Background Paper – Public Feedback UA Partnership Security in Public Spaces

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide background information for the Public Feedback on the draft Action Plan developed by the Urban Agenda Partnership on Security in Public Spaces. The Partnership proposes its Action Plan at a key moment when a new Security Union Strategy is adopted by the European Commission and while the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027 is still under negotiation. In addition, since the urban dimension of security is a new political topic at the European level, the Partnership has a unique opportunity to propose new ideas and contribute to the policy debate on those themes.

Below an introduction on the Partnership is provided, followed by a description of the Actions developed. The feedback received will be used to further develop and shape the Action Plan.

About this Partnership: composition, aims and scope

The Partnership on Security in Public Spaces was launched in January 2019 together with the Partnership on Culture and Cultural Heritage, (together they are known as the Vienna Partnerships) and is one of the 14 Urban Agenda Partnership established in the framework of the Pact of Amsterdam of 2016. As for the other Partnerships, it aims to identify and implement activities and solutions to respond to the three objectives of Better Regulation, Better Funding and Better Knowledge.

More specifically, the Partnership aims to ensure that the role of local and regional authorities in security is better recognised at all levels and enshrined in the European Internal Security Strategy and other relevant European political initiatives or frameworks. This is crucial in order to develop the urban dimension

of EU policies in the field of security and, in this way, contribute to harness the potential of the EU Urban Agenda as a whole.

In particular, The Partnership commits to respond to key challenges such as:
- Address major safety and security threats that local and regional authorities have to cope with;
- Protect public spaces against terrorism and develop security by design;
- Preserve the openness of European cities;
- Find a shared vision and understanding of security;
- Ensure convergence of urban security policies while respecting city differences;
- Enhance the feeling of security of the EU population;
- Ensure security through social cohesion;
- Improve the use of smart and safe technologies to secure cities;
- Empower society to be responsible of its own security and better involve citizens.

The Partnership brings together capital cities, large and small urban areas but also regions. It is coordinated by the City of Nice (FR), the European Forum for Urban Security - Efus, and the Madrid City Council (ES).

The Partnership currently comprises - in addition to the Coordinators, 10 more Partners which are: City of Helsinki (FI); City of Mechelen (BE); Métropole Européenne de Lille (FR); Union of Romagna Faentina (IT); Regione Toscana (IT); Brussels-Capital Region (BE); Ministry of Construction and Physical Planning (HR); Riga City Council (LV); Ministry of Transport (CZ).

Other participants include the European Commission (DG REGIO, DG HOME, JRC, DG CONNECT, DG EMPL, ...) and the European Investment Bank (EIB).

Finally, other actors and observers include the City of Toruń (PL); Eurocities, the Urbact Secretariat, UN Habitat and the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA).

How these Actions were selected

In its Orientation Phase, the Partnership has identified **3 thematic priorities**:
- Urban Planning and Design 'to create safer cities',
- Technology and Security for Smart and Safe Cities,
- Managing security and sharing public spaces.

These three priority areas have been the foundation on which the work of the Partnership has been built upon. Starting from these, the Actions identification and shortlisting process (Scoping Phase) has started.

In the scoping phase a long list of Actions was pulled together based on inputs provided by all Partners. The full list comprised 21 Actions across the three thematic areas and Urban Agenda objectives (Better Funding, Better Regulation and Better Knowledge). For each, information was collected in order to define the Action profile and level of interest by the Partners and determine whether it would meet the following criteria:

1. The Action is well placed in the UA context;
2. The Action is realistic and can be implemented (feasibility);
3. The Action brings added value to what has already been done;
4. The Partnership has expertise and capacity to implement it.

Based on these, and the interest shown by the different Partners on the various Actions, a final shortlisting and clustering exercise was completed at the fourth Partnership meeting, held in October 2019.

The Actions selection was also based on the mapping of all relevant EU legislations and regulations, relevant funding sources, projects and networks existing in the domain of Security in Public Spaces. In October 2019 the Partnership has hosted a panel debate during the European Week of Regions and Cities where it has presented its main priorities and tentative Actions to gather feedback and advice. Further, group and bilateral consultations have involved different European Commission DGs, URBACT as well as UN HABITAT. Partners have looked for synergies with other existing initiatives and projects to ensure coordination and avoid duplication.

ACTIONS

The overview below presents the 6 Actions and respective objectives they contribute to.

	Action	Objective
1	Developing a Framework for a Self-Assessment tool dedicated to Urban Authorities	Better knowledge
2	Recommendations on EU security strategy multi-level governance and funding	Better funding / regulation
3	Evaluate the application of Artificial Intelligence technologies	Better regulation
4	Develop a capacity building training scheme about integrated urban security	Better knowledge
5	Measure the impact of social cohesion on security in public spaces	Better knowledge
6	Develop guidance for architectural spatial design and planning (security by design)	Better knowledge

Bottleneck to be addressed

Around 75% of the EU population has chosen urban areas as their place to live (EEA 2017). Nevertheless, knowledge about how urban areas evolve and perform in terms of security is fragmented.

Terminology, definitions and broader understanding of safety and security differ across Europe and globally. While here are several indices in place, most of them fail to take into account an integrated and holistic vision of security, concentrating heavily on crime and law enforcement. Also, they mostly solely target metropolitan areas and capital regions, leaving a large number of urban authorities without tools to benchmark. Additionally, no comparable database is available to use for urban authorities within the European Union that would include medium-sized and smaller urban authorities.

There is, therefore, a great need for broader knowledge and a standardized, common framework for assessing and evaluating urban security. Moreover, there is a need for improved collaboration among European urban authorities and the exchange of best practices from those cities which have found innovative and effective solutions to common challenges.

Objective

This Action aims to create a framework for a self-assessment tool that urban authorities can use to reflect on their own status interactively.
The long-term ambition of the Action is to pave the way for the creation of a joint dashboard with which urban authorities would be able to reflect on their own status, progress made or weaknesses to overcome.

The Partnership would like to avoid any ranking but rather encourage peer-learning and efforts in tackling the urban dimension of security and safety. By indicating in what fields European urban authorities are active in, the tool could promote good practices and encourage exchanges across cities in Europe.

Outputs

The Action implementation would foresee three main sub-tasks.

- Mapping of current indices used within the EU and globally, as this would help identify their gaps in measuring safety and security;
- Defining a conceptual framework to support the creation of a self-assessment tool is the core objective of this Action. Creating a joint, holistic framework is

key, as it sets the aim and focus of the self-assessment tool to be piloted in the third sub-task. The framework must be actionable, and relevant to NUTS 1, NUTS 2 and NUTS 3 regions as well as urban authorities of different population sizes and economic development, and such that can be used for self-assessment purposes;

- Pilot and data collection carried out by looking for already existing data and creating an online survey or template (in English) on which representatives of European urban authorities can provide their responses;
- Further, a thorough analysis of the findings of the pilot-phase will need to be carried out and reported. These findings will indicate whether the designed self-assessment framework is successful and should be scaled-up to create a joint dashboard.

More specifically, **deliverables** from this Action would include:
- A report on existing indices, benchmarking tools and self-assessment tools related to safety and security;
- A framework for safety and security themed self-assessment tool, including the online survey-form tested in the pilot;
- A report on the pilots implemented and feedback collected.

ACTION N°2 – Recommendations on EU security strategy, multi-level governance and funding

Bottleneck to be addressed

This Action tries to tackle both governance and funding challenges which still hamper a successful and meaningful involvement of local authorities in the prevention and response to security threats at EU level.

From a governance perspective, security was for long considered as an exclusive prerogative of Member States. In the last decades a crucial role of local and regional authorities has become more and more obvious especially in security prevention at local level which entails the necessity of a multilevel governance approach to address local needs and promote local solutions.

Form a funding perspective, EU funding opportunities to ensure security in public spaces should be better known and mobilized more easily by local and regional authorities, especially to support the whole range of activities which allow more efficient prevention, including investments in equipment. It would be important to facilitate access to current opportunities also for small and medium size local authorities; and complementarity between the various sources of funding should be guaranteed in a multilevel approach for a coherent implementation of EU policies at local level.

Objective

From a **governance perspective**, this Action aims to enhance the role of urban authorities and the effective cooperation and synergies with national authorities to develop more effective urban security interventions on the territory. Creating a network between urban authorities involved in the UA Partnership will help in sharing experiences, knowledge and best practices and also in finding shared innovative solutions to common problems (security in this case).

Regarding funding, in the context of the 2021-2027 Multi-annual Financial Framework, The Partnership will draw from and convey lessons learned on how to improve funding opportunities for Urban Authorities across all EU policies and instruments, including Cohesion Policy, in order to meet the real needs at the local level. The Partnership will also better inform local and regional authorities on how to mobilise funding for security in public spaces and communicate towards citizens on EU funded projects.

Outputs

The Action will be primarily implemented through consultations with key decision-makers at national and EU levels (European Commission, European Parliament, Council, Committee of the Regions), advocacy activities in bilateral and multilateral meetings as well as events, and preparation of statements and positions which will inform on local practices and needs, contribute and guide key decisions on both the governance and funding front.
The Action will also foresee a careful screening of all EU funding opportunities, which can be mapped and more easily presented to interested urban authorities. Specific **deliverables** will include:

- Official letters and position papers to European and national authorities on political priorities (such as the Leipzig Charter, the Security Union Strategy) and funding issues (such as guidelines to include security in integrated urban strategies financed by ERDF and develop local action plans);
- Mapping of EU funding opportunities in the field of security for local and regional authorities
- Preparatory work for the creation of a website for the Covenant of Mayors to ensure the continuity of the Partnership in the long term;

ACTION N°3 – Evaluate the application of Artificial Intelligence technologies

Bottleneck to be addressed

To combat the threats of the 21st century to which they are exposed on the front line and to reduce their vulnerability, local and regional authorities must be able to use the last generation technological means and benefit from a legal framework favourable to innovation. New technologies also offer opportunities to better involve citizens in the protection of public spaces, to empower them and encourage security co-production and ownership.

However, several security-related technologies have been judged by national data protection authorities across the EU to be contrary to the principles of proportionality and data minimization enshrined in the GDPR (General data protection regulation), too intrusive with risks for privacy and individual freedoms and likely to create a feeling of reinforced surveillance in the population.

The Partnership would like to ensure a proper articulation between the protection against threats including terrorism, support to innovation and European technological sovereignty, respect for law, privacy and fundamental rights.

Therefore, the Partnership identified the need to carry out an analysis on safe and smart cities' approaches developed across Europe whereas a debate is on-going on the use of surveillance technologies in public spaces (for instance on facial recognition technologies).

Objective

From a **better regulation perspective**, the objective of the Action is to have an overview on legislation and existing initiatives dealing with artificial intelligence applied to security in public spaces across Europe. This should be complemented by a repository related to the Member States positions. Building on these, the Action would aim to raise awareness on concrete problems faced by local and regional authorities with the use and/or experimentation of AI technologies.
The Action also has a **better knowledge dimension** as it is related to defining a shared position by the Partnership on AI technologies.

Outputs

The Partnership will achieve the objectives above through the following activities:
- Contribution to the public consultation on Artificial intelligence by the European Commission
- A mapping exercise of relevant examples of safe and smart cities' experiments carried out in Europe (with a special focus on artificial intelligence and facial

recognition), including a compendium of EU funded projects at local and regional levels;

- Survey on the problems/bottlenecks faced by local authorities when using and experimenting artificial intelligence technologies
- Overview of legal challenges, relevant opinions issued by data protection authorities and recent national bills, including the identification of potential disparities between Member States; recommendations to support cities' innovation in the field of security
- A comparison with third countries' approaches (for instance USA, China, India, Russia).

Main **outputs** produced as result of these activities include:

- A position paper for the attention of EU institutions on the question of security-related technologies and more specifically artificial intelligence and facial recognition;
- Answer to the public consultation on artificial intelligence;
- A position paper to request a European framework to foster state-of-the-art innovation in safe and smart cities, in compliance with the law;
- A study on bottlenecks encountered by local actors.

ACTION N° 4 – Develop a capacity building training scheme about integrated urban security

Bottleneck to be addressed

Security is considered a top challenge for EU citizens, urban authorities and other relevant stakeholders are required to improve their responsiveness and ability to adopt the right, hybrid approach to solve emerging threats. Security policies implemented at local level should in fact be integrated, especially when it comes to crime prevention and promotion of social cohesion; they should be transversal to all other relevant domains, such as housing, social, youth, urban planning.

In this context, new professional profiles such as "Security and Prevention Coordinator", "Public Security Coordinator" or "Urban Security Coordinator" have emerged in local communities across Europe. However, these professionals do not have specific training in the field of crime prevention before taking on such positions, or more specifically they do not have enough knowledge on the European dimension of their work. There are few areas in public service with recognised qualifications at national level, and even fewer at European level. In addition, actors (not only institutional actors) who work on urban security and crime prevention are often not sufficiently trained to respond to new challenges, and to work in Partnership with actors from other fields in an integrated approach,

which is essential to deal with the multidisciplinary, complexity and interdisciplinary of security challenges.

Objective

The Partnership has the goal to contribute in defining a capacity building framework at EU level on integrated security activities including skills and competences for different staff profiles dealing with urban security. Such staff profiles could belong to both urban authorities or other stakeholders. Such a scheme could work as a common standard to refer when defining various profiles at local level (i.e. the urban planner, the social assistant, the local police officer, the volunteer, the member of neighbourhood watch group etc...). The development of such a capacity building scheme on integrated urban security would help all operators that, in local urban contexts, have "to deal" with security from different points of view.

Outputs

The implementation of this Action will entail the following steps:

- Define some pilot/testing profiles which will be discussed with the Partnership members based on needs at the local level;
- Testing Partners will select training targets based on the selection above. Subsequently, they will develop testing training curricula for target(s) of interest. In case of more Partners interested in the same target, the curricula will be developed jointly thus allowing a more coherent ex post evaluation;
- Share a common methodology to evaluate the training activities;
- Based on the analysis a short report should be prepared for each training in order to:
  - ➢ Implement the pilot training by interested Partnership members;
  - ➢ Produce an evaluation report including feedback actions;
  - ➢ Develop/test results from pilots such as self-assessment tools to see the level of competences.

ACTION 5 – Measure the impact of social cohesion on security in public spaces

Bottleneck to be addressed

Social cohesion measures should be part of an integrated urban security policy. Aspects of inclusion, social capital, social mobility, citizen participation, empowerment, etc. can help to create safer environments where citizens feel safe. How can urban authorities create more social cohesion and how can they, by doing so, have an impact on urban security? There is no common framework to

translate this need into concrete local security policies but also there are no standard tools to measure the impact of measures aimed at promoting social cohesion. By consequence, the results and the social impact of social cohesion initiatives and inclusion efforts or non-problem-oriented approaches are extremely difficult to show, replicate and enforce.

Objective

The aim of this action is to provide local policy makers and security managers with a method that enables them to measure the impact of local social cohesion interventions on urban security and feelings of insecurity within the local community. In particular, it has two main objectives:

- Create a common method for local security managers to measure the impact of existing local social cohesion actions on (the feelings of) insecurity in order to make visible to local decision makers what already is "good value for money;"
- Provide a new method that local security managers can implement to find new solutions for complex social or insecurity issues on which the existing projects do not seem to have an impact.

Outputs

The **first main output** of this Action will be the creation of a method that allows local authorities to measure the impact of social cohesion measures on security. To achieve this, two main steps will be undertaken:

- Mapping the existing policies regarding the reduction of feelings of insecurity at local level in 3 to 5 EU cities using as a basis the Integrated urban security policy pyramid model used in the Interreg Orpheus Project;
- Assess the impact of these policies on security in 3 to 5 cities and analyse the data collected. At least 1 initiative per city should be examined.

The **second main output** will be a new or adapted method specially to support existing policies which don't seem to have an impact on security and security perception. In that respect the Partnership will explore the applicability in EU cities of the Collective Impact Model, perform a SWOT analysis and draw some lessons from it.

ACTION 6 – Develop guidance for architectural and spatial design (security by design)

Bottleneck to be addressed

Public spaces play a vital role in the day-to-day life of citizens. However, due to their open and accessible nature, these places are particularly vulnerable to nuisances, incivilities and criminal behaviour. In recent years, natural disasters and recurrent terrorist attacks in the public sphere have more than ever exposed the intrinsic vulnerabilities of these soft targets/crowded places. Local and regional authorities across Europe are now facing the challenge of improving security in those public spaces whilst striking a balance with their fundamental liveability and inclusive character.

The lack of guidance material, including good practices and substantiated 'promotional material' that showcases the benefits of including a safety and security perspective in the planning and design phase is identified as a recurrent shortcoming.
While several initiatives have been undertaken in recent years to better secure public spaces against vehicle-ramming attacks, often these efforts have not been integrated in a holistic approach towards safety and security, and there is still a need to 'connect the dots' when it comes to the integration of prevention and security features in the structural architectural and spatial design of urban areas.

Objective

The overall objective of Action 6 is to stimulate local and regional authorities to share experiences and knowledge related to security by design and to inspire their peer authorities with innovative solutions. Particularly in a novel and innovative domain such as security by design, it is fundamental that urban authorities can exchange good practices and learn from others that face similar vulnerabilities/problems so they can foster their skills, knowledge and expertise.

While security by design measures need by default be location-specific and integrated in the larger spatial environment, outlining those considerations can serve the purpose of awareness-raising and sensitizing urban planners and designers as well as mainstreaming the principles of 'security by design' towards local and regional authorities.

The Action will, on the one hand promote the collection of relevant best practices, and on the other hand promote these and a create a space and outlets where these can be showcased, shared and made of use for other local authorities.

Outputs

The **first output** of this Action will be an inventory / resource platform regarding the protection of public spaces. A **second output** will focus on promoting and mainstreaming the notion of security by design towards urban and spatial planners and designers by creating hands-on leaflets/promotional material, to

sensitize how to include safety and security considerations into the design of urban spaces.

The Action will be implemented in 3 steps:

- Collect good practices from partners and other local authorities. This will be done through a survey and the exact methodology will be developed in close collaboration with JRC. Results of the survey will be analysed and key factors of success identified.
- Mapping relevant platforms that would best suit the aim of sharing that knowledge with LRAs. One option would be to use an existing platform or link to an existing forum in order to facilitate reaching the target audience;
- Identify *rules of thumb* which could be followed while planning and designing urban areas. These rules of thumb constituting the main guiding principles and collected referential material will be consequently illustrated in visual format and shared as inspirational material (newsletter for short-term, storage on the platform in the long term).