D1.8 HUB-IN Final clustering report

Assessing the Joint Efforts of HUB-IN, CENTRINNO, and T-Factor

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About HUB-IN

Mission

Hubs of Innovation and Entrepreneurship (HUB-IN) aim to foster innovation and entrepreneurship in Historic Urban Areas (HUAs), while preserving their unique social and cultural identity and the environment. The project adopts innovation and entrepreneurship as the main drivers of urban regeneration in HUAs and directly draws from the UNESCO concept of Historic Urban Landscapes. HUB-IN fully aligns with and contributes to strategic European policy including the international agendas for Cultural Sustainable Development (UNESCO) and Cultural Heritage Strategy (Council of Europe).

In the first stage of HUB-IN, a network of hubs for innovation and entrepreneurship will be developed in the HUAs of eight city partners (Lisbon, Slovenska Bistrica, Brasov, Nicosia, Genova, Grand Angoulême, Belfast, and Utrecht). In the second stage, the resulting methods and tools will be scaled up to a global network of HUAs in follower cities and the HUB-IN Alliance. The Hubs of Innovation and Entrepreneurship will test, demonstrate, and pilot activities through co-creation and co-design in three main clusters with the potential to deliver the sustainable transformation of HUAs: 1) Culture and Creative industries, 2) New Lifestyles and 3) Resilient and Human Connected Places.

Vision

HUB-IN expects to contribute to reverse trends of abandonment and neglect of historic heritage in a systemic way through the creation of networks of Hubs where innovation will be the main driver. The project will also have a direct impact on the creation of new sustainable opportunities for local traditional businesses and for the development of new creative skills and jobs.

Consortium Behind HUB-IN

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Executive summary

The **HUB-IN Final Clustering Report** evaluates the collaborative efforts of the **HUB-IN**, **CENTRINNO**, and **T-FACTOR** projects, collectively known as the Sister Projects (SPs)**.** These Horizon 2020-funded initiatives were developed under the **H2020-SC5-20-2019** topic, "Transforming historic urban areas and/or cultural landscapes into hubs of entrepreneurship and social and cultural integration," with the shared goal of transforming **Historic Urban Areas (HUAs)** into dynamic, sustainable hubs of innovation and entrepreneurship while preserving their cultural and historical heritage.

The collaboration between the SPs focused on co-creating innovative tools, methodologies, and best practices for the regeneration of urban areas through inclusive, culture-driven innovation. The activities were organized into three key phases:

1. **Understanding Local Ecosystems**: The first stage focused on aligning the project objectives, exploring synergies, and developing effective tools for mapping and analysing urban ecosystems. This phase laid the foundation for understanding the complex dynamics within historic urban areas.
2. **Sharing Tools and Methodologies**: The second phase concentrated on developing and refining methodologies to assess the impact of urban transformations. It emphasized the evaluation of results and the use of cutting-edge tools, such as the HUB-IN **Geo-Tool**, which integrates geospatial data on cultural heritage, economic activity, and social dynamics to support sustainable urban development.
3. **Densifying Networks of Innovation and Replication**: The third phase aimed at expanding the networks of innovation hubs across Europe. It focused on fostering the replication of successful urban regeneration models in additional cities, ensuring the scalability of these efforts across diverse urban contexts.

The joint work culminated in the creation of the **Cluster of Innovative, Inclusive, and Creative Hubs**, a network of **26 cities** and **20 additional follower cities** from the HUB-IN initiative. These cities are united by the principles expressed in the **Manifesto** developed by the Sister Projects, committing to a shared vision of innovation-driven urban regeneration.

The **HUB-IN Alliance** has greatly benefited from these joint clustering activities, which have strengthened its foundation and significantly broadened its potential for scalability. The collaboration with the Sister Projects has enriched the methodologies developed by HUB-IN, providing a robust framework for long-term sustainability, and ensuring that the innovation hubs remain relevant and impactful in the years to come.

The collaboration produced key deliverables, including a **Joint Action Plan**, the **Manifesto**, and the **Policy Report**. These documents provide actionable insights and policy recommendations aimed at urban policymakers, ranging from European institutions to national and local governments. Specifically, they guide cities in implementing innovation hubs in historic urban areas, fostering sustainable and inclusive regeneration.

The **Policy Report** outlines several key recommendations to enhance the impact of the collaboration, including:

- **Institutionalizing Knowledge Sharing**: Establishing formal mechanisms for continuous exchange of knowledge and best practices.
- **Strengthening Financial Models**: Ensuring the long-term financial viability and economic sustainability of innovation hubs.
- **Expanding Policy Advocacy**: Reinforcing the role of heritage-led regeneration in urban policies at multiple levels of governance.

Despite some challenges, particularly in synchronizing project timelines, the clustering activities presented significant opportunities for the projects to create **critical mass** through networking, mutual learning, and knowledge exchange. The cooperation between the Sister Projects and with external stakeholders opened up new avenues for future collaborations, significantly enriching the overall outcomes.

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Furthermore, the collaboration with the Sister Projects was instrumental in **refining and validating methodologies** developed by HUB-IN. This process ensured that the tools and strategies created were not only effective but also adaptable to a wide range of urban contexts.

The **HUB-IN Alliance** is now better equipped to scale its impact, thanks to the enriched methodologies, networks, and policy recommendations established through the joint clustering activities. As the project moves towards its conclusion, the foundations laid by the collaboration between the Sister Projects will continue to support the long-term sustainability of innovation hubs in historic urban areas, promoting the regeneration of these spaces in a way that is both culturally and economically sustainable.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Context and Objectives

The HUB-IN, CENTRINNO[1], and T-FACTOR [2]projects, collaborating as Sister Projects (SPs), share a common foundation as three research and innovation initiatives addressing the European challenge set by the H2020-SC5-20-2019 topic "Transforming historic urban areas and/or cultural landscapes into hubs of entrepreneurship and social and cultural integration". United by the mission of transforming historic urban areas into vibrant hubs of innovation and entrepreneurship while safeguarding their unique cultural heritage, these projects form a **Cluster of Innovative, Inclusive, and Creative Hubs**.

In this context, throughout their development, the three European projects have followed a common path of innovation—identifying best practices, co-developing methodologies, and fostering collaboration across European cities. However, their impact extends beyond their core cities, encompassing a broader network of **26 cities and 20 additional follower cities from HUB-IN** that adhere to the same principles. Through this collaborative work, the SPs are in a stronger position to amplify the impact of their solutions and validate policy recommendations at a larger scale.

Aligned around shared objectives and desired impacts, the SPs are establishing an **international platform for research, knowledge co-creation, and learning exchange**, driving new approaches and tools for the future of cities. Their commitment is reinforced by a jointly developed **manifesto based on six key principles**, through which they aim to achieve the following outcomes:

- **Innovative methods for mapping, understanding, and analysing urban contexts and assets** through collaborative and participatory approaches.
- **New solutions and tools for place-based innovation** to reactivate and regenerate urban areas, particularly in response to the abandonment and neglect of historic urban landscapes in the post-COVID-19 context.
- **The creation and densification of innovative hubs** that can be replicated across European cities, introducing alternative economic models and new approaches to fostering innovation ecosystems.
- **Recognition of the role of socially innovative start-ups, cultural and creative industries, and digital technologies**, alongside small-scale advanced manufacturing and local 'makers,' in driving urban regeneration with strong potential for replication.
- **New methodologies and approaches for impact assessment in transformative urban regeneration**, leveraging novel theories of change and systemic metrics rooted in systems thinking.

By working together within this framework, the SPs are accelerating urban innovation and ensuring that their methodologies are both effective and scalable. Their collaboration contributes not only to the transformation of historic urban areas but also to long-term policy development for **sustainable, inclusive, and creative urban regeneration** across Europe.

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[1] **CENTRINNO**: New CENTRalities in INdustrial areas as engines for inNOvation and urban transformation.

[2] **T-FACTOR**: Unleashing future-facing urban hubs through culture and creativity-led strategies of transformative time.

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Figure 1 - Cities involved as pilot sites: HUB-IN in green, CENTRINNO in blue; T-FACTOR in red
Source: Towards Innovative, Inclusive and Creative Hubs in European Cities, an Action Plan for CENTRINNO, HUB-IN and T-FACTOR, 2021

1.2. Previous Joint Deliverables and Outputs

The clustering activities have resulted in several key deliverables and outputs, including:

- **Joint Action Plan**, outlining strategic synergies and collaboration mechanisms.
- **Policy Report**, detailing recommendations for European and local policymakers on heritage-led innovation.
- **Cross-project Knowledge Exchange**, facilitating thematic discussions and co-creation sessions on urban transformation.
- **Participation in International events** for the external dissemination of the activities and results of SP´s Cluster of Innovative, Inclusive, and Creative Hubs.

This report builds on these deliverables and outputs by assessing their impact, particularly through the lens of the HUB-IN project with emphasis on the creation of HUB-IN Alliance.

2. Stages of joint activities

According to the Joint Action Plan, three stages of collaborative activities have been defined to consolidate the creation of the *Cluster of Innovative, Inclusive, and Creative Hubs*.

2.1. Understanding Local Ecosystems

The first stage focused on aligning project goals, understanding local ecosystems, and exploring synergies for innovation-driven urban regeneration. A key milestone was the **"Understanding Local Ecosystems" Thematic Webinar** on **28 April 2021**, which brought together HUB-IN, CENTRINNO, and T-Factor representatives to discuss **mapping and geospatial tools** in urban regeneration.

This event was structured into two blocks:

- **Block 1: The Role of Mapping and Geospatial Tools**
    - Presentations on HUB-IN's **Geo-Tool**, T-Factor's **Meanwhile Context Mapping**, and CENTRINNO's **Urban Ecosystem Mapping**.
    - Discussion on tool functionalities, key challenges, and required improvements.
    - Emphasis on real-time, granular data reflecting social, ecological, and economic attributes of urban areas.
- **Block 2: Collaborative Learning and Capacity Building**
    - **Data Collection Challenges**: Exploring innovative methods to collect hyper-local data and refine geospatial indicators.
    - **Building Local Capacity**: Supporting local initiatives and innovation hubs in applying mapping methodologies.
    - **From Mapping to Action**: Leveraging mapping tools to catalyse positive urban transformations and guide policy decisions.

The webinar reinforced the importance of geospatial tools in urban ecosystem mapping, emphasizing **cross-project learning and capacity-building**. For HUB-IN, a key takeaway was the potential of its [HUB-IN GeoTool](), **a** tailored geographical information tool to empower historic urban areas by integrating **cultural heritage, economic activity, and social dynamics**, thereby enhancing strategic planning and sustainable urban development.

2.2. Sharing Tools and Methodologies

The second stage of joint activities centred on **defining methodologies to achieve transformative urban impact**. This process involved three key webinars and two thematic common topics:

Impact Assessment Methodologies and Theory of Change for Urban Regeneration

- **"Regenerating Cities for the Post-Pandemic: What Counts for Transformative Impact?"** (2nd march 2022) *(External Expert Exchange)*
    - Gathered leading experts and policymakers to explore urban regeneration paradigms such as Just Cities, Productive Cities, Heritage Cities, and Climate-Neutral Cities.
    - Examined theoretical frameworks and real-world applications for measuring impact, resilience, and inclusivity.
    - Featured case studies showcasing experimental urban interventions and innovative impact assessment methods.

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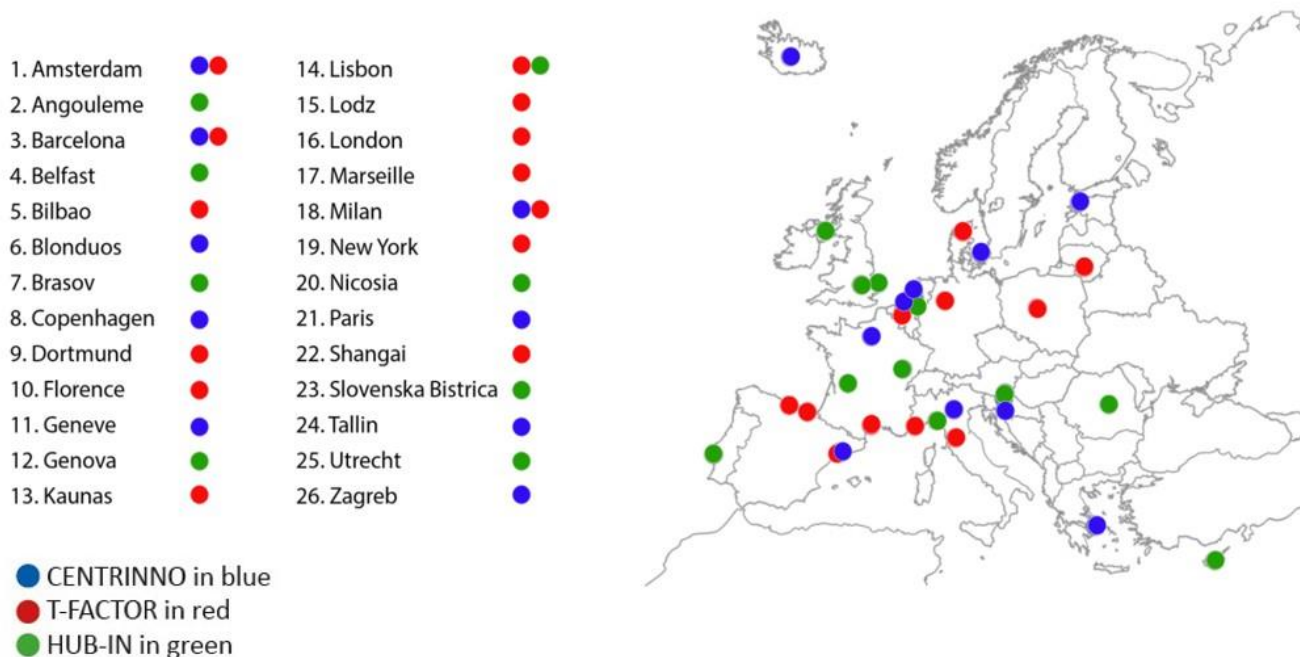*Assessing the Joint Efforts of HUB-IN, CENTRINNO, and T-Factor*

Recording link: YouTube

- **"The Hard Challenge of Assessing Transformative Impact in Urban Regeneration"** (20ᵗʰ January 2023)
  (Internal Working Session for the 3 SPs)
    - Focused on overcoming practical challenges in impact assessment.
    - Explored methodologies such as **outcome mapping** and strategic learning approaches.
    - Emphasized shifting impact evaluation from mere reporting to an **adaptive learning and improvement tool**.
  Recording link: YouTube

These exchanges were instrumental in **advancing HUB-IN's impact assessment framework**, refining the project's ability to assess urban transformations in a structured and practical manner. The discussions informed the **development of HUB-IN's logical model**[3], built on the **Theory of Change**, which underpins its impact assessment and guides key deliverables such as:

- D5.3 Quarterly Evaluation Reports
- D5.4 Final Economic, Social and Environmental Appraisal and Lessons Learned

Business and Financial models For Urban Regeneration

- "Business & Financing Models for Tomorrow's Heritage" (June 2022, New European Bauhaus Festival): This webinar explored sustainable business and financing models for cultural heritage, emphasizing the **economic viability of heritage-led regeneration**. It showcased **innovative funding mechanisms, investment strategies, and entrepreneurship models** that support creative and cultural initiatives. Featuring experts and case studies from the Sister Projects, the session provided actionable insights for cities and stakeholders seeking to ensure long-term financial sustainability in urban regeneration efforts.
    - Discussed alternative financial models tailored for heritage-driven urban transformation.
    - Highlighted successful case studies from the SPs, demonstrating innovative investment and business strategies.
    - Addressed the challenges of attracting investment while preserving cultural and social value in historic urban areas.

The **Business & Financing Models for Tomorrow's Heritage** webinar had a significant impact on the **HUB-IN project**, particularly in shaping the **Tomorrow's Heritage Paper**, a contribution by the SPs, coordinated by Heritage Europe (HUB-IN partner) as a way of highlighting the role of heritage in the themes of the New European Bauhaus. Tomorrow Heritage concept is central to HUB-IN's approach, explores the key ingredients, tools, and mechanisms necessary to create the framework conditions for **sustainable heritage-led urban regeneration**. The dissemination of this concept was an integral part of the **Action Plan with the Sister Projects**, aligning with strategic European partners and programs.

Furthermore, the webinar played a critical role in **knowledge sharing and outreach**, directly contributing to the expansion of the **HUB-IN Alliance**. It also provided valuable insights that informed key HUB-IN deliverables, including:

- **HUA Business and Financing Models Catalogue (D2.3 & D2.4)** – Documenting sustainable financing strategies for heritage innovation.

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[3] HUB-IN Logic Model: Impact assessment model developed as part of the HUB-IN framework, based on the principles of the Theory of Change. More information at: The Common Impact Assessment Framework - Hub-In

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- **HUB-IN Atlas (D2.5)** – Mapping and showcasing innovative heritage-led business models across European cities.

By linking financial sustainability and new business models with cultural heritage, the webinar strengthened HUB-IN's ability to scale its impact and support cities in developing resilient and self-sustaining **Hubs of Innovation**.

These thematic discussions enriched the collaboration by fostering knowledge exchange and refining methodologies, ensuring that each project could build upon shared insights while tailoring solutions to their respective urban contexts.

2.3. Densifying Networks of Innovation and Guiding Replication

Despite their different approaches to fostering innovation in historic urban areas, the Sister Projects (SPs) shared a common goal: **developing networks of hubs to promote creative and culture-led regeneration**.

- **CENTRINNO** focused on establishing a **FAB City Network**, promoting circular economy strategies through urban manufacturing and local production.
- **T-FACTOR** developed a **network of universities, cities, businesses, and grassroots communities**, fostering creative and collaborative placemaking in interim urban regeneration phases.
- **HUB-IN** worked on creating an **operational network of Hubs of Innovation**, implemented across **eight pilot cities**, and extending to a broader **network of 20 follower Historic Urban Areas**.

Connecting these networks significantly enhanced the **scalability and impact** of the projects. The combined reach of **46 cities (26 city pilots + 20 follower cities)**, along with their diverse ecosystems of stakeholders, enabled a broader exchange of methodologies and best practices. This collaboration reinforced the projects' ability to **test solutions, validate policy recommendations, and scale successful models**.

A key step in this phase was the **development and dissemination of policy recommendations**, synthesized into the joint publication: **"Towards Inclusive, Creative, and Innovative Hubs in European Cities – Policy Report"**. This report consolidates the projects' shared experiences and serves as a **strategic resource** for future urban innovation policies.

The **Policy Report** was structured to offer actionable insights for heritage-driven urban regeneration. Its main objectives include:

- **Strengthening culture-led urban regeneration policies** to boost local economies and promote innovation models.
- **Supporting policymakers** in recognizing cultural heritage as a key driver for circular economy and social entrepreneurship.
- **Enhancing evidence-based policymaking**, addressing regulatory, governance, funding, and civic engagement challenges.
- **Empowering stakeholders**, including European, national, and local policymakers, third-sector organizations, SMEs, and academic institutions, with practical knowledge on culture-led regeneration.

The finalization of the **Policy Report** was accompanied by a key phase of **dissemination and validation**, notably at the EWRC Session 'Achieving Climate Neutral Cities through the Regeneration of Historic Urban Areas', held in Brussels on **12 October 2023**. This session provided a platform for presenting key findings, collecting feedback from policymakers, urban practitioners, and researchers, and refining the recommendations. The insights from this discussion were integrated into the final version of the report, ensuring its **practical relevance and applicability**.

The conclusions of the Policy Report emerged from a **two-way process of knowledge exchange and application**. On one hand, the report has been shaped by the lessons of the **SP pilots,** most notably the implementation of **eight Action Plans by HUB-IN**. In these eight HUB-IN pilot cities, more than 23 complex actions developed, contributed to inform the policy report. On the other hand, this report enriched and reinforced the conclusions

of the HUB-IN, reinforcing the conclusions and recommendations of **the Leadership Guide for Historic Urban Areas (Deliverable 6.3).**

This iterative exchange ensured that the Leadership Guide provided a **practical, evidence-based framework** for cities and stakeholders looking to replicate and adapt the **HUB-IN methodologies**. The clustering activities and policy recommendations have strengthened HUB-IN's capacity to develop and sustain Innovation Hubs as key drivers of **heritage-orientated urban regeneration**. By promoting creative entrepreneurship, social inclusion and cultural vitality, these hubs play a key role in transforming historic urban areas into resilient, dynamic and **economically sustainable ecosystems** through a **structured and scalable approach**.

2.4. Joint events and activities

Below is an overview of key meetings and collaborative activities carried out as part of the clustering efforts:

Date	Description	Format / Local	Outputs	Participants
Nov 2020	Clustering Kick-off Meeting – Introduction of key themes and shared challenges.	online	Identification of cooperation priorities and exploration of potential synergies.	SP´Project Coordinators, EC Representatives.
Dec 2020 - Jan 2021	Several Working Sessions – Definition of methodologies and approaches.	online	Common framework for innovation in historic urban areas.	Research teams from SPs.
Mar 2022	"Regenerating Cities for the Post-Pandemic: What Counts for Transformative Impact?"	online	Impact Assessment – Theory of Change External expert exchange of knowledge, case studies discussions.	Local authorities, academic experts, entrepreneurs.
Jan 2023	"The Hard Challenge of Assessing Transformative Impact in Urban Regeneration"	online	Impact Assessment – Theory of Change Internal Working Session for the 3 SPs	Research teams from SPs
June, 2022	Joint networking session "Just, Productive, Creative and Climate-Neutral cities: R&I approaches towards sustainable urban transformation", co-organised by CENTRINNO, DG-RTD, HUB-IN, and T-Factor at the 11th World Urban Forum.	Katowice, PL	Public presentation of the Sister Project´s Manifesto. Focus on the regeneration of urban places through hubs or 'creative space' that hold a potential as cultural, social, economic, and environmental innovation.	Policymakers, city representatives, environmental and urban planning sector´ stakeholders
June, 2022	"Business & financing models for tomorrow's heritage" A webinar organized by HUB-IN, CENTRINNO and T-Factor as	online	Three different approaches to business models and financing systems will be presented, stemming from sister projects HUB-	Policymakers, city representatives, environmental and urban planning sector´ stakeholders

	part of the New European Bauhaus Festival 2022		IN, CENTRINNO and T-Factor. The cases were wrapped in a single fictional storyline that develops into the event programme.	
Oct 2023	European Week of Regions and Cities – Panel discussion featuring insights from all three projects. Session 'Achieving Climate Neutral Cities through the Regeneration of Historic Urban Areas"	Brussels, BE	Policy recommendations, dissemination of project findings.	Policymakers, city representatives, cultural, environmental, and urban planning sector´ stakeholders.
Feb 2024	Final Policy Workshop – Synthesis of lessons learned and policy recommendations.	online	Consolidation of best practices, strategic guidelines for future collaborations.	Representatives from all SPs, policymakers, external experts.

These events played a significant role in strengthening cross-project collaboration and aligning strategic outcomes.

Fig. 2 - Joint networking session "Just, Productive, Creative and Climate-Neutral cities: R&I approaches towards sustainable urban transformation" (top) and for the Manifesto's presentation (bottom), 11th World Urban Forum, June 2022.

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Fig. 3 – EWRC Session "Achieving Climate Neutral Cities through the Regeneration of Historic Urban Areas" (top). Group Photo from speakers´ session (bottom) ,

3. The impact of joint activities on the foundations of HUB-IN Alliance

The **HUB-IN Alliance** emerged as a key instrument of the HUB-IN project, ensuring the **continuity and geographic scalability** of innovation-led regeneration processes beyond the project's timeline. It consolidates methodologies, networks, and policy frameworks to sustain innovation hubs in historic urban areas (HUAs). Through collaboration with Sister Projects, HUB-IN established shared methodologies, policy recommendations, and an extended stakeholder network, laying the foundation for the HUB-IN Alliance as a long-term driver of heritage-led urban transformation.

Joint activities across projects fostered **knowledge exchange, capacity building, and strategic alignment**, reinforcing the Alliance in key areas:

A Shared Vision and Strategic Roadmap

The clustering efforts led to the **Joint Manifesto** and **Action Plan**, aligning heritage-led innovation strategies across projects. The **HUB-IN Leadership Guide** encapsulated policy recommendations and key learnings, providing a structured framework for cities to develop and sustain innovation hubs as drivers of long-term heritage-led regeneration. Additionally, the clustering efforts contributed to enriching its content and lessons learned, making it a fundamental document for ensuring the continuity of the HUB-IN Alliance beyond the project's timeline.

Expanding the HUB-IN Network

Collaboration extended beyond pilot cities, incorporating **20 additional follower cities**, scaling HUB-IN's impact. The clustering efforts were instrumental in advancing and spreading the core principles of the HUB-IN Alliance by fostering cooperation between cities and key stakeholders. Through exchanges with Sister Projects (SPs), these efforts significantly contributed to refining methodologies for impact assessment, including the development of HUB-IN's logic model based on the Theory of Change. Additionally, they played a vital role in designing innovative business and financing models, ensuring the sustainability of historic urban innovation hubs and securing the long-term viability and expansion of the Alliance beyond the project's official duration.

Policy Influence and Governance Models

A key outcome was the **Policy Report: Towards Inclusive, Creative, and Innovative Hubs in European Cities**, which consolidated policy recommendations at international, national, and local levels. It reinforced the strategic importance of creating a network of innovation hubs, encapsulated in the HUB-IN Leadership Guide. By distilling lessons learned from clustering efforts with Sister Projects, the report strengthened the case for the HUB-IN Alliance as a long-term mechanism for scaling and sustaining heritage-led urban regeneration beyond the project's duration.

Sustaining Impact Through Institutional and Financial Models

The Alliance is designed as a **stakeholder-driven network**, securing institutional backing, exploring funding avenues like the NEB Facility (2025-2027), and strengthening ties with European urban innovation networks. This approach has been reinforced by the clustering efforts with Sister Projects (SPs), which have provided a strong foundation for knowledge exchange, policy alignment, and shared financial strategies. These collaborations have empowered the Alliance to scale up its methodologies and ensure the long-term sustainability of innovation hubs across diverse urban contexts.

3.1. Future Directions

The HUB-IN Alliance will prioritize:

- **Governance and membership models** for long-term sustainability.
- **Financial resilience**, leveraging diverse funding sources.
- **Digital resources**, enhancing accessibility to urban innovation tools.

The HUB-IN Alliance has benefited from joint clustering efforts, which have strengthened its foundation and broadened its scalability. The collaboration with Sister Projects has enriched its methodologies and provided a solid framework for long-term sustainability. Rooted in cooperation and shared knowledge, the Alliance will continue to expand heritage-led urban transformation. By applying lessons learned and policy insights, developing a 'knowledge transfer' process and creating an accessible online, it supports cities in embedding innovation hubs as key tools for cultural, social, and economic regeneration, ensuring they remain central to **heritage-led regeneration** and contribute to resilient and thriving urban spaces.

4. Lessons Learned and Recommendations

4.1. Strengths of the Collaboration

The collaborative efforts between HUB-IN and Sister Projects demonstrated the value of knowledge-sharing and co-development. Key strengths included:

- **Interdisciplinary expertise**, enabling a holistic approach to urban regeneration.
- **Scalability of methodologies**, proving adaptability across diverse historic urban areas.
- **Strong stakeholder engagement**, fostering a broad network of committed partners.

4.2. Challenges Encountered

Despite the successes, several challenges emerged:

- **Alignment of project timelines**, requiring adaptive strategies to synchronize activities.
- **Balancing general and specific recommendations**, ensuring both scalability and local relevance.
- **Ensuring long-term collaboration and sustainability**, necessitating continued funding and institutional support.

4.3. Strategic Recommendations

To maximize impact and sustain collaboration, the following strategic recommendations are proposed:

- **Institutionalize knowledge-sharing**, establishing formal mechanisms for ongoing exchange.
- **Strengthen financial models**, ensuring long-term economic sustainability of innovation hubs.
- **Expand policy advocacy**, reinforcing the role of heritage-led regeneration in urban policies.

5. Conclusions and Next Steps

The HUB-IN clustering efforts have significantly contributed to the broader European discourse on heritage-led urban regeneration. The collaboration with Sister Projects has reinforced methodologies, expanded knowledge-sharing, and facilitated the co-creation of policy recommendations that enhance the sustainability of urban innovation hubs. These efforts have proven that interdisciplinary and cross-sector partnerships are essential to scaling up innovation-driven regeneration models.

As the HUB-IN concludes, key lessons highlight the need for continued institutional support, adaptive funding mechanisms, and the integration of digital tools to facilitate broader stakeholder engagement. The ability to translate knowledge into action will be crucial in ensuring that the methodologies developed remain relevant and scalable across different urban contexts.

The next steps include:

- **Strengthening governance structures**, ensuring that collaboration mechanisms between cities and stakeholders remain active.
- **Securing diverse funding sources**, fostering financial resilience to sustain ongoing and future initiatives.
- **Enhancing knowledge-sharing platforms**, ensuring accessibility and continuity in the dissemination of best practices and policy insights.

By building on these foundations, the outcomes of the HUB-IN project will continue to inform and inspire future initiatives, ensuring that historic urban areas remain vibrant, innovative, and inclusive hubs of cultural and economic activity. The HUB-IN Alliance will play a crucial role in maintaining this momentum, fostering long-term collaboration, and scaling up the methodologies developed through the project. By leveraging ongoing knowledge exchange, institutional partnerships, and adaptable governance models, the Alliance will ensure that the impact of HUB-IN extends beyond the project's initial scope, supporting sustainable urban regeneration well into the future.