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**MECOG-CE**



# MECOG-CE New Solutions



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# Introduction

The **MECOG-CE New Solutions** brochure presents five newly developed solutions as practical outputs designed to **inspire and support other metropolitan areas**. Each solution is introduced with a clear **concept** and actionable **steps for implementation**. Together, they **address a variety of metropolitan challenges** and processes, with a strong emphasis on strengthening cooperation and governance across metropolitan areas.

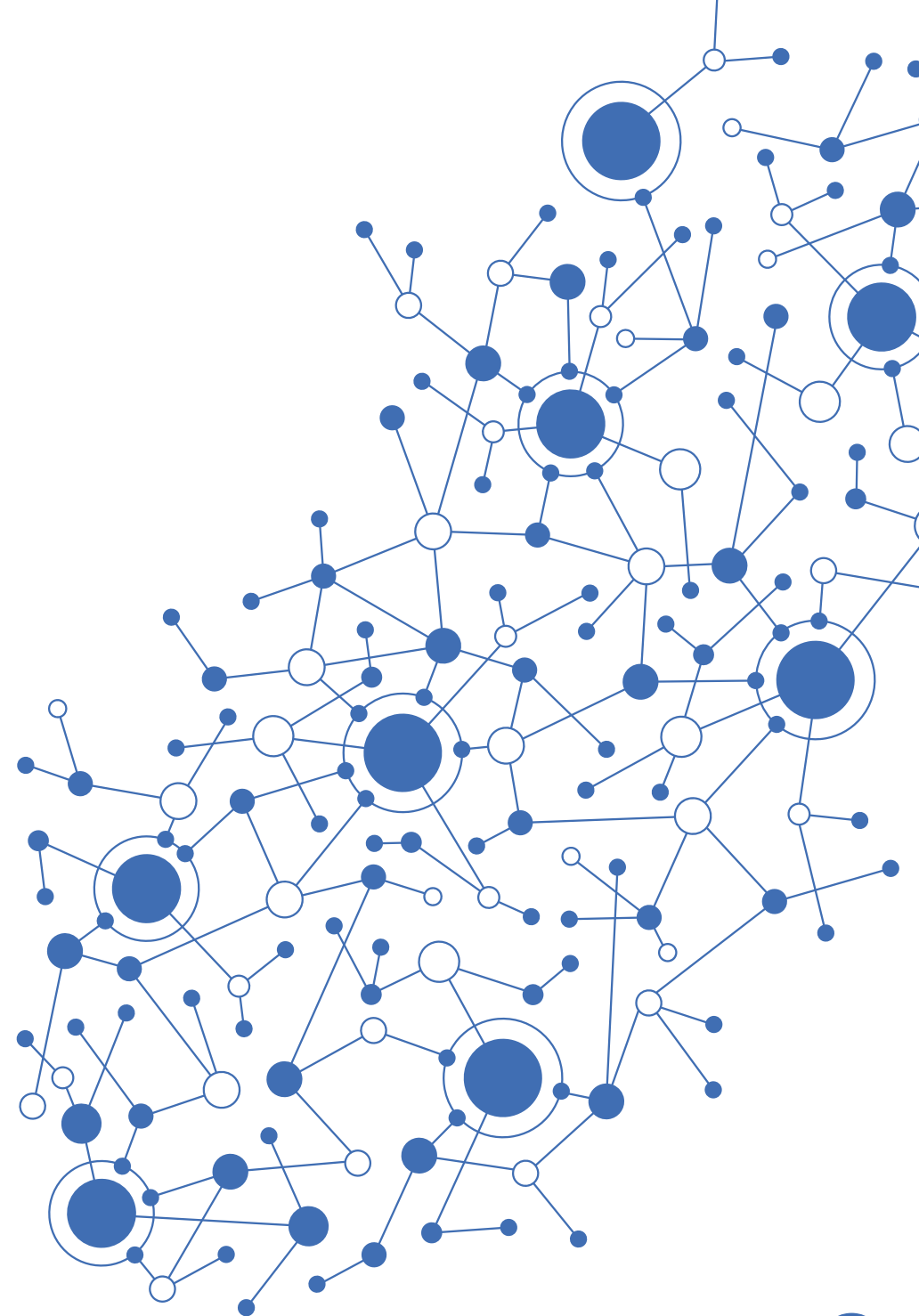
The new solutions developed within the MECOG-CE project correspond to tools previously examined in **study clusters** and tested as well as adapted through **pilot actions**. Each metropolitan partner **enhanced a selected best practice** to increase its adaptability, replicability, and overall effectiveness in metropolitan governance.

By promoting knowledge exchange and cooperation, the five solutions contribute to the **implementation of the Common Metropolitan Vision**, supporting the creation of resilient and sustainable metropolitan areas across Central Europe.

The full report on MECOG-CE new solutions can be found:



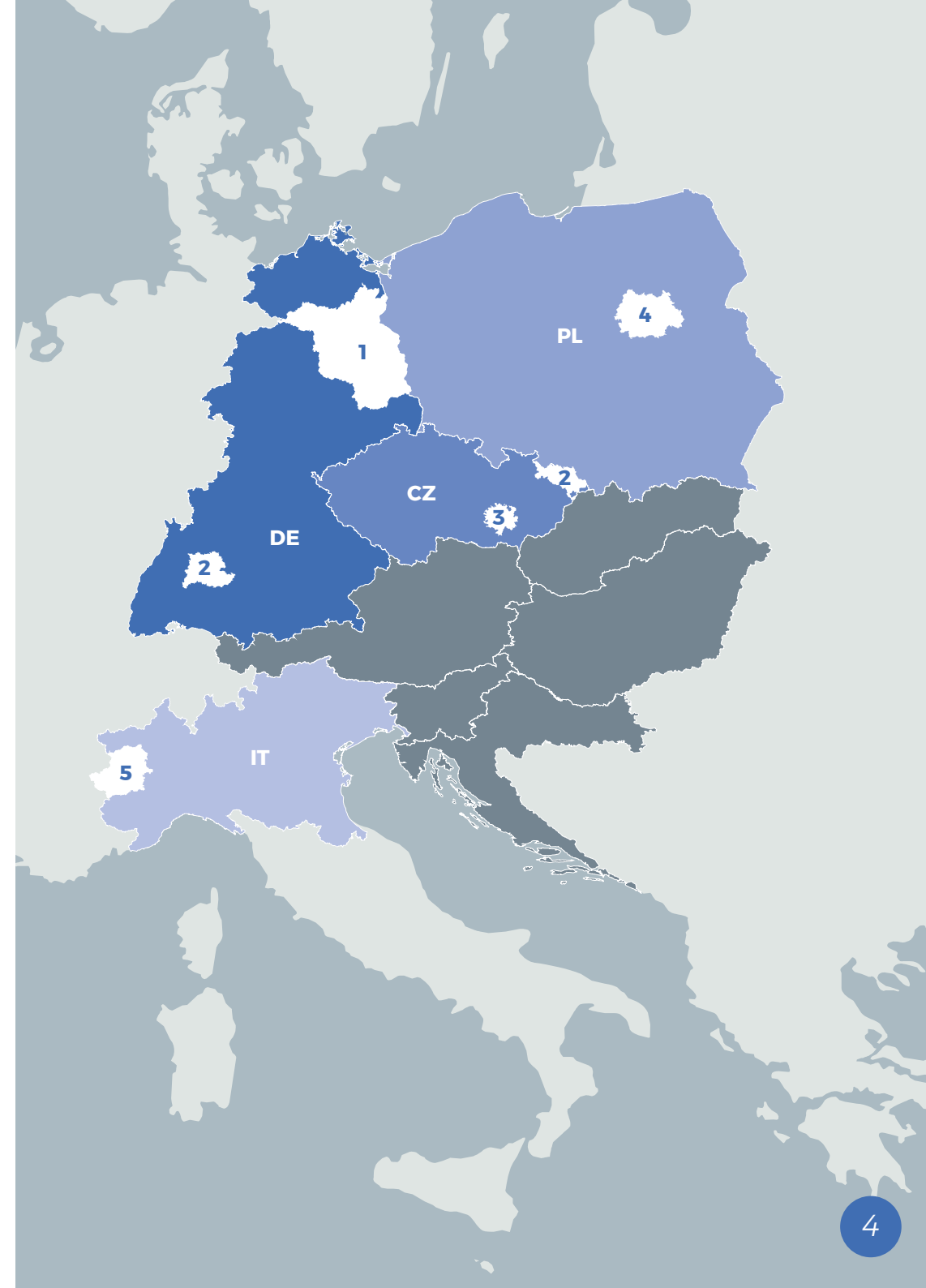
[bit.ly/4myHkG8](https://bit.ly/4myHkG8)



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# New Solutions

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# Bottom-up process-oriented stakeholder involvement



## Concept of the new solution

Central to this approach are two interconnected elements: identifying “white spots”, overlooked topics in formal planning, and adapting governance structures to support broader participation. To achieve this, previously uninvolved stakeholders such as local non-state actors, scientists, civil society groups, and SMEs must be actively included, ensuring their specific needs are addressed. This shift requires a transition from top-down to a more inclusive, bottom-up planning process, enabled through the following steps:

### 1. IDENTIFY THE APPROPRIATE POINT IN TIME

Integrate the solution when key strategical or legal binding planning documents are due to be revised. This marks the entry point for initiating change.

### 2. EXPAND THE CIRCLE OF STAKEHOLDERS

Expand the circle of stakeholders to include non-traditional actors, especially non-state actors from the local level, science, civil society, and the economy, such as SMEs, enabling diverse perspectives. A targeted address and invitation enable their participation.

### 3. IDENTIFY AND INTEGRATE “WHITE SPOTS”

Use the needs and objectives of new participants, which represent “white spots”, to identify and prioritize overlooked planning topics.

### 4. DEFINE THE APPROPRIATE SPATIAL FRAMEWORK

Tailor the spatial focus to each issue, some topics concerns the whole metropolitan area, others just parts.

### 5. LINK TOPICS AND AREAS COOPERATIVELY

Match specific topics (introduced bottom-up) with relevant territories (defined cooperatively) to form an appropriate goal-oriented governance model.

### 6. DEVELOP FLEXIBLE AND TEMPORARY GOVERNANCE

Design temporary, adaptable governance structures that fit the specific problem and spatial scope, using tools like information loops as well as monitoring, continuous reporting and SWOT analysis to closely connect formal and informal processes.

### 7. USE WORKSHOP FORMATS AND DESIGN THINKING

Workshops and subsequent events are essential to both elements. Apply design thinking, with break-out sessions, plenum sessions, and world café formats to support dialogue and cooperation.

## Significance, innovativeness and transferability

The “Bottom-up process-oriented stakeholder involvement” is a highly adaptable and low-resource solution that strengthens democratic planning in metropolitan areas by embedding an informal participation into formal governance structures.

Its innovation lies in the depth of stakeholder engagement, especially in how challenges are defined and participants selected.

The approach is transferable to other metropolitan contexts, particularly those transitioning from top-down planning processes to more dynamic bottom-up development practices.

## Strengthening metropolitan cooperation

This new solution significantly impacts the metropolitan cooperation by establishing stronger links between formal and informal planning instruments, enhancing engagement of stakeholders from different sectors, and reinforcing trust within the metropolitan governance structure. The approach creates a deeper sense of community and metropolitan responsibility.





# Metropolitan area implementing the new solution

Capital Region Berlin-Brandenburg represented by the Joint Spatial Planning Department Berlin-Brandenburg

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## Basis for developing the new solution

### TOOL CHOSEN AND IMPROVED

Organization of workshops (best practice of the City of Warsaw)

### PILOT ACTION EXECUTED BY THE METROPOLITAN AREA

Informal and participatory planning approach to the vision process for the Metropolitan Area Berlin-Brandenburg

The full document can be found:



[bit.ly/4kA1oWD](https://bit.ly/4kA1oWD)





# Innovative metropolitan prototyping





## Concept of the new solution

The “Innovative metropolitan prototyping” aims to develop and test solutions to key metropolitan challenges such as sustainable transport, energy supply, climate adaptation, digitalization, demographic changes, migration, integration, housing, and others.

The prototyping process follows a multi-step methodology, considering both local and metropolitan perspectives:

### 1. IDENTIFYING A METROPOLITAN CHALLENGE

Challenges that cannot be tackled by a single municipality, are identified through workshops, working groups, participatory activities, data analysis or surveys at the metropolitan level.

### 2. DEVELOPING A PROTOTYPE SOLUTION

Multi-sector stakeholders, comprising specialists, politicians, civic activists, and engaged citizens, collaborate to design prototype solutions through interdisciplinary workshops.

### 3. TESTING THE PROTOTYPE

The prototypes are piloted in selected municipalities. Local feedback helps evaluate and adapt the metropolitan solution to specific local conditions.

### 4. FINALIZING THE METROPOLITAN SOLUTION

Finally, the upgraded solution is set-up into the metropolitan level like a concept, strategy, or guidelines that address the metropolitan challenge and can be applied across the metropolitan area.



## Significance, innovativeness and transferability

The solution is significant for its ability to address complex metropolitan challenges through bottom-up collaboration. Its innovativeness lies in combining participatory, interdisciplinary, and data-driven methods that prioritise challenge identification over pre-defined solutions.

Designed to be implemented in diverse metropolitan contexts, the methodology is highly transferable and adaptable to different metropolitan environments, supported by flexible data collection and local stakeholder engagement.

## Strengthening metropolitan cooperation

“Innovative metropolitan prototyping” bridges metropolitan and local governance, ensuring collaborative and creative problem-solving for various pressing societal challenges.

Its structured, evidence-based and participatory approach, combined with practical testing and adaptability to diverse local contexts, makes it a powerful and transferable tool for strengthening metropolitan cooperation and governance.





# Metropolitan areas implementing the new solution

Ostrava Metropolitan Area represented by the City of Ostrava

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Stuttgart Region represented by the Stuttgart Region Association

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# Basis for developing the new solution

## TOOL CHOSEN AND IMPROVED

Metropolitan prototyping academies (best practice of the GZM Metropolis)

## PILOT ACTION EXECUTED BY THE METROPOLITAN AREA

Participatory approach to transforming metropolitan territories in the Ostrava Metropolitan Area and the Stuttgart Region

The full document can be found:



[bit.ly/44OWRv5](https://bit.ly/44OWRv5)





# Food cooperation for metropolitan areas





## Concept of the new solution

The core of this new solution is the establishment of a voluntary food cooperation at the metropolitan level. This approach proposes active collaboration involving public authorities, private sector representatives, NGOs, local actions groups, and research institutions, and others. The solution outlines several steps to build and sustain food cooperation at the metropolitan level:

### 1. TERRITORIAL ANALYSIS

A detailed examination of local agricultural production, supply and demand chains, stakeholders, and existing food initiatives. This analysis includes a SWOT analysis and serves as the foundation for data-driven decisions and stakeholder engagement.

### 2. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT EVENT

A discussion about the findings of the analysis, identification of key cooperation topics, and establishment of a preliminary structure for voluntary collaboration.

### 3. LISTENING AND ANIMATION PHASE

A process of continuous communication with stakeholders to foster trust and cooperation.

### 4. ESTABLISHMENT OF WORKING GROUPS

The creation of an overarching Information and coordination working group, along with thematic groups focusing on specific topics and projects. These teams should include stakeholders from different sectors, also from both demand and supply sides, to reflect a bottom-up approach.

The solution suggests various topics for cooperation, such as public catering, sustainable agriculture, food waste reduction, marketing support for local production, shortening local supply chains and others, as well as the potential formalisation of cooperation. Stakeholders should jointly define the goals of cooperation and develop a 2–3-year action plan describing specific activities to be implemented through mutual collaboration.

## Significance, innovativeness and transferability

This solution enables flexible and voluntary cooperation, regardless of legal barriers to food governance. Its replicability makes it an effective model for other metropolitan areas, serving as a foundation for institutionalizing food cooperation.

Beyond economic and environmental benefits, the solution supports the health and well-being of metropolitan residents. Through joint planning and concrete actions, it reinforces metropolitan cooperation, advances sustainable food systems, ensuring long-term benefits for local communities.

## Strengthening metropolitan cooperation

The “Food cooperation for metropolitan areas” solution provides a framework for voluntary governance of food systems, enabling metropolitan areas to strengthen urban–rural relations and foster partnerships across different sectors. It drives the local economy, reduces environmental burdens through shorter supply chains, and improves food security.





# Metropolitan area implementing the new solution

Brno Metropolitan Area represented by the City of Brno

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# Basis for developing the new solution

## TOOL CHOSEN AND IMPROVED

Food Districts (best practice of the Metropolitan City of Turin)

## PILOT ACTION EXECUTED BY THE METROPOLITAN AREA

Potential for food cooperation and its governance network in the Brno Metropolitan Area

The full document can be found:



[bit.ly/3H7f0KD](https://bit.ly/3H7f0KD)





# Cooperation platform for the development of metropolitan public transport





## Concept of the new solution

The “Cooperation platform for the development of metropolitan public transport” is an integrated space for collaboration among stakeholders in planning, developing, and operating public transport systems. Its goal is to enhance the efficiency, sustainability, and inclusivity of metropolitan public transport through shared best practices and innovative solutions. The platform includes the following steps:

### 1. INVOLVE RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS

The platform should bring together a wide range of stakeholders such as transport planners, local governments, operators, organizers, and county-commune unions, ensuring diverse perspectives are included in decision-making. Instead of separate efforts, it encourages communication and data-sharing among all participants and local government units.

### 2. ESTABLISH THE STRUCTURE OF THE PLATFORM

The executive or governing body of the metropolitan entity initiates the formation of the Cooperation platform — a formal working group. All members contribute insights and expertise during regular meetings to identify challenges, share ideas, and develop coordinated projects.

### 3. IDENTIFY KEY ISSUES AND SET THE OBJECTIVES

The platform addresses key transport issues such as fragmentation, municipal coordination, unified fare and information systems, sustainability, car dependency, traffic management, investment, accessibility, inclusivity, and technology integration. It explores best practices and aligns transport strategies to shape a unified vision for the metropolitan transport network.

### 4. CREATE DECISION-MAKING MECHANISMS

The decision-making process balances formal structures and voluntary collaboration, tailored to each region’s context. Mechanisms such as transport master plans, operational and financial plans, and regulatory frameworks may be used. Decisions are ideally made by building consensus.

### 5. ESTABLISH TASK FORCES AND LEADERSHIP

To tackle specific challenges like technological integration, accessibility, or sustainability, smaller task forces can work independently and provide recommendations to the larger group. Rotating leadership ensures equal participation and prevents centralization.

## Significance, innovativeness and transferability

The Cooperation platform’s uniqueness lies in its collaborative, transparent and flexible approach to metropolitan transport planning. It enables bottom-up decision-making, data-sharing, and adaptation to local challenges. It leads to a more integrated, efficient, and accessible public transport system for all residents and visitors.

The new solution is designed for an easy replication across metropolitan areas. Its key transferable features include collaborative decision-making, a focus on sustainable mobility, compatibility with local conditions, user-centric design, adaptable legal frameworks, and a voluntary, low-cost model, making it suitable for diverse metropolitan governance and development levels.

## Strengthening metropolitan cooperation

The cooperation platform strengthens metropolitan governance by reducing fragmentation and fostering inclusive, collaborative transport planning and management.

It engages key stakeholders such as local and metropolitan governments, transport operators, tech and data providers, businesses, and citizens to ensure effective, sustainable, and user-oriented public transport systems across complex metropolitan networks.





# Metropolitan area implementing the new solution

Warsaw Metropolitan Area represented by the City of Warsaw

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## Basis for developing the new solution

### TOOL CHOSEN AND IMPROVED

Integrated metropolitan transportation system (best practice of the Stuttgart Region and the Capital Region Berlin-Brandenburg)

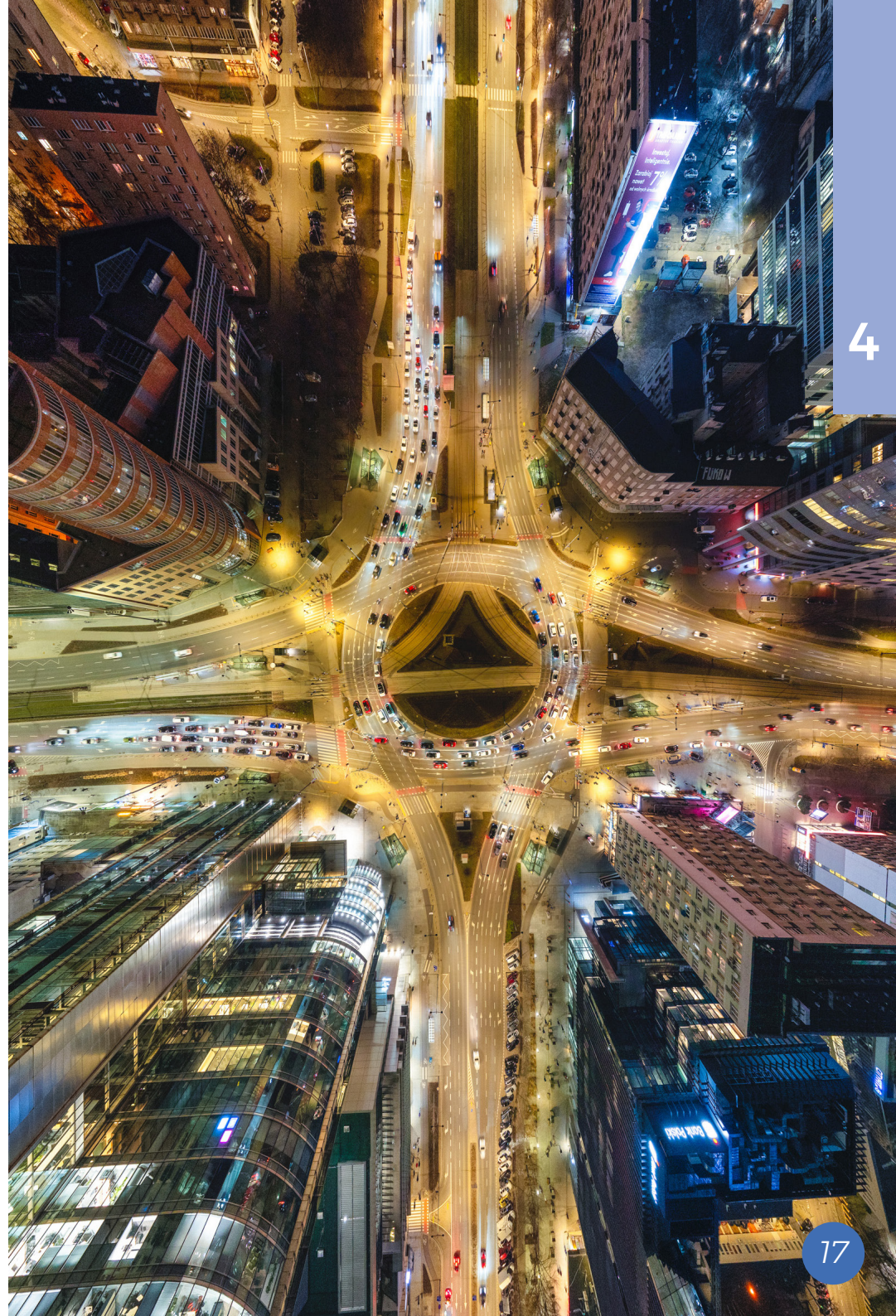
### PILOT ACTION EXECUTED BY THE METROPOLITAN AREA

Possibilities of integrating bus transport in the Warsaw Metropolis

The full document can be found:



[bit.ly/4kBWHvH](https://bit.ly/4kBWHvH)





# Engaging metropolitan stakeholders in strategic planning process





## Concept of the new solution

The new solution “Engaging metropolitan stakeholders in strategic planning process” includes a regularly administered survey targeting a broad range of metropolitan stakeholders to assess their involvement in strategic planning, monitor progress, and gather input for metropolitan strategic plan updates. It formalizes stakeholder participation, supports bottom-up planning, and strengthens metropolitan governance and cooperation. The survey aims at political representatives, private sector actors, civil society and community organizations, as well as academic and research institutions.

Its adoption requires a formal competence in strategic planning and execution of the following steps:

### 1. DEFINE THE GOALS OF THE SURVEY

The core goals should be: evaluation of participatory planning processes, assessment of the achieved progress, and gathering of feedback for strategic planning.

### 2. IDENTIFY METROPOLITAN STAKEHOLDERS

Map all relevant metropolitan stakeholders, such as municipal governments, business associations, NGOs, research institutions, residents, etc.

### 3. ADAPT THE QUESTIONS

Align them with the survey's goals, ensuring clarity and relevance.

### 4. CONDUCT A PILOT TEST

Identify ambiguities and technical issues to optimize clarity and engagement.

### 5. ADMINISTER THE SURVEY AND MONITOR RESPONSES

Encourage user-friendly environment and participation through reminders.

### 6. ANALYSE THE RESULTS

Segment responses by stakeholder groups and identify trends and priorities.

### 7. INTEGRATE THE FEEDBACK

Share the results and incorporate them into updates of the strategic plan.

### 8. EVALUATE AND OPTIMIZE THE PROCESS

Assess and improve the process after each survey round.

The example of the survey created by the Metropolitan City of Turin can be found here: [bit.ly/4jq2Aep](https://bit.ly/4jq2Aep)

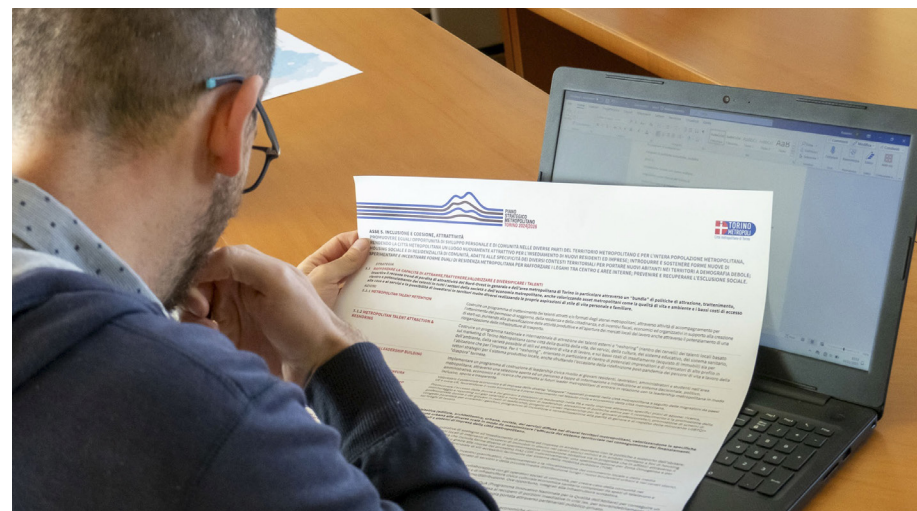
## Significance, innovativeness and transferability

Regularly administering a stakeholder survey fosters engagement, supports participatory and bottom-up planning, and ensures that strategic plans reflect real stakeholder needs. It contributes to greater policy coherence and supports sustainable metropolitan development.

The new solution represents a formally institutionalized tool, engaging metropolitan stakeholders across multiple sectors. It is easily transferable to institutionalized metropolitan areas or to areas where authorities are responsible for strategic and participatory planning. The tool and its accompanying methodology for development, administration, result evaluation, and follow-up can be widely adopted and adapted.

## Strengthening metropolitan cooperation

The new solution strengthens metropolitan cooperation and governance by making stakeholder involvement a formal part of strategic planning. Through a recurring survey targeting metropolitan stakeholders it enables the assessment of progress, collection of feedback, and the update of the strategic plans based on real needs. This fosters trust, supports participatory governance, and ensures that metropolitan strategic plans remain relevant and inclusive. Regular follow-up and transparent communication further reinforce collaboration and shared responsibility across the metropolitan area.



# Metropolitan area implementing the new solution

Turin Metropolitan Area represented by the Metropolitan City of Turin

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## Basis for developing the new solution

### TOOL CHOSEN AND IMPROVED

Questionnaire among mayors of the Brno Metropolitan Area (best practice of the City of Brno)

### PILOT ACTION EXECUTED BY THE METROPOLITAN AREA

Structured dialogue for evaluating the strategic planning process in the Metropolitan City of Turin

The full document can be found:



[bit.ly/4jm78SW](https://bit.ly/4jm78SW)







The full report can be found:



**[bit.ly/4myHkG8](https://bit.ly/4myHkG8)**