



REPORT

Resilience in Times of War - Municipal Exchange between Ukraine and Germany

SUMMARY OF THE CONNECTIVE CITIES PROJECT PLANNING WORKSHOP
28 AND 29 NOVEMBER 2023 IN MUNICH

Partners of Connective Cities



with its



Commissioned by



1. Introduction

In response to the Russian aggression, Ukrainian municipalities are facing the urgent need to protect and rebuild their infrastructure. Many municipalities are now confronting a new reality marked by destroyed infrastructure, civilian casualties, a mass exodus of residents, and disruptions in the social and economic fabric of local communities. Amidst these challenges, local governments endeavor to maintain public service continuity, citizen safety, and prepare for post-war reconstruction.

To tackle these challenges, the Connective Cities' Project Planning Workshop titled 'Resilience in Times of War – Municipal Exchange between Ukraine and Germany' was designed to facilitate the dialogue between Ukrainian and German municipalities, as well as foster interaction and experience sharing among the Ukrainian colleagues and discover solutions for enhancing the resilience of Ukrainian municipalities. The focus areas included **sustainable energy development, local and regional economic development, and strategic/urban planning.**

The workshop was successfully held from November 28 to 29, 2023, in Munich, Germany. It brought together over 35 participants, including representatives from 12 Ukrainian municipalities. The event served as a platform for the delegates to engage in meaningful dialogue and exchange ideas.

Together with the representatives from the Ukrainian municipalities, the workshop hosted four delegates from Kosovo municipalities and esteemed guest speakers who shared their expertise and insights on German and international municipal experiences and cooperative efforts with Ukrainian municipalities. Participating experts included:

- Dr. Martin Klamt from Munich's Department of Urban Planning and Building Regulations
[The big Picture: Planning integrated urban Development in Munich](#)
- Peter Münster, Mayor of the city of Eichenau
[ENERVYSH a joint endeavour in energy management](#)
- Dr. Eng. Gerd Meier zu Köcker, Division Manager at VDI/VDE Innovation GER
[Local Economic Development](#)
- Daniel Krutzinna, an independent expert on investment cluster ecosystems
- Andreas Remmele, Utility Manager for the City of Gersthofen
[A local municipal utility](#)
- Felix Geyer, Architect and Head of Division at the Allgäu Energy and Environment Centre (eza!)
[Municipal Energy Management](#)
- Nina Mitiaieva, Advisor GIZ, Mitigation Action Facility
[The climate fund driving sectoral decarbonisation](#)
- Thomas Medler, Product management, Energy services - next energy solutions at RheinEnergie, Cologne

At a glance

- Connective Cities Project Planning Workshop - Resilience in Times of War – Municipal Exchange between Ukraine and Germany held on November 28-29, 2023, in Munich, Germany
- Over 35 participants, including representatives from 12 Ukrainian municipalities (Berezhany, Brovary, Dnipro, Lutsk, Melitopol, Mikolaiv, Novovolynsk, Sambir, Sumy, Trostyanets, Vinnytsia Oblast, Zbarazh) and 2 from Kosovo (Glogoci, Prishtin)
- Aim: Exploring Resilience building pathways in energy, economic and urban/strategic development



"I was impressed to hear from representatives from Munich, as well as from Lutsk and Mykolaiv. I am immensely grateful to GIZ's support of our municipality as we develop our strategy for 2030, especially as we plan for the liberation of our municipality."

Yuriy Bova, Mayor of Trostyanets

2. Good practices and priority areas of the municipalities

2.1 DEVELOPMENT FOCUS 1 - ECONOMIC RESILIENCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE

At the Practitioners' Corner the case of the Trostyanets - "Sweetest City of Ukraine" for its chocolate production - served as a compelling example of effective economic strategies in action. The city's approach focusing on supporting SMEs, resulted in tangible results, including an increase in the number of SMEs, increase in an overall income, and population growth. A significant part of this economic success is seen in the development of essential local infrastructure like schools and hospitals, reflecting the positive impact of economic growth on the community's well-being.

Another key aspect of Trostyanets' strategy was enhancing local supply chains. By prioritizing near-sourcing and developing business clusters, the city has managed to strengthen its local supply network. In this context, synergies have been used, e.g. with new partnerships it was possible to procure milk and eggs locally. This not only supports local businesses but also adds robustness to the city's economy.

Lastly, Trostyanets has diversified its reach by shifting its focus from the Russian market to international markets. This move has been crucial in reducing the city's reliance on any single market, thus mitigating economic vulnerabilities, and paving the way for a more secure economic future.

Main Themes

The discussions revolved around **strategies for economic development in challenging times**, as exemplified by Mayor Yuriy Bova's experience in Trostyanets. The city's approach to maintaining economic stability, even in the face of war, was a central topic. Mayor Bova emphasized the importance of **diversifying the local economy** and **building resilience through well-thought-out strategies**.

The concept of **cluster development and near-sourcing** was also a significant focus. This approach is crucial for supporting SMEs in the region. By forming local business clusters and prioritizing near-sourcing, municipalities can create a supportive environment for SMEs. This not only aids local businesses but also **leads to stronger economic connections within the community**.

Another important theme was the need for **broadening market reach through internationalization and diversification of export strategies**. By looking beyond traditional markets and exploring new international opportunities, municipalities can reduce their dependence on a single market and open up new avenues for economic growth.

Taxation policies were discussed with an emphasis on finding a balance. The goal is to set **tax rates that are supportive of SME growth but also allow for investment in local infrastructure**. This balance is key to creating a healthy business environment that benefits the entire community.

Finally, the discussions highlighted the need for **strong institutional and infrastructure support for SMEs**. This includes **establishing business centers** and providing the necessary resources for SME development, such as infrastructure upgrades and capacity-building initiatives. These centers are envisioned as places where businesses can access support and resources, fostering a thriving local economy.

Ways to move forward

Peer to Peer consultation identified several ways to move forward:

- **Support for Migrants and Refugees:** Facilitate the integration of returning migrants and refugees into the local economy, either through employment in SMEs or by helping them establish their own businesses.
- **Brand and Market Development:** Utilize the unique identity of municipalities (like 'Chocolate City') to create branding and marketing strategies, including international fair participation.
- **Attracting Investment:** Focus on attracting investors by promoting good governance, transparency, and fighting corruption.
- **Bureaucratic Simplification:** Streamline processes for businesses to encourage entrepreneurship and growth.
- **Municipal Integration and Cooperation:** Foster collaboration among different municipalities to share best practices and resources.
- **Human Resource Development:** Assess and develop the capabilities of the local workforce to meet the needs of SMEs.
- **Strengthening Cluster Institutionalization:** Further institutionalize business clusters in various sectors, enhancing their efficiency and impact.

These themes and outcomes provide a roadmap for municipalities to foster SME growth and resilience, especially in challenging environments. The focus should be on creating a supportive ecosystem that encourages innovation, collaboration, and sustainable development.

2.2 DEVELOPMENT FOCUS 2 - ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

At the Practitioners' Corner, it was highlighted how Sumy City Council and Sambir have made significant steps in the field of renewable energy and environmental sustainability within their municipalities. These two cities showcased best practices that have advanced the implementation of renewable energy systems, particularly focusing on solar power and other green energy sources. Their efforts align with the aspirations towards energy independence and environmental conservation.

In Sambir, addressing high energy consumption and environmental issues has led to several targeted projects. The replacement of windows with energy-saving alternatives and the installation of recuperators, exemplify the community's efforts to enhance energy efficiency.

Additionally, the transition to automatic alternative heating systems, and the reconstruction of outdoor lighting, demonstrate Sambir's commitment to improving its environmental footprint. The shared experiences from Sumy, for providing the solar power plant for Sumy Hospital, highlighted the positive impact of this renewable energy initiative on the vital infrastructure in the community.

Ways to move forward

To build upon the experiences of Sumy City Council and Sambir, and the discussion during the Peer-to-Peer consultation, several ways to move forward were identified:

- **Strengthening Partnerships:** Foster stronger collaborations between municipal governments, private sector entities, and financial institutions to support and expand renewable energy projects
- **Simplifying Processes:** Work towards streamlining the legal and financial processes to facilitate easier access to financing and remove barriers to the implementation of renewable energy initiatives.
- **Community-Centric Programs:** Develop and implement programs aimed at increasing public awareness and involvement in renewable energy efforts, ensuring that the community is not only informed but actively participating in the sustainability initiatives.



Main Themes

The Sumy City Council and Sambir initiatives served as valuable models for other municipalities and raised the importance of doing more in this regard. But the practitioner's corner also discussed the issues **impeding smooth implementation of different initiatives/projects of Renewable Energy**. One of the significant challenges mentioned was the **complexity of existing legal frameworks**, which participants agreed require simplification and updating. The importance of establishing public-private partnerships was emphasized, and the **complexities of public procurement rules were noted as a potential barrier** to the sustained progress of projects.

Another major concern is the **lack of financing for renewable energy projects**. Consequently, there was a strong call to **advocate for supportive policies** and to seek out innovative financing options. **Community engagement** was recognized as a crucial element in the success of these initiatives. Thus, conducting awareness campaigns and educational programs, as well as building knowledge in renewable energy systems, were identified as vital to ensure successful implementation and ongoing maintenance of projects. **Building local technical expertise** to address and overcome technical challenges was also a key point of discussion. This is seen as essential to not only kick-start but also sustainably manage renewable energy projects in the long term.

"I greatly enjoyed learning how German communities address and craft their energy programs. I look forward to adopting similar objectives into our own municipal strategies. It was inspiring to see how various Ukrainian communities creatively approach the obstacles we face."

Olena Kozliuk, Strategic Planning and Regional Development Advisor at the Regional Development Agency of Vinnitsa Oblast



2.3 DEVELOPMENT FOCUS 3 - STRATEGIC/URBAN DEVELOPMENT

At the Practitioners' Corner, Lutsk focused on **digitizing municipal services**. The digitization of municipal services in Lutsk, particularly in the context of public transport, includes several key innovations. **Smart public transport stops** have been installed, featuring high-contrast schedule screens, cameras, fast-charge USB ports, and WiFi. Currently, there are 9 "smart" pavilions and 22 self-standing screens at bus stops. Additionally, an **automatic fare collection system** has been implemented in all public transport units (buses, trolleybuses) in Lutsk. This system encompasses fare collection terminals, GPS tracking, video surveillance, and a passenger information system. The public transport reform in Lutsk, serves as a good example of **public-private partnership**. The city has outsourced the operation and maintenance of the automatic fare collection system to a private company. This includes fare collection terminals, GPS tracking, and video surveillance in all public transport units. **The private company's involvement ensures efficient system maintenance and accurate data collection**, enabling the municipality to leverage this data for improved service planning and management. This collaboration highlights the **effectiveness of combining public oversight with private sector efficiency** in urban development projects.

Main Themes

The digitization of Lutsk's municipal services is a comprehensive initiative that extends beyond public transport reform, encompassing various aspects of urban management and citizen engagement. Key elements include:

- **Electronic Document Management:** This paper-free system has automated all office work processes within the Lutsk City Council, including the preparation and approval of regulatory documents. It features an API-integration for sharing digital documents, thus significantly enhancing administrative efficiency.
- **Geoinformation System:** Lutsk has developed a robust geoinformation system featuring 97 layers and 8 thematic maps, facilitating better urban planning and resource allocation.
- **Green Plant Management System:** This innovative system manages urban greenery, ensuring sustainable and efficient maintenance of public spaces.
- **Online Air Quality Monitoring:** With nine stations monitoring six parameters, this system provides real-time data on air quality, contributing to public health and environmental protection.
- **Public Security:** A city-wide video surveillance system with 352 cameras, including specialized ones for license plate recognition and robotic capabilities, enhances public safety and law enforcement efficiency.

Ways to move forward

In light of the urban development process, peer-to-peer consultations have identified several challenges in urban development and planning common to the municipalities in Ukraine as well as Kosovo. Key obstacles include:

Lack of Accurate Statistical Data: Municipalities struggle with limited access to national statistical data and lack the capacity to generate their own data.

Inadequate Data Analysis Capacity: This hampers precise, data-driven strategic planning.

Low Citizen Engagement: In decision-making processes, citizen involvement is minimal.

Limited Awareness of Urban Development Needs:

There's a gap in public understanding of evolving urban development requirements and benefits, which hinders green development of the neighborhoods.

Proposed solutions to address these challenges included the following strategies:

Awareness Building and Educational Initiatives: Implementing creative methods to enhance public awareness.

Pilot Projects: Utilizing small-scale projects as success models for broader changes.

Communication Strategies: Developing methods to effectively communicate with local citizens and businesses and caters to the contextual nuances of the community inhabitants. Key measures would include trust building activities.

Staff Exchange Programs: Encouraging secondments and expert exchanges between municipalities, both locally and internationally.

- **E-Democracy Initiatives:** Platforms for online petitions, public budgeting, and consultations engage citizens directly in the governance process, fostering a participatory and transparent local government.

Lutsk's digital transformation in public transport brings significant benefits for urban development. The implementation of smart stops and an automated fare collection system, managed through a public-private partnership, has the potential to enhance operational efficiency and data accuracy.

The collective efforts mark Lutsk's success in leveraging digital solutions for improved municipal governance, enhanced public services, and potentially, greater citizen engagement. The integration of technology across different sectors reflects a holistic approach to urban development, setting a benchmark for other cities aiming to modernize their municipal services.

3. Conclusion

The workshop effectively fostered a collaborative spirit among municipalities, who shared their resilience strategies and emphasized the importance of ongoing learning and adaptation. It became apparent that while municipalities have a clear understanding of their immediate challenges, they confront significant obstacles, such as insufficient funding and limited capacity for development initiatives. A notable frustration among many municipalities is the inadequate addressing of their needs, especially for those near the Russian border or close to occupation areas. These locations are often deemed high-risk, deterring donors from investing in development projects in these regions.

“It’s central to ensure that there is room for community discussion before considering the budgetary plans/actions. If we facilitate the creation of working groups consisting of members of the public to brainstorm collectively, this may be of use.”

Boris Karpus, Mayor of Novovolynsk

Good Practices

- Lutsk: Digital Solutions to Municipal Services
- Sambir City Council: Energy Saving in Sambir
- Sumi City Council: Renewable Energy Solution for Sumi Hospital
- Brovary City Council: Modernization of Heating System
- Vinnitsa Oblast: Economic Development (Capacity Development for SME)
- Trostyanets, Sumi Region: No Business has left the Community

Further information:

[Connective Cities Community Platform](#)

Connective Cities – International Community of Practice for Sustainable Urban Development

Since 2013, Connective Cities promotes the world-wide exchange of municipal expertise, disseminates proven-practice solutions for sustainable urban development, and supports peer learning between German and international experts from municipalities, as well as the jointly development of project ideas within the framework of structured learning processes.

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