal framework favours the establishment of a more formal structure, the solution suggests possible steps. The solution can also be an input for legal changes in the future.</p>
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4.6. Uptake of new solution

Uptake of new solution	<p>The City of Brno as the executor of the pilot action and the main creator of the subsequent new solution is currently implementing the suggested steps. At first, it analysed the territory of the Brno Metropolitan Area (part of the pilot action). This analysis provided essential information about natural characteristics, crops and livestock farming, stakeholders, strategic and conceptual documents, and current initiatives. It also identified benefits and impacts on the territory, included a SWOT analysis, and proposed possible steps and topics of food cooperation. The analysis was finalised in October 2024.</p> <p>On the basis of this analysis, the City of Brno organised a larger workshop for interested stakeholders. These included the representatives of local and regional public authorities, local action groups, NGOs, the private sector (agricultural organisations and most active farmers), and universities. Metropolitan authorities do not formally exist in Czechia, but representatives of the City of Brno and</p>
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its Department of Metropolitan Cooperation responsible for activities of the Brno Metropolitan Area attended and organised the event. Participants agreed that one topic would be fundamental: **coordination and information activities focused on food cooperation**. Then, they prioritised three topics which should be addressed by further food cooperation:

- **support for the promotion of local production in public catering,**
- **development and promotion of local supply chains,**
- **adaptation to climate change and sustainable agriculture.**

Participants also discussed possible steps like the establishment of working groups or the creation of an action plan. This event provided valuable inputs for the further establishment of informal cooperation.

After the event, the City of Brno communicated with the most active participants and monitored their views, opinions, planned activities, and willingness to cooperate. Thus, the **process of listening and animation** of the territory was conducted and helped to prepare the proposal of the initial working group aimed at coordination and information activities.

Based on the previous steps, the City of Brno prepared the proposal for the structure of the **initial working group focusing on coordination and information activities**. This group includes local and regional public authorities, local action groups, NGOs, and the private sector (agricultural organisations and most active farmers). Among the first tasks of this WG will be the creation of an action plan for 2025-2026. There will also be **separate WGs** for each selected topic. The City of Brno will regularly organise the one focused on public catering. The other ones will be held by relevant stakeholders for these topics.

The legal framework of Czechia does not currently allow the establishment of a formal governance structure as outlined in this solution. Therefore, the cooperation in the Brno Metropolitan Area is voluntary and may positively influence the legislation in the long term.

The stakeholders across the sectors in the Brno Metropolitan Area showed their strong interest in the topic of food cooperation. Therefore, they plan to focus on it in the long term and jointly implement activities enhancing local production, distribution, and consumption. The proposed structure is important for the proper



	implementation and the action plan will outline concrete activities to support the topics.
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4.7. Summary of new solution

Summary	<p>The new solution “Food cooperation for Metropolitan Areas” establishes a voluntary governance structure focusing on the topic of food cooperation and enhancement of local production, distribution, and consumption. It suggests important steps leading to the informal structure, which include analysis of the territory, organisation of larger event for different stakeholders, process of listening and animation of the territory, and the final establishment of the working groups with concrete types of actors. The solution also proposes the topics of cooperation or its possible formalisation. This approach is innovative for metropolitan areas without such cooperation and is highly replicable due to its voluntary nature independent of the legal framework which represents the main improvement of the Food Districts tool. It also has positive impacts on the local economy, environment, tourism, and health and well-being of residents. Food cooperation strengthens urban and rural relations and enhances overall metropolitan cooperation and governance thanks to the joint planning and implementation of concrete activities.</p> <p>The uptake of this solution is currently ongoing in the Brno Metropolitan Area which has already analysed the territory, organised the workshops with stakeholders, and established the main working groups. The area will focus on the creation of an action plan and implementation of concrete activities in the following months and years. The goal is to maintain this cooperation structure in the long term.</p>
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5. Innovative Metropolitan Prototyping

5.1. Initial information about the new solution

Study cluster and the members developing a new solution	<p>This new solution has been developed within the study cluster “Metropolitan Prototyping Academies - Innovative cooperation and transferability locally and internationally”.</p> <p>It is based on the experience gained through the realisation of pilot action by the Ostrava Metropolitan Area and the Stuttgart Region. The lighthouse metropolitan area of the study cluster, the GZM</p>
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	Metropolis , as well as the scientific partners , the University of Silesia (Katowice) and Charles University (Prague) , gave feedback and input to the development of the new solution.
The pilot action tested, and the tool chosen	Tool: Metropolitan Prototyping Academies (GZM Metropolis) Pilot action: Participatory approach to transforming metropolitan territories in the Ostrava Metropolitan Area and the Stuttgart Region
The new solution	Innovative Metropolitan Prototyping

5.2. The concept of new solution

Description of new solution	<p>The core of this new solution is to develop prototypes for current metropolitan challenges. These can include public transportation, energy supply, climate adaptation, improving the quality of public space, digitalization and adaptation to new technologies, challenges connected to demographic changes, migration, integration and the housing market, as well as newly rising challenges that cannot be foreseen yet.</p> <p>The prototypes are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - developed in the metropolitan dimension, then - tested on an urban scale, broken down to local conditions, - then upgraded back to the metropolitan level. <p>Through a well-prepared and moderated series of workshops, involving the whole range of all relevant multi-sector stakeholders from all over the metropolitan area, raising their creativity and collective problem-solving capacity, a prototyping concept (e.g. a thematic metropolitan strategy or guidelines for further settlement-development or new governance approaches) is developed.</p> <p>Methods of data collection (qualitative and quantitative data) and data analysis will be used simultaneously to the interdisciplinary workshops. The collection of data can have the form of surveys (online and/or printed questionnaires), structured interviews with local and metropolitan stakeholders and/or with engaged activists, systematic on-ground observations, on-site documentation or the evaluation of previous research.</p> <p>The prototyping concept is first to be tested and evaluated in different cases within the metropolitan area, e.g. in different local authorities. Based on the evaluation of the prototyping concept, a</p>
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	<p>new solution (a final concept) for the metropolitan challenge is developed.</p>
<p>Main elements</p>	<p>The main elements/steps of the new solution are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identifying a metropolitan challenge (e.g. development of affordable housing, public transportation, mitigation of urban sprawl, the need to strengthen city centres, improving the quality of public space, the need to reorganize the energy supply on a regional scale, waste management etc.) that cannot be tackled at single municipal level. The challenges will be identified in workshops and working groups, or they can be indicated by previous participatory activities or by surveys. ■ Developing a prototyping solution in a participative way with relevant stakeholders through a series of workshops, supported by data collection and evaluation. The prototype solution will be a concept, a strategy, a joint approach or metropolitan guidelines. One or several interdisciplinary teams are established by institutions responsible for metropolitan cooperation in each MA. The task of these interdisciplinary teams is to develop the prototyping concept. These expert teams are interconnected, interdisciplinary, mixed groups of different specialists, local politicians, influencers, civic activists and active inhabitants from diverse branches. The interdisciplinary teams /working groups are a tool for interactive approach to metropolitan problems. They provide the platform for the application of different know-how to common challenges. They provide the chance for professionals from different branches and stakeholders from different parts of the metropolitan area to get to know each other, but also to include possible opponents from the very beginning and to listen to their opinions. ■ Testing the prototype in one or several exemplary cases in different municipalities to verify and approve the concept with local stakeholders. After the testing phase, an evaluation phase follows, where the prototype concept is to be adjusted, modified or complemented according to the results of the testing phase. ■ This leads to setting up a final approved concept, strategy or guidelines on how to solve or approach the challenge for the whole metropolitan area.



<p>Innovativeness and uniqueness of new solution</p>	<p>The Innovative Metropolitan Prototyping:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ further develops traditional planning methods by applying a bottom-up approach, ▪ upgrades the original concept of Prototyping Academies by applying it to metropolitan challenges, involving metropolitan stakeholders and providing metropolitan answers, ▪ focuses on identifying the challenge, not immediately thinking of solutions (solutions, which seem to be the obvious way to solve the problem), ▪ provides a platform for exchange among different stakeholders, ▪ enables the stakeholders to think in a different way, to change their perspective, to be creative, ▪ fosters interdisciplinary cooperation, ▪ gets you from theory to practice, ▪ mobilises the development of metropolitan areas.
<p>Improvement of the selected tool</p>	<p>Compared to the original Prototyping Academies tool, the new solution goes one step further. It directly tackles challenges that should be addressed at a metropolitan level. It is meant for problems, which have a metropolitan dimension (not only single on-site problems / local problems), and it provides metropolitan solutions which can be a plan, a strategy, an approach etc. that is supported by all metropolitan stakeholders, expresses a common understanding and serves as a common metropolitan guideline (rather than a concrete physical intervention in a specific area). After testing and approving the prototype concept on a municipal scale, it provides metropolitan answers to metropolitan or even broader challenges.</p>

5.3. Joint development and project management

<p>The process of development of new solution</p>	<p>First, the Prototyping Academies tool as presented by GZM Metropolis during a site visit in May 2024 has been evaluated jointly by the Ostrava Metropolitan Area and the Stuttgart Region between December 2024 and March 2025.</p> <p>Second, both piloting partners brainstormed separately on how to develop a new solution.</p> <p>In several online meetings and via the joint work on shared documents with all partners in the study cluster, various ideas were</p>
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	<p>presented, discussed, and refined together, ultimately leading to the development of a new joint solution.</p> <p>During a transnational meeting in Berlin, in February 2025, the new solution of the “Innovative Metropolitan Prototyping” was presented and discussed with the whole MECOG-CE consortium.</p>
Methods of work	<p>Online meetings with all partners within the study cluster (Ostrava, Stuttgart, GZM, Brno as WP leader, scientific partners) to put ideas together and develop a new solution jointly.</p> <p>Joint work on shared documents.</p> <p>World café discussions during transnational partner meeting in Berlin.</p>
The reflection of the initial work set-up and time plan	<p>The partners defined the tasks collaboratively (regular online meetings, offline work on this sub-report, consulting the sub-report draft with the partners and adapting it after common discussions) and the timeline. The original activity framework was adhered to, with the time plan carefully monitored, thanks to the strong commitment of the project team. Both the planned procedures and the projected timetable were realistic and successfully followed.</p>
Problems and deviations	<p>No serious problems or deviations occurred. The team maintained constant and constructive communication.</p>

5.4. Strengthening metropolitan cooperation and governance

Impact on metropolitan cooperation and governance	<p>The Innovative Metropolitan Prototyping breaks out of traditional thinking in local dimensions.</p> <p>By identifying problems, considering tools to be applied, inviting active citizens and involving metropolitan stakeholders, the transferability of the adopted work plan between different municipalities within a MA or between different MAs will be overviewed and monitored. The metropolitan thinking is constantly present.</p> <p>Besides the development of metropolitan solutions, the consequent inclusion of a broad range of metropolitan stakeholders and their joint work in interdisciplinary teams is a chance to gain social capital for all participating experts and stakeholders.</p> <p>Due to the testing of the Prototyping Academy tool in two MAs solving different challenges, the new solution is replicable on different levels.</p>
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	<p>New solutions at the city quarter / urban level help to strengthen metropolitan cooperation (transfer/exchange of good practice to/between cities in the metropolitan area, creating an inclusive space for cooperation and establishing informal networks).</p> <p>New solutions at the metropolitan level provide a guide for the whole metropolitan area. This type of new solution is suitable for MAs with stronger metropolitan governance.</p>
<p>Involvement of metropolitan stakeholders</p>	<p>Within the Innovative Metropolitan Prototyping, multiple teams of metropolitan stakeholders are established to develop the prototyping concept. These expert teams are interconnected, interdisciplinary, mixed groups of different specialists, local politicians, influencers, civic activists and active inhabitants from diverse branches.</p> <p>The interdisciplinary expert groups are a tool for interactive approach to metropolitan problems. They provide the platform for the application of different know-how to common problems. They provide the chance for professionals from different branches and stakeholders from different parts of the MA to get to know each other, but also to include possible opponents from the very beginning and to listen to their opinions.</p>
<p>Contribution to the Common Metropolitan Vision</p>	<p>As the Common Metropolitan Vision states, the Metropolitan areas function as daily socio-spatial ecosystems, where most social interactions and connections take place. Metropolitan areas are engines of innovative development with far-reaching effects, beyond their borders.</p> <p>The tool of “Innovative Metropolitan Prototyping” contributes to the Common Metropolitan Vision by advancing inclusive community-building in metropolitan societies and areas, maximizing the positive impacts of societal processes in metropolitan areas, contributing to the prosperity and quality of life of their inhabitants, strengthening and developing civic engagements and metropolitan governance and by emphasizing the empowerment of the metropolitan dimension in Europe.</p>

5.5. Replicability to other metropolitan areas

<p>Replicability to metropolitan territories</p>	<p>This new solution is led by the fact that metropolitan areas become the new reference points for global problems. Metropolitan urban areas are the ideal space for identifying problems, testing them in</p>
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	<p>practice and developing solutions transferable to other metropolitan areas, regions or conurbations.</p> <p>Other metropolitan areas can easily replicate values and procedures such as a combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques. They can use it in topics like affordable housing, public space, spatial development etc. They can replicate them with a broad involvement of stakeholders (including possible opponents).</p> <p>Each element and step of the new solution is highly replicable as it is not strongly based on the context of a particular MA. This is enhanced by the fact that this new solution was drafted by two metropolitan areas with different context so that the replicability of this solution is inherent.</p>
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5.6. Uptake of new solution

<p>Uptake of new solution</p>	<p>Via the new solution, prototyping guidelines will be developed in a multi-stakeholder approach. These guidelines will be developed through a series of workshops with a range of metropolitan stakeholders starting with the identification and definition of the metropolitan challenge.</p> <p>The new solution can be viewed as a “cookbook”, where the details are up to each metropolitan area to add. The implementation in both metropolitan areas, which were involved in the development of this new solution, will be launched in 2025 and will be completed after the closure of the MECOG-CE project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ In the Stuttgart Region, the new solution will be used to tackle the metropolitan challenge of developing affordable housing. <p>The experience gained through the pilot action on sustainable industrial areas will be upscaled to the regional level and used for the challenge of developing areas of sustainable and affordable housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ In the Ostrava Metropolitan Area (OMA), Innovative Metropolitan Prototyping will be used to address the metropolitan dimension of the problems identified in public space in prefabricated housing estates. <p>Local proposals will be combined with priority challenges and proposals from other cities in the OMA, as discussed in the Regional Stakeholder meeting and combined into a metropolitan cookbook / a handbook with examples of good</p>
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	<p>practice. This metropolitan handbook might be submitted to a relevant OMA authority with metropolitan impact or to all OMA cities for their convenience.</p>
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5.7. Summary of new solution

<p>Summary</p>	<p>Our new solution, the Innovative Metropolitan Prototyping, is designed to develop prototypes for addressing pressing metropolitan challenges. These challenges might span across public transportation, energy supply, climate adaptation, digitalization, demographic shifts, migration, integration, housing markets, and unforeseen emerging issues.</p> <p>The core innovation lies in the structured, multi-stakeholder prototyping process. Through a series of well-moderated workshops, engaging a broad spectrum of metropolitan stakeholders, creative and collective problem-solving capacities are harnessed. The result is a prototyping concept, such as a metropolitan plan, strategy, development guidelines, or governance approaches, that tackles challenges on a metropolitan scale rather than isolated local issues.</p> <p>Unlike the original Prototyping Academies tool, this new approach focuses on metropolitan-level challenges from the outset. It fosters a metropolitan perspective by testing and evaluating prototypes by different local authorities before scaling them up to provide a metropolitan solution. This ensures a common metropolitan guideline supported by all stakeholders.</p> <p>By integrating qualitative and quantitative data collection methods, such as surveys, interviews and systematic observations, the solution builds a strong evidence base for decision-making. Additionally, by continuously involving a broad range of metropolitan stakeholders, it fosters social capital and strengthens informal networks for sharing best practices across the metropolitan area.</p> <p>The new solution is designed to be highly transferable. The methodology, which combines interdisciplinary collaboration with structured data analysis and testing, can be applied to various metropolitan challenges. The interactive approach, where guidelines are tested, refined, and scaled, ensures adaptability across different metropolitan contexts.</p> <p>By piloting the tool in two different metropolitan areas and tackling different challenges, the new solution is ready for broad applicability. It is a “cookbook”, providing steps while allowing</p>
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flexibility for various metropolitan areas to adapt the process to their specific needs.

In the Stuttgart Region, the new solution will be used to face challenges in the housing market and to develop possibilities for **affordable housing**. In the Ostrava Metropolitan Area, the new solution will be applied to diverse metropolitan topics, including the need to reframe the housing conditions in socially challenged housing estates and to create a city-wide mixture of **housing, leisure and business**.



D. Conclusion

New solutions serve as an indispensable part of the project and outline **necessary steps for metropolitan areas to strengthen metropolitan cooperation and governance** in various topics. These solutions **improve existing tools** that were studied within the study clusters and tested via pilot actions. Thanks to the **innovative and unique improvements of the tested tools**, their replicability to other territories in Europe has increased and all five solutions contribute to advancing metropolitan cooperation and governance. Therefore, each sub-report provides **guidelines on their implementation that enables capacity-building** for integrated territorial development and improves the overall effectiveness of metropolitan areas.

The new solutions focused on different themes and approaches as their basis lies in the tools explored within the study clusters and the results of pilot actions. Each solution addresses a different topic: one is focused on introducing **metropolitan food cooperation with a voluntary governance structure**, while another develops a **cooperation platform for the development of metropolitan public transport**. Innovative metropolitan prototyping represents an approach to **developing prototypes for metropolitan challenges in a thorough and cooperative way**. Strengthening metropolitan cooperation through **stakeholder involvement in strategic planning processes** is the aim of two solutions, one is focused on the surveys among metropolitan stakeholders and the other concentrates on finding new topics for spatial planning and its governance structure.

These solutions also respond to the pressing needs and challenges faced by metropolitan areas. Primarily, all of them address the **insufficient cooperation between metropolitan stakeholders**. The solution aimed at food cooperation tackles challenges related to **weak coordination of activities** in local production, distribution and consumption. Dealing with **inefficient and unintegrated transport system** is the core issue for cooperation platform for metropolitan public transport. Innovative metropolitan prototyping meets the need for strong cooperation between different groups of stakeholders **developing prototype concepts dealing with several metropolitan challenges**. Two other solutions address the challenges connected with the **inadequate involvement of several metropolitan stakeholders** in the strategic planning processes thanks to the introduction of methods like surveys and workshops.

In terms of **strengthening metropolitan cooperation and governance**, the new solutions have a clear positive impact on these aspects as they aim to enhance cooperation between stakeholders on several topics and through diverse approaches. The food cooperation connects actors through working groups to enhance **local production, distribution and consumption in the whole metropolitan area**, whereas cooperation platform for the development of metropolitan public transport establishes a group of the most relevant **stakeholders dealing with issues of public transport in the territory**. The **interdisciplinary teams, prototyping and bottom-up approaches** represent the main parts of innovative metropolitan prototyping tackling metropolitan challenges, such as affordable housing, energy supply, climate adaptation, or improving the quality of public space. The last two solutions focused on more inclusive strategic planning processes involving stakeholders through two different methods. The first one represents **regular surveys among**



these stakeholders and the second one concentrates on **identifying new topics for spatial planning with stakeholders using a bottom-up approach** and contributing to the new ways of planning, which is currently mostly top-down.

The new solutions are also a crucial step towards the **achievement of the Common Metropolitan Vision** as partners demonstrate in each sub-report. The cooperative efforts of new solutions favour **emancipatory, bottom-up activities, synergies and coordination**. The application of soft forms of governance, such as **collaborative networks, joint initiatives, and informal partnerships**, alongside formal structures, **pave the path towards a balanced metropolitan institutionalization**. In accordance with this vision, the new solutions are **good examples of using metropolitan expertise**, guided by thorough analysis, data-driven policies and evaluation, that supports the **timely, flexible and effective advancement of the metropolitan dimension** across multiple metropolitan areas. The solutions also contribute to overarching goals not only as specified in the Common Metropolitan Vision, but also universally for metropolitan areas in Europe, through **enhancing metropolitan dimension, promoting sustainable and inclusive approaches, or increasing metropolitan democracy and legitimacy**.

These new solutions were based on the tools studied within the clusters and tested via pilot actions. The food cooperation for metropolitan areas redesigns the **Food Districts** established by the Metropolitan City of Turin Metropolitan Area, while the cooperation platform for the development of metropolitan public transport builds on the **integrated metropolitan transport systems** in the Stuttgart and Berlin-Brandenburg regions. The **Prototyping Academies** of the GZM Metropolis are the tool which, through improvement and upscaling, provides the basis for the Innovative Metropolitan Prototyping. Solutions aimed at stakeholder involvement in strategic planning processes are based on the **Questionnaire among mayors** introduced in the Brno Metropolitan Area and the **Organization of workshops** developed in the Warsaw Metropolitan Area. All solutions introduce **innovative improvements to these tools**, enhancing their adaptability to different contexts across European metropolitan areas.

Thus, the solutions were developed to **suit the specific conditions of different metropolitan contexts**, ensuring their relevance and practical applicability. Each MECOG-CE solution can be **replicable to other metropolitan areas** across Europe and consists of several clearly defined steps and elements that are highly transferable. The **flexibility of all five solutions** lies in the fact that they were developed with adaptability in mind, making them suitable for a wide range of territorial settings. European metropolitan areas can draw inspiration from these solutions, implement the proposed steps and tailor them to their needs and strategic objectives.

Metropolitan partners of the MECOG-CE project clearly stated their intention to **uptake these new solutions in their metropolitan areas**. The City of Brno is implementing **food cooperation in the Brno Metropolitan Area**, while the City of Warsaw focuses on the **cooperation platform for metropolitan public transport in the Warsaw Metropolitan Area**. The Innovative Metropolitan Prototyping will be implemented in the **Ostrava Metropolitan Area and Stuttgart Region** for the metropolitan challenges of ensuring **affordable housing** and the spatial and societal revitalization of **public spaces**. The **Metropolitan City of Turin** aims to **regularly administer a survey** among their metropolitan stakeholders, whereas the **Berlin-Brandenburg** partners will focus on



identifying new topics for their spatial planning processes. All partners should be able to uptake these solutions not only during the project's lifetime, but they will also use them in the long term.

The **development of new solutions** can be considered **at a high level**. The partners **jointly developed** them not only within the study clusters, but also during the transnational partner meeting in Berlin. The **cooperative approach** ensured that these solutions are not specific to one metropolitan or national context and are usable not only for project partners but also for territories outside the project. The new solutions represent a crucial part of the project, enabling partners to strengthen their metropolitan cooperation and governance. These solutions will be implemented within the respective metropolitan areas and will also be included in the subsequent part of the project. Partners shall reflect and incorporate these solutions into their **Action plans for strengthening metropolitan cooperation and governance**. These plans will constitute one of the core elements of the third and last work package of the project, together with the **Strategy for strengthening metropolitan cooperation and governance in Central Europe**.