

***urban voids to urban potentials: AGORA*** 

*an Interreg Danube Project*



# AGORA

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## *Advanced coGeneration Options for Reintegrating local Assets*

It is challenging for cities to revitalize and repurpose spaces in urban areas due to a lack of governance instruments to support regeneration processes. Especially when it comes to building economic capacities for utilizing the skills and knowledge of local youths, a gap between public administration, and the ideas that citizens have regarding the potential use-value of vacant spaces remains. Current ways of using vacant spaces often happen as a decentralized processes, resulting in single actions that are difficult to replicate, and do not lead to institutional reformations in urban policies.

By working together with ten local authorities along the Danube River, AGORA addresses this gap between public administration and the spaces for harnessing local potential by developing and adopting effective governance instruments to build a bridge between local stakeholders and public administration.



**CHISINAU**



**CLUJ-NAPOCA**

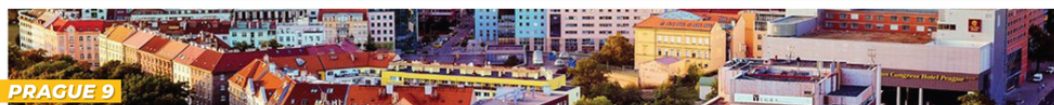
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**KOPRIVNICA**



**KRANJ**



**PRAGUE 9**



**NECKAR-ALB REGION**



**SLAVONSKI BROD**



**SOFIA**



**SZARVAS**



**ZENICA**

AGORA is an Interreg Danube project that takes place in 10 different cities developing a policy learning platform for urban voids regeneration.  
[www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/agora](http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/agora)

**urban voids to urban potentials: AGORA**  
an Interreg Danube Project

# *the AGORA Brochure*

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## *The story behind the work of AGORA partnership*

AGORA is an Interreg project from the Danube Transnational Programme of a duration of 30 months, started in July 2020 it will end by December 2022. Through the engagement of different actors and local stakeholders and the implementation of a series of co-design workshops, territorial partners developed innovative, interdisciplinary and multi-level decision-making processes. **AGORA** adopts a Quadruple-Helix approach to reach greater public involvement and democratise knowledge in innovation processes in urban and regional planning in order to engage the governmental, research, business, and civil society sectors.

# *the AGORA Brochure*

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## *The story behind the work of AGORA partnership*

Thanks to the Quadruple-Helix approach and to the AGORA framework, co-design communities - including cross-departmental task force, investors, landowners, young professionals, and service providers - were established by AGORA's territorial partners. Within AGORA, Territorial Partners have followed a three step process for the development of Urban Regeneration Agendas, a policy document to be linked with other local strategies for local development strengthening institutional capacities. A co-creation process that adopted a participatory approach, calling citizens for an active participation during a series of workshops that started with an initial identification of untapped local opportunities for vacant spaces, continued with a co-definition of governance instruments to unlock underused space potential, and completed with the definition of a clear strategy for urban asset reuse at city level which will establish the bases for subsequent Action Plans and mechanisms for their future implementation.

Within this process, AGORA cities, districts and regions were supported by Scientific partners that guided their local activities and created moments of peer-to-peer learning to increase their organisational and communicational capacities. The present brochure brings to the reader a summary of the work developed in every AGORA local community, and work package.

# AGORA Territorial Partners: districts, cities, and regions

CLUJ-NAPOCA



CHISINAU



KOPRIVNICA



KRANJ



PRAGUE9



NECKAR-ALB REGIONAL  
PLANNING ASSOCIATION



SLAVONSKI-BROD



SOFIA



SZARVAS



ZENICA





*"Festival in Unirii Square" (c) City of Cluj-Napoca*

# CLUJ-NAPOCA

As the fourth-most populous city in Romania and the capital of Transylvania, Cluj-Napoca is known for its rich history and natural landscapes. The city has significant national relevance given that it is among the most economically viable regions in Romania, boasting a vibrant workforce and low unemployment rates.

*"Festival in Unirii Square" (c) City of Cluj-Napoca*





*"Concert in Iris District" (c) City of Cluj-Napoca*

## ***The vision for the regeneration of the Iris district***

The main goals in the regeneration process of the Iris district are to enhance citizen engagement and establish the means for local cultural governance. Building the regeneration process on existing tools, focusing on areas outside of the centre of Cluj-Napoca, and integrating a wide web of stakeholders are all factors that make the contribution of AGORA unique. The chosen interventions are thought to be inspiring incubators for innovative developments in the district.

## ***The changing dynamics of the Iris District***

The Iris district is located in Cluj-Napoca, directly by the Someșul Mic river. It faces opportunities as well as challenges due to changing local demographics. Because of its location, it's become an attractive district for newcomers in the city. Yet the district also faces challenges when it comes to providing spaces for different activities. What's more, the regeneration of the population risks the creation of a segregated community, with the quality of urban spaces varying within the district.



# *The Iris district today*

The role of AGORA became central in activating the neighbourhood to find means to participate in transforming public spaces in the district to fit the needs of the locals. The AGORA project set out to build the foundation for the creation of a multi-functional community and youth centre, with the main goal of creating spaces that all residents will be able to use.

The transformation of the Karl Liebknecht Square as the pilot project included the transformation of a space facing the square into a multi-functional public facility.

The transformed facility, based on an international architecture competition, is to accommodate public debates, neighborhood meetings, social services, exhibitions, and other activities. By integrating the space into its surroundings, the transformation of the building into a community space will be expected to lead to bigger changes in the district, including the creation of an enhanced sense of communal identity and the promotion of social exchange.

*"My Fair Lady concert - Cluj Days" (c) City of Cluj-Napoca*





*"Concert in Iris District"  
(c) City of Cluj-Napoca*

# Local partnership & future challenges

Together with the engagement of the National Opera of Cluj-Napoca and Urban Scene (an association consisting of organisations within the community), the Karl Liebknecht Square was transformed into a flower market, where the musical play titled *My Fair Lady* would take place. Including local organizations was a crucial aspect of organizing the event. Their collaboration helped us understand what kind of activities would best suit the interests of locals.

The musical was a success with over 5000 attendees. The feedback obtained after the event showed that locals would like to engage in such activities more often - yet financial and physical accessibility, as well as time constraints, hinder the opportunity to do so.



*"Temporary market in Iris District"  
(c) City of Cluj-Napoca*



*"Sport activities on the street"  
(c) City of Cluj-Napoca*

*"Chişinău City Hall" (c) City of Chişinău*



# CHISINĂU

Physically located in the center of the country next to the river Bâc, Chişinău is not only the capital, but also the largest city of the Republic of Moldova. The population of Chişinău accounts to nearly 700 000 inhabitants; nearly a third of Moldova's population lives in the city's metropolitan area. Chişinău is the economic and cultural epicenter of the country, with notable agricultural and technical industries.



*"I love Chişinău - sign in the city centre" (C) City of Chişinău*



*Entrance to the BUCIUMUL Centre (c) City of Chisinău*

## ***The history of state-owned spaces in Chisinău***

Founded in 1992, the BUCIUMUL Center is a former movie set located in central Chisinău. The center has had the aim of showcasing national history, art, and cultural heritage. On the verge of being regenerated for commercial and creative functions, the purpose of the revitalization process is to transform the deteriorating area into a space that is open to the general public and incorporates cultural, social and economic perspectives into its activities.

## ***The revitalization process of the BUCIUMUL Centre***

Since 1995, 977 buildings in the capital - mostly owned by local public bodies - have been registered into the "Register of monuments of national and municipal importance". Due to the high volume of buildings registered, many of them lack upkeep measures, leading to neglect and decay. As a result, Chisinău currently has many underused or unused building spaces. To tackle this issue, the Urban Regeneration Agenda presents guidelines and solutions for the revitalization of forgotten spaces, such as the BUCIUMUL Centre.

# The vision of the BUCIUMUL Centre

Together with the public administration body, AGORA has produced a toolkit for operational and policy measures. The toolkit will enable the public administration to adopt means to stimulate the process of urban regeneration. The pilot project on the BUCIUMUL Centre provides a learning process, which allows the emergence of good practices that can also be applied to other urban regeneration projects. On a local level, the regeneration process showcases the opportunities of linking urban vacancies with socio-economic opportunities.

The revitalization of the BUCIUMUL Centre has an impact on different levels. Organizationally, the cultural area will be managed as a municipal enterprise by experts in the field. Environmentally, the design plans include a green area that will operate as a park and street food area. From a business perspective, the area will promote establishing new businesses, and from a social perspective, the space will promote social gatherings and use of public space.

*BUCIUMUL Centre (c) City of Chisinău*





"title of the pic" (c) copyrights

# Local partnership & future challenges

The flagship project "New roots" brought together several stakeholders, including the new employees of the National Center for Creation - Moldovan Village "BUCIUMUL" Chisinau.

The National Center for Creation - the Moldovan Village "BUCIUMUL", was presented together with its objectives. Considering the need to preserve and improve the creative areas within the Center, the possibilities of developing and promoting the cultural heritage of the location were addressed

Also, the stakeholders had the opportunity to witness several cultural programs that are already coming to life within the Center - the theater, the folklore ensemble, etc.



AGORA Flagship Event(c) City of Chisinău



AGORA local community (c) City of Chisinău



*Koprivnica main square  
(c) City of Koprivnica*

# KOPRIVNICA

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Located 70 kilometres from the capital of Zagreb, Koprivnica is the capital and largest city of the Koprivnica-Križevci county in Croatia. Together with the region, Koprivnica is home to more than 30,000 inhabitants. Some of the landmarks of the city include the church of Saint Nicholas, and the Koprivnica Synagogue.

*Koprivnica Park  
(c) City of Koprivnica*





*drone view Svilaraska Street (c) City of Koprivnica*

## ***Characteristics of Svilaraska street***

Located in central Koprivnica, Svilaraska is a historical one-way street, mostly used for parking purposes or as a transit zone to access other streets in the city. Svilaraska street is home mostly to residents as well as some small and medium sized enterprises. Mostly, it offers nothing to passersby, contributing to a feeling of being left behind in the urban space.

## ***The revitalization process of Svilaraska street***

The street holds special characteristics, such as the Koprivnica Synagogue and a public music school. The aim of the revitalization process is to develop the street into a place where locals will spend time and have access to services. By highlighting the synagogue as a focal cultural point in the city, it will lead to enhanced social and economic activities on the street.



# Svilarska street today

One of the special aspects of the revitalization process is the combination of stakeholders, citizens, and involved municipal administrators. The meetings in which revitalization plans were discussed were open to individuals, organisations and institutions. By using a bottom-up approach, the development of the street will address local needs.

Having the opportunity to contribute to the ideas and planning of the space makes the use of it more attractive to the locals.

These sessions and other workshops with stakeholders have contributed to the establishment of a working group, which will be involved in future projects together with the city to develop unused and underused space. The exchanges further strengthened the notion that locals would like to have more cultural events in their city.

*Childrens theatre at weekend festival c) Photo by: Filip Bišćević*



# Local partnership & future challenges



*Workshop in action (c) Maja Hlebar*

As a flagship project for AGORA, a weekend festival was organised on Svilaraska street. Many activities took place throughout the weekend on both days, with different ages being taken into consideration in planning for the event. The synagogue was open so that locals could go inside, and many were interested in seeing how it looks as it is usually closed off from the public. Panel discussions, presentations on the AGORA project, and co-creation processes were held inside the synagogue, as well as yoga classes. Outside, there was entertainment for children, such as theatre plays.

To engage citizens in planning for the future of the Svilaraska street, locals wrote down their suggestions and hopes for the street, and questionnaires with approximately 100 answers were received. The flagship event was a success, with around 200-300 locals taking part in the festival.



*AGORA presentation in synagogue (c) Filip Bišćević*



*People proposals(c) Filip Bišćević*

*"Old city center  
Kranj" (c) City of  
Kranj*



# KRANJ

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The Municipality of Kranj is the economic, commercial, educational, and cultural center of Gorenjska. It covers an area of 148 km<sup>2</sup> and lies at the crossroads of important traffic routes leading from northern Europe to the Adriatic, and from western Europe to the east. Kranj is the third-largest city in Slovenia with a population of 57.133. It is located approximately 20 km northwest of the capital.



*"City of Kranj"  
(c) City of Kranj*



*"new Drulovka" (c) City of Kranj*

## **The history of new Drulovka**

The neighbourhood of new Drulovka is located in the Southeastern part of the city. It was constructed as an above-standard, quiet neighbourhood on the edge of the city, based on the building plan from 1983. The neighbourhood is located in a natural environment, constructed mainly for young families. The plan provided areas for sports and recreation, a social centre, meeting areas, playgrounds, a shop, a buffet, a heating plant with storage and common green areas. Through the years of transition to capitalism, despite a well-planned concept, the topic of public, semi-public and private space differentiation has become a challenging issue.

## **The revitalization process of new Drulovka**

Due to the failed realization of the city plan, resulting in the inadequate use of public areas, the site was selected as an AGORA pilot area. The main objective is to achieve the determination of land use through a participatory approach. We want to identify local needs, find common solutions and include them in plans and in space creation, with public interest taking precedence over that of private. With the implementation of physical and social improvements in the space, we will improve the quality of life in the neighbourhood, based on the needs of residents, and build a new identity of for the neighbourhood.

# *New Drulovka today*

At the end of 2022, new Drulovka is still in the process of urban and social renewal. We encouraged the residents of the neighbourhood to actively participate in the AGORA process with the workshop we held in August of 2021. The workshop helped citizens come to the realization that local authorities do care about their living space and are striving to improve it.

At the workshop, residents highlighted the importance of social events in neighbourhood and the importance of the physical neatness of the space.

A community action initiative titled "Let's refresh Drulovka" was organized in march of 2022, combining environmental care with socialization. Events of this kind help raise awareness on the importance of improving the surroundings people live in. They also promote awareness on how contribution and participation can lead to progress with ideas, suggestions as well as through physical labour. Citizens who have contributed to the community with their input, feel proud to cooperate and protect the results of their work.

*"Let's refresh Drulovka" (c) City of Kranj*





"Community action" (c) City of Kranj

# Local partnership & future challenges

Ensure resident participation and encouraging them to submit proposals and solutions regarding their space is an integral part of the neighbourhood renewal process. Residents must actively be involved in all phases of the process: identifying challenges in space, offering suggestions and ideas, participating in the co-creation of professional solutions, and finally implementing them in their communities.

Through such a process, users will recognize the space as their own, adopt, protect and care for it. Such an approach allows for the strengthening of the identity of the neighborhood.

The City Administration will do its best to continue the AGORA process by informing residents about upcoming plans and activities, and inviting them to actively participate and contribute. The two-way process of cooperation and the principle of co-creation of the neighbourhood renewal will continue.



"Community action" (c) City of Kranj

## OSVEŽIMO DRULOVKO

### - SKUPAJ SOBOTA, 26. marec

od 9:00 do 12:00, na garaži pred Mercatorjem

čiščenje strehe garaže

zasaditev medovitega vrta

čistilna akcija

stenska grafika

izmenjalnica stvari "prinesi svoje, odnesi moje"

V sklopu nadaljevanja EU projekta AGORA in vsakoletne čistilne akcije Očistimo Kranj, vabimo prebivalce naselja nova Drulovka na skupnostno akcijo, kjer bomo sosesko skupaj očistili in olepšali.

"Invitation to participate" (c) City of Kranj



"Odkolek area after revitalization" (c) City of Prague

# PRAGUE9

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*Prague, the capital and largest city in the Czech Republic, is home to approximately 1.3 million people. Located on the Vltava river, Prague is a political, cultural, and economic hub of central Europe, with a rich history and Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque architectures. The city receives nearly 10 million visitors yearly and ranks high in measures of liveability.*



"The Vysočany district" (c) City of Prague



*"Odkolek before revitalization" (c) City of Prague*

## ***The history of the Odkolek area and the Prague9 district***

Built in 1835, the Odkolek site is located along the railway in Vysočany in the Prague9 district. As one of the largest companies in the 1940s in the Czech Republic, the Odkolek site remained as a bakery until 2001, when production ceased. Since 2005, the site has been owned by a private actor. The railway forms a barrier in the territory, challenging accessibility and movement in the space.

## ***The revitalization process of the Odkolek site***

The revitalization process aims to incorporate the industrial past, while creating a public space where social interaction is encouraged. Economically, the revitalization will contribute to the creation of new services and an increase in population. Socially, the revitalization will support civic activities, social services and movement in the area. Culturally, some of the historical buildings will be preserved for past commemoration. Environmentally, the revitalization will incorporate the creation of more green spaces.



# The Odkolek site today

The main goal of the revitalization process is to open the former site up to the public and make it accessible in a safe manner, making access to the formerly dangerous area enhanced. The area will be accessible from all sides, with enhanced pedestrian walkways and opportunities for cycling - with a goal to decrease the need for car traffic. By situating parking spaces on underground levels, it will contribute to a safe environment where the use-value of space is maximised for public use.

The space that does not need to be accommodated for cars can thus be used to develop new housing in the area, which will have a positive impact on the increasing challenge of finding suitable housing in Prague.

Increasing the amount of housing will not only address the growing pressures in the housing market of the city, but also enhance the feeling of safety for locals by bringing more life into the area. Further, this will lead to the establishment of civic activities by those who habit the space.

*"The concept of revitalization of Odkolek site" (c) City of Prague*





*"Map meeting conducted by Metrostav" (c) City of Prague*

# Local partnership & future challenges

Flagship project was conducted on September 19 and its aim was to inform stakeholders about the project itself and about specific civic amenities which they asked for.

The topic was chosen because some stakeholders didn't know about purpose of civic amenities in pilot project. The flagship project complies with strategic objective of Municipality P9. To provide safe place for living with environmental aspect and also to satisfy high demand for housing. The project also intends to preserve a cultural asset - administrative building from Austrian architecture. The meeting also focused on Agora 2 and identification of stakeholder's needs and problems in order to know what they need in case of replication of the project and for the future.

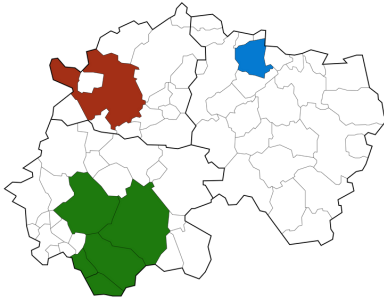
The flagship project has led to increase of involvement of stakeholders. We plan to integrate outcomes and use them in business plan.



*"Meeting with neighbors" (c) City of Prague*



*"Map of the new area" (c) City of Prague*



*"Project locations in the  
Region Neckar- Alb"  
(c) Regionalverband  
Neckar-Alb 2022*

# Neckar-Alb Regional Planning Association

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Located in southern Germany, consisting of the districts of Reutlingen, Tübingen and Zollernalbkreis, the Neckar-Alb Regional Association (RVNA) has supported three municipalities in the sustainable planning of commercial and Industrial areas. The approach is based on cooperative, democratic and participatory methods. Methodologies for improving the participation of stakeholders, residents and interested parties were developed in the municipalities. In this way, the RVNA strives towards ensuring an effective use of the space, increasing the acceptance of industrial estates and decreasing the amount of floor sealing in the region.

*"IIGP Zollernalb"  
(c) City of Meßstetten*

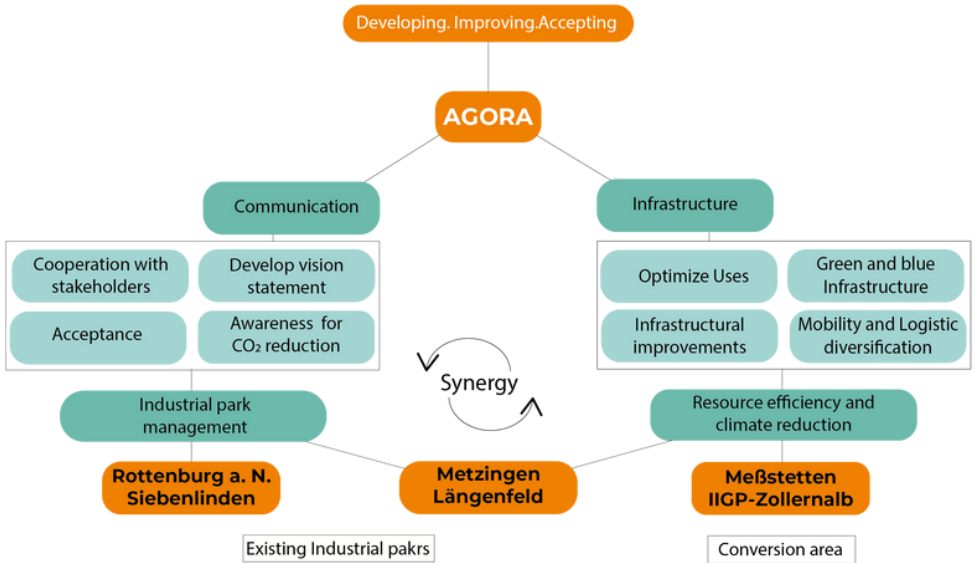


*"Längenfeld" (c) RVNA*



*"Siebenlinden" (c) RVNA*





*Overview of Project content in the Neckar-Alb Region, RVNA 2022*

## **Analysis Phase**

In the first phase of the Project, 8 different industrial sites in the region were visited and analyzed. An overview of the most important problems, opportunities, threats and strengths was made. In this way, the Neckar-Alb Regional Planning association was able to reduce the working topics to the main aspects that need to be taken into account when working on developing strategies at the regional level and creating transferable outputs. Following this process, three industrial sites were selected as AGORA Areas. Those were further developed within the AGORA Project.

From a thematic point of view; there were two main topics that are relevant for the industrial sites of the region: developing and organizing existing infrastructures and social dynamics to be able to establish an industrial park manager, and developing planning and advisory measures to reduce the use of resources and achieving climate friendly industrial sites.

## ***Industrial Areas in the Neckar-Alb Region***

The Project was implemented both on an existing industrial area as well as a conversion area.

The existing industrial areas of the region began developing in the 60s or 70s. Since then, the areas have been through different periods of development. Uncovered potential, infrastructural deficiencies and the lack of communication among different stakeholders were the main identified issues in these existing areas. The conversion area was developed out of a need for industrial land. This was a former military barracks that has been unused since 2014.

The goal of AGORA was to develop planning measures that ensure an efficient use of resources and a reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emission in every step of the development of the industrial site.

One of the main keys in the AGORA implementation was to create a cooperation process between different local stakeholders in the different areas.

## ***The revitalization process of the Neckar-Alb Region***

The characteristics of diverse areas require different approaches and interactions. Working in an existing infrastructure requires interventions, both on a spatial as well as social level.

*"Flagship Event in Rottenburg am Neckar, RVNA 2022" (c) RVNA*



## *Revitalization in Rottenburg am Neckar*

The main reason for the participation of the city of Rottenburg in the AGORA project is to mobilize and engage stakeholders towards building development strategies that effectively use the industrial and commercial site of Siebenlinden. Currently, the city of Rottenburg is experiencing a high demand for building commercial use areas for further development/settling. This need is mainly expressed by established companies in Siebenlinden that need a place for expansion. Nevertheless, the city has also received requests from companies outside the area wishing for settling possibilities in Siebenlinden. Since there are no vacant spaces in the industrial site of Siebenlinden, the city wants to work in developing strategies together with owners and stakeholders to effectively use the given area of the commercial site.

The same desire came from inhabitants in Rottenburg, since they have low acceptance regarding the development of new industrial sites in the surroundings of the city.

The AGORA project in Rottenburg works with the stakeholders of the area to create an awareness of the problem, thus starting the generation of innovative solutions. This should also bring together different interests and perspectives. Numerous experts and actors from different areas were involved in the project to pursue the most balanced, modern and representative possible planning.

*"Industrial site Siebenlinden, RVNA 2022" (c) RVNA*





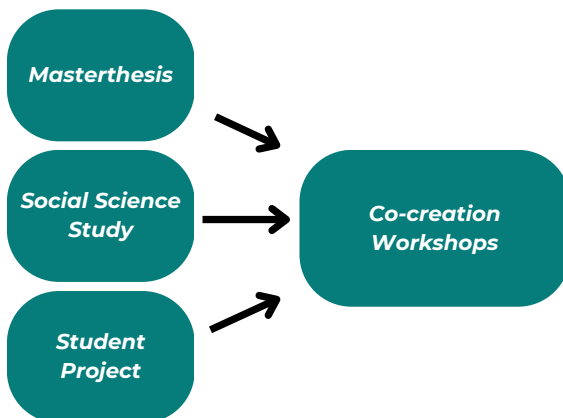
# Co-creation Process

*"2nd Co-Creation Workshop  
Rottenburg am Neckar, RVNA 2022"  
(c) RVNA*

In Rottenburg, the RVNA worked in collaboration with a wide range of different experts. Each of them was in charge of reporting important information for the development of the project and the elaboration of the final Outputs.

The Co-Creation Workshops and the different modules grew synergically during the implementation of AGORA.

The city of Rottenburg developed a list with the most important outputs of the project. These are also the topics the city wants to improve upon and include: Communication ( creating a Newsletter for the Industrial Site in collaboration with the Trade and Commerce Association); Infrastructure (Improving pedestrian and bicycle paths, green areas and quality of stay); finding available temporary uses in un- and underused areas; creating cooperation models for renewable energy; and offering consulting regarding development plans.



# Retivalization in Meßstetten

The main goal with this area is to develop it as a CO<sub>2</sub>-reduced industrial and commercial area for resource-efficient companies and for ecologically and economically sustainable site development.

With the selected approach of test-planning, several interdisciplinary planning teams worked simultaneously on a given task in connection with the project.

At the end of the process, different ideas and planning solutions emerged to best spatially realize the goals of the Intercommunal Special Purpose Association. This procedure was not a competition, but an accumulation of possible and working ideas for the site. Therefore, the test-planning offered assistance and support to take future project driven decisions effectively.

*"Former Military Barracks" (c) City of Meßstetten*







# CO2 reduced Industriepark

*"Visualisation IIGP-Zollernalb"  
(c) asp architekten, RVNA 2022*

*Active settlement strategy*

*Active land policy*

*Guideline for business park  
management*

*Attractive environment for future  
employees*

*Building culture*

*Mobility and parking concept*

*Implementation of sponge city  
concept and water management*

*Renewable energy*

Through the implementation of the test-planning, the cities developing the site received a wide range of different ideas and topics to integrate into their future project phases.

The recommendations the AGORA community developed based on the different approaches, are listed in the content boxes next to this text.

According to the climate goals of the EU, federal governments, states, municipalities and companies need to reach climate neutrality by 2030-2050, and neighbourhoods planned today must already enable climate-neutral business.

Only an ecologically sustainable area will also be economically viable in the long term. Not in the least, to attract and retain skilled workers as well.

The IIGP has the opportunity to develop a unique and exemplary location in Meßstetten.

# Metzingen, Längenfeld

The topic of how mobility within the business park and its connections could be improved was examined during the "Mobility perspectives Längenfeld" workshop

Other topics to be examined were how employees, customers and visitors get there and back; the situation with regard to being and staying in Längenfeld; and that possibilities beyond motorized individual transport should be considered against the background of the environmental and climate goals of the company, the state and the city.

Companies, employees and other stakeholders from Längenfeld assisted in the workshop, which lasted around three hours. Approximately 30 participants were divided into two groups, each of which worked for 30 minutes on the themes of "Coming and Returning" and "Being and Staying." The results will be integrated into the mobility concept of Metzingen, which is currently being developed.

"Flagship Event Metzingen" (c) RVNA

"Industrial Site Längenfeld, Metzingen" (c) RVNA



*"Slavonski Brod from above" (c)  
City of Slavonski Brod*



## SLAVONSKI-BROD

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*Located by the Sava River in Eastern Croatia, close to the border between Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slavonski Brod is home to nearly 60 000 inhabitants. As the capital of the Brod-Posavina County and sixth biggest city in Croatia, Slavonski Brod has many historical attractions, such as the Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić square, and the Brod Fortress, which is protected by the Act of the Protection and Preservation of Cultural Property.*



*"The Brod Fortress area" (c)  
City of Slavonski Brod*



*"Part of the Brod Fortress" (c)  
City of Slavonski Brod*

## **The history of the Brod Fortress**

Representing a baroque fortification, construction of the Brod Fortress began in 1715 and ended in 1780. The fortress has framed the landscape of Slavonski Brod for over 200 years, with significant impact on how the city became an urban centre with a rich social and cultural setting. It is a significant cultural property in Slavonski Brod and wider Croatia, and showcases both fortification and archeological heritage. The fortress is a former military area and is currently owned by the city of Slavonski Brod. The size of the fortress offers many opportunities for its activation, but this also led the space to remain unused for a lengthy period of time.

## **The revitalization process of the Brod Fortress**

The aim of the revitalization process is to make the fortress functional, while commemorating its past as an invincible and powerful complex. The revitalization process lays its foundation on three important aspects: creating a centre for the development of creative industries, the development of the civil sector and its services, and citizen participation with a special emphasis on the younger population. The shared vision for the fortress is enhancing the quality and quantity of multifunctional spaces for different activities, events and other content. These activities include the provision spaces that promote cultural and educational engagement.

## The Brod Fortress today

While the revitalization process has mostly focused on specific parts of the fortress so far, the City of Slavonski Brod is interested in developing more projects that will incorporate different areas of the fortress. The pilot project has gathered different stakeholders together, alongside a vast array of knowledge that can be used as a basis for future projects. Due to its size and historical setting, the opportunities of developing the fortress into something both locals and tourists can enjoy, are vast. As the fortress is located in proximity to central Slavonski Brod, the opportunity for

connecting it to the everyday lives of locals is worth exploring. With the main aim of enhancing the urban, economic, social and environmental quality of the surrounding area, the revitalization process incorporates the needs and wishes of locals of Slavonski Brod. The role of AGORA in improving the setting for local participation was central, through workshops, meetings and interviews. These workshops brought up best practices from other European cities, and raised the idea of temporary use of space, which can work as an incubator for future activities.

*"Planning session for the Brod Fortress revitalization" (c) City of Slavonski Brod*





"Flagship project event" (c) City of Slavonski Brod

## Connecting The Fortress to the surrounding areas

The *Brodtech* conference was held in an art gallery as the flagship event for AGORA. The location is a central space of the fortress that is currently in use. The conference included a series of lectures from local and regional IT experts, panel discussions and gaming and IT workshops for young people. The flagship event was co-hosted with IT associations that have been involved in the [AGORA](#) project since the beginning.

The flagship event was a great success, with many visitors, and especially high school and university students taking part in the events. During the flagship event, feedback was gathered from locals through a questionnaire, to better understand the needs of citizens in planning for future use of the space. The questionnaire was further included on social media channels, with over 260 responses.



"Flagship event participants" (c) City of Slavonski Brod



"Presentation during the flagship event" (c) City of Slavonski Brod

*"Ivan Vazov  
National Theatre"  
(c) City of Sofia*



# SOFIA

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With 1.2 million inhabitants, Sofia is the capital and largest city of Bulgaria, an EU member country since 2007. It is also the 14th largest city in Europe. The city is built west of the Iskar River, situated in the Sofia Valley at the foot of the Vitosha mountain, in a culturally relevant area of the Danube Region.



*"The National  
Palace of  
Culture" (c) City  
of Sofia*



*"Toplocentrala" (c) Sofia  
Development Association*

## ***The history of Toplocentrala***

From the Roman Christian era to the Socialist era, the urban fabric of Sofia is a showroom of history. The Regional Centre for Contemporary Arts, *Toplocentrala*, is a memory of the Communist past, and the central heritage site of the AGORA project.

Constructed in the 1980s as a heating plant for the National Palace of Culture, Toplocentrala is situated close to central Sofia. After operating for around three years, Toplocentrala stood as a vacant space until 2014, when a group of activists initiated the process to revitalise the space into a centre of contemporary arts.

## ***The revitalization process of Toplocentrala***

The regeneration project included holistic renovation of the building for artistic purposes and required the engagement of stakeholders, citizens, and the local municipality. In 2017, the different artists related to Toplocentrala formed an association, and communicated their view on activating the space through different media outlets, and through Bulgarian and European networks. In order to restore the space, funds from the City of Sofia were attained.



## Toplocentrala today

The goal of the project is to give the space a strong meaning for its surroundings through a process of regeneration. The building now hosts a vast array of artistic, social and cultural activities, such as exhibition rooms, artist residencies, rehearsal halls and a cafe. A significant aspect of the revitalization process was to make sure the space accommodates the needs of locals in order to support public engagement and access to culture.

In this way, Toplocentrala is promoted as a space that not only fosters the artistic community of Sofia, but also the general public. One of the aims of the AGORA project is to increase the role of participation in culture through innovative actions, and establish more cultural governance, while maintaining high artistic quality. By integrating the space into its surroundings, it enhances local identity, which citizens have both a role and responsibility in shaping.

*"Toplocentrala from outside" (c) Sofia Development Association*





*"Flagship planning event" (c) Sofia Development Association*

## Connecting Toplocentrala to the surrounding areas

To return the river to the citizens, the Sofia partners organized workshops with experts in urbanism. AGORA had a central role in improving the link between Toplocentrala and the Perlovska river through participatory activities, where ideas were shared and feedback was given on the revitalization plans.

Citizens were also included in the planning process by communicating the findings of these workshops. As a result, locals have access to a barrier-free public space along the riverbank. This was done with minimal intervention in the surrounding areas to consider the ecological footprint. The flagship project showed that locals would like to have more opportunities to participate in cultural activities in outside areas.



*"Plan for the flagship project site" (c) Sofia Development Association*



*"Flagship event at the Perlovska river" (c) City of Sofia*



*"River Körös  
and Castle  
Bolza" (c) City of  
Szarvas*

# SZARVAS

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With a population exceeding 15,000, the city of Szarvas is located in the south-east of Hungary. It is the defining cultural center of the region and an important tourist destination. Historically, the city was already a permanently inhabited area in prehistoric times. A significant urbanization process took place from the first half of the 19th century onwards, however agriculture is also a determining factor to this day.



*"Mill in 1924" (c)  
Fortepan*



*"The Granarium - acting nowadays as a live music club" (c)  
City of Szarvas*

## ***The revitalization area***

The planning area is located in the western part of Szarvas, in a highly frequented area, in the surroundings of the Lutheran Old Church, the Parish, the Tessedik Museum and the renovated Kossuth Street. This area is a frequented location of the city, which is characterized by a bustling activity and cultural richness during the numerous city events. There is a mixed zone in the immediate vicinity. Typically, it is an institutional, educational, cultural, religious and family housing zone.

## ***The history of Granarium***

The Granarium is one of the most emblematic buildings of the city center. The building was built in 1827, after the Lutheran church stored the harvested grain here. It has been home to one of the country's most prestigious youth clubs since the 1990s.

# CCI Incubator as it is planned

The property to be developed is located next to the already presented cultural heritage Granarium. The area is owned by the city and has a large garden and a building in need of renovation regarding to the new function of which was determined during the **AGORA** project.

Based on the features of the district's functions and the live music club already operating next door, the designated development direction is aimed at young people.

The city would like to provide a location where they can assess what they have talent for and find means of cultivating this talent. The location, technical background, equipment and mentoring will be provided.

According to the already existing technical documentation, a creative-cultural industrial incubator house could take care of this function in the future.

*"Design plan of the CCI Incubator"(c) KOMPAKT Design Mérnökiroda Ltd.*





*"Site visit with youngsters" (c)  
City of Szarvas*

# Local partnership & future challenges

Following the methodology of the [AGORA](#) project, several workshops were held, during which all relevant target groups were involved in the possible development sites selection phase. When designing the functions, it was also important to ask the opinion of the target group, so during an open day, local youngsters could visit the building with more than a hundred persons and make suggestions.

Despite the pandemic situation, all events were held in person, which enabled more efficient planning. Based on the feedback, the stakeholders still want to participate in the urban development works, which in the case of the [AGORA](#) project, was judged highly positively.



*"AGORA Open day - with CCI experts" (c)  
City of Szarvas*



*"Co-creation workshops at the Cityhall"  
(c) City of Szarvas*

*"Zenica from above" (c) City of Zenica*



# ZENICA

Zenica, located in the Bosna river valley, is the fourth biggest city in Bosnia and Herzegovina. With more than 100,000 inhabitants, Zenica is most known for its steel industry, sports, and cultural activities. As the capital of the Zenica-Doboj canton, it is the administrative and economic center of the surrounding region.



*"The Bosna River" (c) City of Zenica*



*"The Business zone Zenica 1" (c) City of Zenica*

## ***The socio-economic situation of Zenica***

The urban fabric of Zenica is heavily affected by the steel industry, with a mix of residential and industrial zones throughout the city. Many formerly occupied buildings now stand empty in the city, and as available land in the urban area is scarce, the potential use-value of the vacant buildings is increasing. The city is facing the challenge of high unemployment levels, leading the city administration to invest in initiatives that promote start-up activity and entrepreneurialism.

## ***The revitalization process of the Business zone Zenica 1***

One such vacant building is a former technical control building in a former steel plant Željezara Zenica. It is located in the business zone, a few kilometres away from the city centre. While one part of the building (Annex A), was revitalised in 2009, the other part (Annex B) continues to stand empty. To promote activity in the city, the plan is to transform Annex B into a space containing 35 business spaces, meeting and educational rooms, and other facilities for technological innovation, while incorporating elements of its past.



# The Business zone Zenica 1 today

Together with a web of stakeholders within the Agora project, The Urban Regeneration Agenda of City of Zenica was created on the basis of defining concrete actions for reactivating areas of the city, making the issue of vacant buildings visible for stakeholders and decision makers. One key factor of the agenda is the involvement of various stakeholders, such as NGO's, institutions, educational resources, the private sector and citizens. The cooperation of these networks leads to the decision to revitalise Annex B.

The reactivation will have multiple benefits for different actors. Not only is technological innovation fostered, but companies will relocate to the area, contributing to the economy of the city. Students at the local university will have opportunities to gain work experience, and job creation will tackle the challenge of local unemployment. The Business zone Zenica 1 now hosts 126 companies and nearly 2000 employees, with cross-company workshops and other forms of knowledge exchange taking place.

*"Pilot action building at start of the Project and after reconstruction " (c) City of Zenica*





"Meeting for planning the flagship project" (c) City of Zenica

# Local partnership & planning for the future

To promote technological innovation, the flagship event resulted in a robotics competition. While the competition did not take place in the revitalised Annex B building, an additional event regarding robotics was hosted for children in primary school, in order to promote the space for interested companies.

With more than 120 children attending the pre-event, it was a great success. Planning and hosting the event brought together teachers, stakeholders, and those organizing the main robotics event in the following week. The pre-event further worked as an incubator for planning other similar events in the city, such as topics related to digital tools for teachers.



"Flagship event activity" (c) City of Zenica



"Flagship event activity" (c) City of Zenica



AGORA Territorial Partners Map (c) Urbasofia





*AGORA partners visiting TOPLOCENTRALA. May 12th 2022 (c)  
Victor Buzu*

# AGORA Scientific Partners

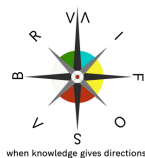
URBAN PLANNING  
INSTITUTE OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA



PAKORA



URBASOFIA



METROPOLITAN  
RESEARCH INSTITUTE



EUTROPIAN



# Analysis and Instruments

UIRS, the Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia

In an initial phase, operational analysis on governance models and unused/underused areas inner cities was developed as an important preparatory phase for co-creating 10 Urban regeneration agendas of 10 AGORA territorial partners from different administrative levels (region, city, district). Through 3 training seminars and 3 peer-to-peer and thematic learning missions, AGORA partners build their capacities and became credible and active key players capable of catalyzing a critical mass of different interest groups in urban regeneration processes. The AGORA Toolkit as a compendium of different types of policy instruments and best case examples supported and empower cities and stakeholders in the co-creation process on urban regeneration activities.



"Concept of the Analysis and Instrument" (c) Eutroplan

# Methodology

The main aim of the **operational analysis** was to:

- understand existing governance framework, decision making processes, participation procedures
- identify policy instruments and potential stakeholders
- analyse the state of the art of the AGORA areas as local strategic resources for urban regeneration interventions in AGORA cities



***"structure of the operational analysis" (c) copyrights***

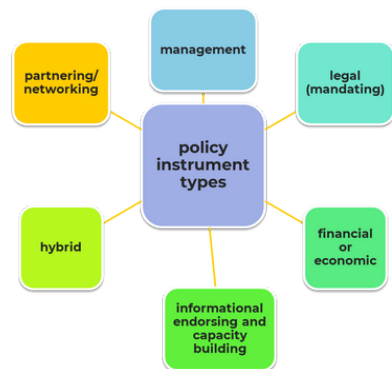
**Capacity building programme** was composed by:

- 3 training seminars
- 3 peer-to-peer and thematic learning missions each one on one thematic cluster

The **AGORA toolkit** as a compendium of different urban regeneration practices is composed by three parts:

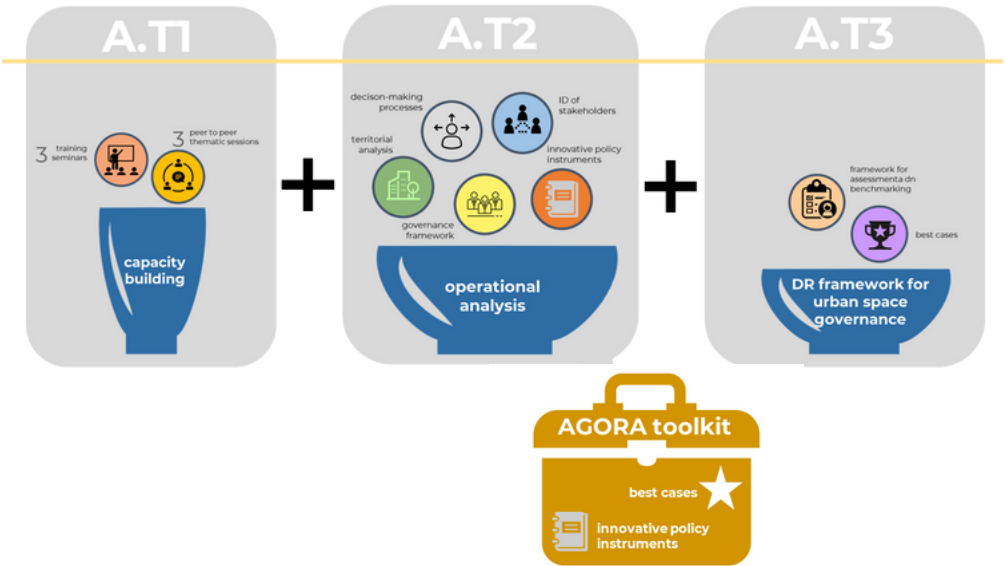
- best cases on urban regeneration interventions
- innovative policy instruments and governance models

assessment and benchmarking of innovative policy instruments



***"types of innovative policy instruments" (c) copyrights***





**"3 main results of the analysis and instruments" (c) copyrights**

## Results

10 operational analysis on different governance models, decision making processes and territorial analysis of 10 AGORA territorial partners coming from different legal governance backgrounds from different administrative levels (regional, city, district)

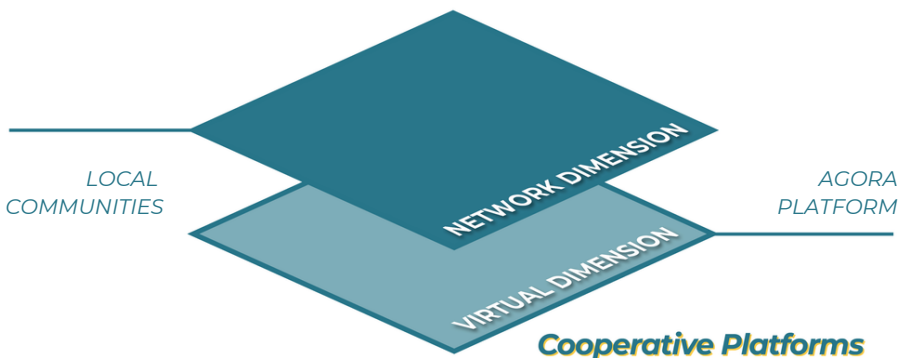
1 capacity building programme with 6 events, 3 training seminars and 3 peer-to-peer and thematic learning missions each one on one thematic cluster

1 AGORA toolkit as a compendium of different urban regeneration practices as a supporting tool for AGORA and other Danube Region cities to overcome the barriers of rigid public administration processes in the urban regeneration field and to inspire cities to improve and develop efficient policy mechanisms supporting decision making processes and improve bottom up participation of different stakeholders groups.

# Actors and Agoras

pakora.net - Network for Towns and Regions

After performing a stakeholder analysis according to the quadruple helix approach and testing the willingness of identified actors to support the AGORA process the territorial partners did set up AGORA communities. Together with the AGORA communities the TPs discussed the results, reflected on them and thereby supporting the local development of Regeneration Agendas, action plans and instruments, which were co-developed and tested later on in the project. The process was supported by so called AGORA cooperative platforms which are supposed to represent “public co-production spaces”, having a network dimension and a virtual dimension. Beside physical meetings like State-of-Play workshops the platform could help to raise awareness on this topic.



# Methodology

With these cooperative AGORA communities and platforms, it was foreseen that AGORA will generate and consolidate local co-design

Communities in each partner territory.

Additionally, through the platforms' virtual dimension, AGORA will foster and facilitate the transnational encounter and matchmaking of actors and stakeholders from different locations.

So in first step relevant stakeholders had to be identified, coming from the quadruple helix approach (education, private sector, administration and public society).

Due to pandemic situation the Territorial Partners did use different ways of contacting identified stakeholders and collaborating with them.

To obtain a form of binding, the AGORA communities also were supposed to develop and sign a so called "Memorandum of Cooperation".

For the internetbased platform an open source environment was developed that could be used and adopted by the Territorial Partners according to their needs. This part was organized by the Lead Partner (Municipality of Cluj-Napoca) and evaluated by the TPs and finalized by an external IT-specialist.



**"AGORA Workshop settings" (c) AGORA Partners**

# ALL SPACES, ONE PLACE

Enriching places along the Danube

FIND A SPACE

"AGORA platform" (c) Municipality of Cluj-Napoca

## Results

The territorial partners managed to get in contact with all relevant stakeholders according to the quadruple helix approach.

Having a series of virtual and face-to-face meetings each TP organised at least one State-of-Play-Workshop to present the results of the Operational Analysis, to discuss the foreseen AGORA activities on the pilot areas and to get first ideas on how to model the process.

The most demanding aspect was to point out, what was in for each stakeholder so that they would not only sign the Memorandum of Cooperation (which was done for each AGORA community) but also stay in the process for the duration of the project and even beyond that.

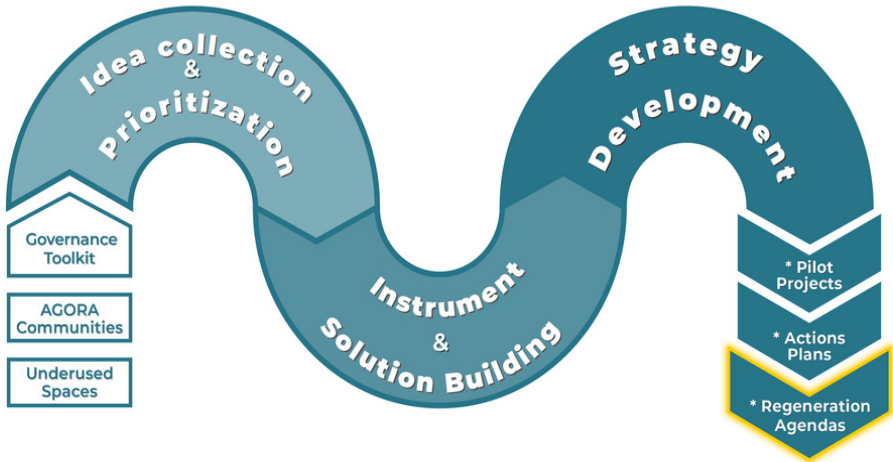
All in all one has to accept that the group of territorial partners was to heterogeneous in size, former experience and structure of the municipality to come to a "general" conclusion that can be applied to the whole Danube Region. But it must be pointed out that to motivate a broad group of different stakeholders to commit to a project / to an area and to take part not only as a spectator but to be involved in the process itself and to work pro-active is very ambitious. However, it was achieved by providing interesting and well-prepared analysis and contributions and (most important) by giving the possibilities to recognize that they have a benefit (not necessarily monetary) from engaging and working together.

# Co-Design of Regeneration Agendas

URBASOFIA

Work Package T3 represents the fundamental step towards a conversion of the knowledge created through the research and analysis of the 10 AGORA cities into concrete strategies for Public- Private-People-led physical and social regeneration.

Local AGORA Communities appropriate their role as key players for local and regional socio-economic development, being actively involved in the co-creation and further co-implementation of the Urban Regeneration Agendas and Action plans from the very beginning of the process.

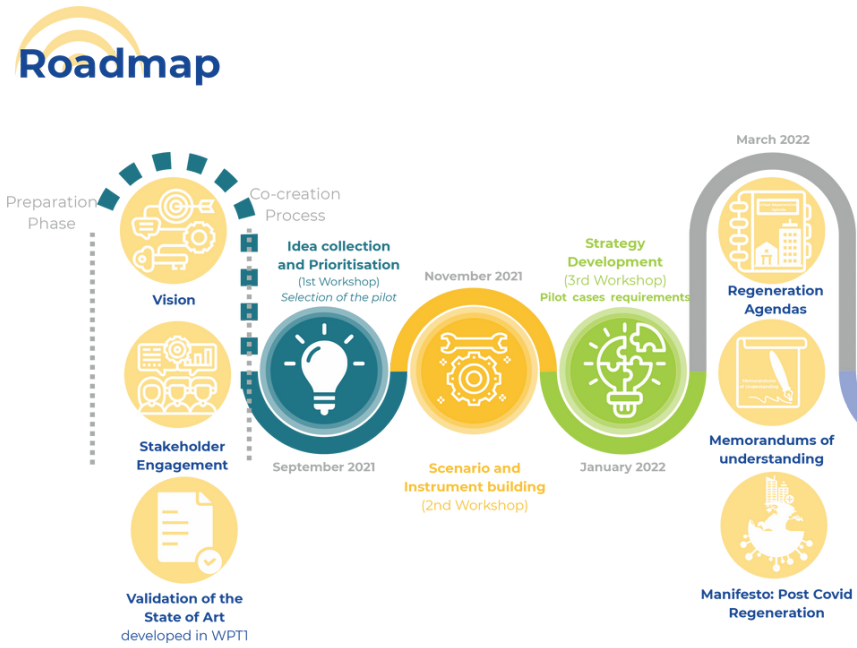


WPT3 co-creation process (c) Eutropian

# Methodology

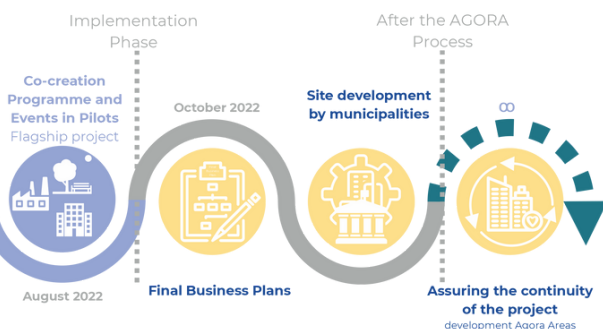
The methodology used for the co-creation of Urban Regeneration Agendas (URAs) and their specific implementation at the level of one pilot project involved the following main steps:

- the conversion of the gathered data of the analysis process
- engaging the quadruple-helix AGORA Communities in a process of co-creation
- based on the requirements and needs of the local communities, the strategies started to be developed under the framework of the common template
- The URAs were adopted at local level through Memorandums of Understanding
- one pilot project among the Agora Areas (sites to be regenerated) was chosen to be developed
- a process of awareness rising towards the future initiative was triggered by a series of events on the Pilot Project. The events followed the theme of the future Pilot Project (business, tech, cultural activities, etc.)
- Final Business Plans/ Action Plans were developed in order to anticipate what is required for the site development.



Name of Territorial Partner	Urban Regeneration Agenda directions	Objective of the Pilot Project
Chişinău (MD)	Unused heritage buildings redevelopment	Municipal Enterprise "National Center for Creation - Buciumul"
Cluj-Napoca (RO)	The regeneration of the public spaces from an underdeveloped neighborhood (Iris District)	Karl Liebknecht plaza
Koprivnica (HRV)	Revitalization of historical streets around the city centre	Svilarska Street
Kranj (SVN)	Revitalization of the public spaces of the Drulovka neighborhood	Neighborhood Drulovka
Neckar-Alb Region (DEU)	(Regional level): Support municipalities to develop industrial sites in a sustainable way	Rottenburg, Meßstetten, Metzingen - transferrable knowledge
Prague 9 District (CZ)	Industrial district revitalization through: Quality urbanism and housing, Environment, jobs, heritage.	Odkolek Bakery - transformation into a place for small & creative enterprises
Slavonski Brod (HRV)	Reactivation of unused spaces within the fortress	Brod Fortress - reactivation of unused spaces within the fortress
Sofia (BG)	Regeneration of unused industrial buildings	Topolocentrala - regional dance centre
Szarvas (HU)	Regeneration of unused/ heritage buildings in order to create a more livable and sustainable city	Zebra Club - providing cultural gathering places for younger generations
Zenica (BIH)	Improving the image of the city through its national and historical significance and revitalization of unused and public spaces	Zeda building - municipality owned

## Results



# Transfer and Capitalisation

MRI, Metropolitan Research Institute

This analytical work package will help achieving AGORA's aims by comparing and analyzing the outcomes of local codesign processes and policies in support of a decentralised governance model of decisionmaking.

It will also draw on the results of the 10 AGORA pilots to draw (and ultimately transfer) valid evidence-based lessons and recommendations.

*Transfer & Capitalisation wordcloud (c) Eutropan*





# Methodology

The methodology was developed in a way to allow the synthesis of the AGORA project, including:

- the interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral analysis of the design and implementation processes taking place in the AGORA cities.
- the analysis of the advantages and shortcomings of the processes
- collecting the results and feedback assessment from the territorial partners and compiling them into an outcome assessment and local socio-economic impact of the pilot actions.
- summarizing the key take-aways from all co-production and piloting experiences conducted through AGORA, as well as the actual transnational implementation experiences.
- a set of recommendations for stakeholders interested in replicating AGORA

*First Hybrid Seminar  
(c) Sofia  
Development  
Association*



## Qualitative Interviews

The interviews help to measure three type of outcomes and project impacts: outcome focused facts, process focused success /failure factors and impact focused lessons, seeking to understand and assess the various impact and possibly their long-term effects created by the project.

The data collection method is based on semi-structured interviews with diverse representatives of the AGORA cities. In case of each AGORA city two persons are asked, representing different viewpoints, sharing diverging experiences and possible opinions. The thirds set of interviews was conducted by MRI and the interviewees were the AGORA partners. Through this structure a good mix is ensured, providing insights both from a professional and a sometimes neglected political perspective.

## Collecting information for lessons learned:

This process involved the capture of information through structured and unstructured processes (questionnaires, checklists, interviews, meetings, written documents). In AGORA, all project participants take part in the feedback process, so the recommendations represent all areas of the project. The methods applied include:

**Surveys:** Surveys are useful tools to get information from a large group of people quickly and easily in a rather inexpensive way. They are also relatively easy to compare and analyse. The disadvantage of the survey is that it may not include detailed enough response and it might have a low response rate.

**Meetings, interviews:** Meetings and interviews are a useful opportunity for the team to talk through project experiences and to provide a fuller understanding of the personal impressions. However, this method is quite time consuming and it's much harder to analyse and compare

**Combining meetings and surveys:** Facilitated meetings/interviews can be used to catch personnel impressions and shape preparing lessons learned reports.

**Review of documentation:** Conveys information about how the partnership operates relying on already existing information (deliverables, meeting minutes, meeting records, etc.)

# COMMUNICATIONS

## EUTROPIAN

Within AGORA, Eutropian has been responsible for preparing the Communication Strategy that will be central to ensure an effective communication process within the partnership and effective and efficient implementation of the project activities for all Work Packages. Moreover, Local Communication Coordinators have been appointed for each partner, they have been responsible to coordinate with Eutropian and ensure proper communication at the local level regarding the implementation of AGORA activities.

Finally, Eutropian has been promoting the AGORA work through its communications channels, and events multiplying the project's impact thanks to partners' contribution



# Methodology

Eutropian worked on two different levels.

On a project level, the team supported other scientific partners by being actively involved in AGORA's analysis phase, supporting the Urban regeneration process and the final transfer and capitalisation activities. The work in all the phases of the project allowed Eutropian to be closer to all partners activities supporting the project communication which is linked also to the second level of Eutropian's work.

On a dissemination level, Eutropian brought its experience in storytelling, through various formats and media. Eutropian coordinated the AGORAmicrowebsite on the INTERREG platform delivering also a bi-annual newsletter. In addition, Eutropian coordinated with other scientific partners for the participation in other multiplier events and the delivery of scientific articles based on the AGORA work.

## VOIDS TO POTENTIAL: AGORA



Having gone through various lockdowns and travel restrictions, project partners have finally met. Here you find updates from the event and work completed in the first quarter of the last implementation year.



## FIRST AGORA HYBRID MEETING



This two-day intensive reunion in Cluj-Napoca was more than just a consortium meeting; it was an opportunity for partners to get closer to one another for better future cooperation. In addition to reviewing the project's activities for over a year, and planning the next nine months of activities, partners visited Cluj-Napoca's pilot area, the Iris District.



AGORA partners visiting the Iris District in Cluj-Napoca, 13th of April 2022

**AGORA Newsletter, Summer 2022**  
**(c) Eutropian**

This idea to revamp Svilaraska street is praiseworthy, these areas could be

**AGORA  
WALK in  
Koprivnica  
(c) City of  
Koprivnica**



Ariana Šandl, prof.

Art School Fortunat  
Pintarić

## ***Customized communication products***

The AGORA partnership benefitted from the coordination of:

**AGORA Walks:** a series of urban walk videos produced by each local team sharing the work on the local urban voids to be regenerated and on the pilot&flagship activities;

**AGORA zoom.ins:** a series of dedicated webpages for the work of each city for the regeneration on their pilot projects' impact.

**Alternative Kick-off campaign:** a plan for project communication and promotion at the early stage of the project that had to be adapted due to corona restrictions.



**CAPACITY  
BUILDING  
PROGRAMME**

**AGORA  
TOOLKIT**



**AGORA  
COMMUNITIES**



**10 AGORA  
PLATFORM  
SOLUTIONS**



***AGORA EXPERIENCE***

**GUIDELINES AND  
POLICY  
RECOMMENDATIONS  
FOR A BETTER  
GOVERNANCE OF  
URBAN  
REGENERATION IN  
THE DANUBE REGION**

**URBAN  
REGENERATION  
AGENDAS**

**10 AGORA  
PILOT  
PROJECTS**



**TRANSNATIONAL  
CAPACITY BUILDING  
TRANSFER  
PROGRAMME**

***IMPROVING KNOWLEDGE  
AND EQUIPPING LOCAL AUTHORITIES  
TO ACTIVATE LOCAL SPACE  
POTENTIAL***

