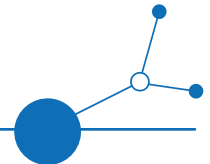




ENGAGING METROPOLITAN STAKEHOLDERS IN STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS



Version 1
03 2025





Table of contents

A. Engaging metropolitan stakeholders in strategic planning process.....	2
1. Initial information about the new solution	2
2. The concept of new solution.....	2
3. Joint development and project management.....	7
4. Strengthening metropolitan cooperation and governance	7
5. Replicability to other metropolitan areas.....	9
6. Uptake of new solution.....	9
7. Summary of new solution.....	9



A. Engaging metropolitan stakeholders in strategic planning process

1. Initial information about the new solution

Study cluster and the members developing a new solution	Semi-structures and dialogues for the improvement of metropolitan cooperation Members of the cluster: <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.
The pilot action tested, and the tool chosen	Pilot action: Structured dialogue for evaluating the strategic planning process in the Metropolitan City of Turin Tool chosen and improved: Questionnaire among mayors of the BMA (City of Brno)
The new solution	Engaging metropolitan stakeholders in strategic planning process

2. The concept of new solution

Description of new solution	<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</p>
-----------------------------	---



	<p>mayors that was developed by the City of Brno to the context of the Metropolitan City of Turin and to its specificities.</p> <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.
Main elements	<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 legitimization 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.



The results of the pilot action can be considered to be:

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. 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>

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>
<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.



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 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>
--	--

6. Uptake of new solution

<p>Uptake of new solution</p>	<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>
-------------------------------	--

7. Summary of new solution

<p>Summary</p>	<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</i></p>
----------------	--



and dialogues for the improvement of metropolitan cooperation study cluster, the solution provides a systematic, recurring mechanism for metropolitan authorities to consult stakeholders and integrate their input into strategic planning processes.

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 *Questionnaire among Mayors* 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.

The main benefits of the new solution for metropolitan governance and cooperation include:

- 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.

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.

Ultimately, this tool aligns with the Common Metropolitan Vision, reinforcing bottom-up governance, inclusive metropolitan cooperation and adaptability of metropolitan strategic plans.