

URBREATH 101139711

Systemic Integration of Transformative Technical and Nature-based Solutions to Improve Climate Neutrality of European Cities and Regions and tackle Climate Change: the URBreath Approach



D7.2 European Nature-based Solutions Manager Certificates

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	- Evaluation of the Training Mission and implications for future similar programs
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Disclaimer

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Executive Summary

Against the backdrop of accelerating climatic and social challenges, global urbanisation requires sustainable development approaches that are cost-efficient, resource-efficient, and inclusive. Delivering such approaches necessitates the expertise of interdisciplinary professionals. The URBREATH project aims to contribute to this capacity-building by training municipal representatives to become European Nature-based Solutions Managers.

This document summarises the work conducted under Task 7.1, as defined in the Grant Agreement, which focuses on the certification of representatives from nine European municipalities to become European Nature-based Solutions Manager. For this purpose, an 11-month Training Mission was designed, beginning with an organisational kick-off and an introduction to the concept of Nature-based Solutions in January 2025 and concluding with a final exam and feedback session in November 2025. The Training Mission consists of four key thematic modules, namely (1) Visioning, Spatial Planning & Governance; (2) Stakeholder Engagement; (3) Innovative Procurement & Financing; and (4) Digital Technologies. Together, they equip participants with the skills required to act as change agents within their municipalities, thereby supporting the sustainable transformation and long-term resilience of European cities.

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List of Terms and Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
AR	Augmented Reality
FHG	Fraunhofer Institute for Industrial Engineering IAO
LC	The Lisbon Council
NbS	Nature-based Solution
USTUTT	University of Stuttgart
POLIMI	Politecnico di Milano
SPG	South Pole Group
TAL	Tallinn University of Technology
VR	Virtual Reality
WP	Work Package

1 Introduction: Certifying European NbS Manager

Against the backdrop of accelerating climatic and social challenges, global urbanisation requires sustainable development approaches that are cost-efficient, resource-efficient, and inclusive in order to gain social acceptance and thus contribute to the sustainable emergence of the cities of tomorrow. Due to the complexity of this far-reaching task, the development and implementation of such approaches therefore require the expertise of interdisciplinary professionals who pursue a holistic, integrative approach in their work. These internationally sought-after experts are characterised by their strong theoretical expertise and their practically proven and locally adapted know-how.

Aligned with strategic objectives of the Horizon Europe framework and overarching strategies like the net-zero cities mission and the European Green Deal, the URBREATH project aims to contribute to this capacity-building by equipping cities and their representatives with frameworks and tools for planning, effectively realising and financing re-naturing solutions, ensuring social acceptance, scalability as well as long-term financial sustainability through reflexive learning and knowledge sharing between participating cities. In accordance with this objective, an EU-wide Training Mission was set up as part of WP7 which aims to gather and share knowledge created throughout and outside the project and transfer it to project partners and partner cities using innovative methods. The Training Mission aims to train up to four employees from each city to become Certified European Nature-based Solutions Manager. As local change agents, they will promote the sustainable development of their cities while also disseminating their expertise in the context of globalisation and international knowledge exchange.

1.1 Purpose and Scope of D7.2

Against this background, deliverable D7.2 documents the design, implementation and outcomes of the Training Mission. On the one hand, it presents the approach and methodology used in designing and implementing the Training Mission. On the other hand, this report contains the results of the online learning activities for up to four employees from the participating cities to become Certified European Nature-based Solutions Managers. Moreover, conclusions and lessons learned, based on the feedback received, are also included in the report and should be used for improving the exploitation effort in other urban areas in the EU. This deliverable is linked to T7.1.

1.2 Approach for Work Package and Relation to other Work Packages and Deliverables

This deliverable is part of WP7 “Scaling up, out and deep through knowledge transfer, capacity building and financial sustainability” and focuses not only on synthesising the knowledge regarding capacity building and financial sustainability gained from the Training Mission, which results primarily from the knowledge interaction between cities and partner organisations, but also on proposals for how this knowledge can be used in other work packages and in the field of sustainable urban development. The deliverable is linked to task T7.1.1 which, as already explained, involves the certification of representatives of 9 European cities as European Nature-based Solutions Managers. Therefore, the primary objective of the Training Mission is to create a solid foundation of knowledge and practical skills that can

be applied to real-world scenarios. This is achieved by not only addressing quantitative financial and procurement challenges but also navigating qualitative factors such as governance and public participation, which are crucial for the successful implementation of NbS. In addition, the integration of digital technologies improves the capacity for effective planning, execution and monitoring of NbS projects. On this basis, the four modules were identified as relevant based on extensive literature research and discussions with practitioners and were subsequently agreed upon in consultation with the participating partner organisations in the Grant Agreement. The content of the modules is also based on intensive literature research and the expertise of the organisations organising the respective modules.

In order to be able to align theory and practice in the form of case studies presented by guest lecturers, after all, the Training Mission goes beyond URBREATH and includes best practice knowledge on NbS projects at European level, the cities' experiences with regard to the four modules were collected as part of three tasks preceding task T7.1.1 from other work packages. The information and data provided by the Frontrunner and Follower Cities is primarily concerning their status quo, their previous NbS experience, barriers to implementation and general expectations from URBREATH Training Mission. This data is based on a screening of co-creation sessions realised in the context of WP2, one-to-one meetings with the different climate zones corresponding to the Frontrunner and Follower Cities held in the context of WP5, and the project overview presentations provided and updated by each partner city. Based on this, best practices were identified, theoretically framed and presented during the sessions within the framework of the four thematically different modules, so that participating cities were prepared for implementation and up-scaling of the developed knowledge.

This deliverable thus provides the starting point and a reference for further deliverables within the scope of WP7. The deliverables taking D7.2 as their starting point or reference are D7.3, the "Follower Cities Project Development Report- V1", D7.4, the "Follower Cities Project Development Report – V2", and finally D7.10, the "Follower Cities Roadmap".

1.3 Methodology and Structure of the Deliverable

This deliverable was mainly written based on information gathered during the design phase of the Training Mission. The results of the monthly task lead meetings were primarily used for this purpose, ultimately forming the basis for the administrative and content structure of the programme. This was an iterative process, as the individual modules were designed by different partners, who were able to continuously revise their own designs through regular exchanges and feedback obtained from the participants in May. This also means that the teaching and learning experiences gained during and after the Training Mission also form the basis of this deliverable.

Accordingly, chapter 2 contains information on the preparation, organisation and implementation of the Training Mission. First, subchapter 2.1 presents the timeline and the partner organisations involved in designing the Training Mission. Subchapter 2.2 provides information on the origin and number of participants, as well as the number of participants who were certified at the end. Subsequently, subchapter 2.3 first explains the procedure for designing the modules and learning objectives, followed by

a description of the prototypical structure and sequence of a single session. Alongside this, the individuals from the partner organisations involved in setting up and conducting the sessions are introduced. Information on the learning materials, the final examination and the certificates is also provided. The following subchapter 2.4 first presents the learning and training objectives of the Training Mission, which form the basis for the learning objectives of the individual modules and framing sessions, which are also outlined below. Chapter 3 begins by summarising the organisation and course of the Training Mission, before going on to discuss the feedback generated twice during the Training Mission with a view to future programmes of a similar nature. Chapter 4 contains complementary photographs of the Training Mission and individual sample sessions.

2 About the Training Mission: European NbS Certification

As explained in subchapter 1.2, the content structure of the Training Mission was preceded by administrative preparations, during which the timeline (see 2.1), organisational (see 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4) as well as content-related modalities (see 2.2 and 2.4) were agreed upon on the basis of literature research, expert discussions and results from WP2, WP5 and the city presentations. This formed the framework within which the individual module coordinators planned their modules and sessions. Even during the Training Mission, the module coordinators met monthly as part of a task lead meeting to ensure that the content built on each other as much as possible and to clarify organisational issues.

2.1 Timeline and Collaborators

The Training Mission kicked off with the consortium meeting in Madrid in October 2024, with training sessions starting on 16 January 2025 and ending with a feedback session on 20 November 2025. The structure of the Training Mission and the content of the individual modules were designed collaboratively by Fraunhofer/USTUTT, Polimi, SPG and TAL. The following partners were responsible for the individual modules:

- FHG/USTUTT: Framing Sessions (Outline, Introduction, Synthesis, Feedback)
- POLIMI: Visioning, Spatial Planning & Governance
- FHG/USTUTT: Stakeholder Engagement
- SPG: Innovative Procurement & Financing
- TAL: Digital Technologies

In addition to the training sessions, several site visits were planned according to the Grant Agreement and conducted with the partner cities. The site visits took place in Madrid during the consortium meeting in October 2024, in Cluj-Napoca in May 2025, and in Tallinn in October 2025. However, due to financial limitations, it was not possible to guarantee that all participants in the Training Mission would be able to take part in the site visits, as not all participants are funded by the URBREATH project. Materials for the site visits and for the individual sessions were prepared and provided by the respective module coordinators (for more information, see 2.3 ‘Practical Information about the Training Mission’).

Table 1: Training Mission Schedule & Timeline

Date	Creator	Hour	Topic
October 2024	ALL	-	Consortium Meeting Madrid, Site Visit
16 January	FHG/USTUTT	11 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.	Organisation & Planning, Virtual Networking
23 January	FHG/USTUTT	11 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.	Introduction to the Field of NbS
06 February	Polimi	11 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.	Introduction: Urban Nature Plans, Regulatory Frameworks, Governance & Planning Processes

13 February	Polimi	11 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.	Stakeholders Engagement
20 February	Polimi	11 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.	Preparation: Cross-departmental Collaboration & Co-creation Processes
27 February	Polimi	11 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.	Action Planning: Actions, Responsibilities, Communication & Conflict Management
10 April	FHG/USTUTT	11 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.	Introducing the Basics of Stakeholder Engagement
24 April	FHG/USTUTT	11 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.	Prioritisation & Analysis of Stakeholder Groups
08 May	FHG/USTUTT	11 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.	Strategies & Methods for Successful Stakeholder Engagement
15 May	FHG/USTUTT	11 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.	Implementation, Monitoring & Continuous Improvement, Evaluation
05 June	SPG	11 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.	Sources of Financing for Urban NbS
12 June	SPG	11 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.	Forms of Financing for Urban NbS
19 June	SPG	11 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.	Challenges & Strategies to Mobilise Financing
26 June	SPG	11 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.	Innovative Approaches to Procurement of NbS in Cities
04 September	TAL	11 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.	Introduction: Digital Twins, Data & Visualisation
11 September	TAL	11 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.	Digital Tools for Participatory Planning & Collaboration
18 September	TAL	11 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.	Digital Tools Used in Tallinn Detailed Planning
02 October	TAL	11 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.	Estonia's National Digital Twin & the E-Construction Platform
23 October	FHG/USTUTT	11 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.	Training Mission Synthesis Module 1 & 2
30 October	FHG/USTUTT	11 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.	Training Mission Synthesis Module 3 & 4

13 November	ALL	11 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.	Final Test
20 November	FHG/USTUTT	11 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.	Feedback Session

2.2 Participants

In the 11 months of the training, 31 people attended the training sessions regularly in order to receive the certificate at the end. In particular, they belonged to the following public administrations:

- Cluj-Napoca: 4 participants
- Madrid: 3 participants
- Pilsen: 2 participants
- Leuven: 4 participants
- Parma: 5 participants
- Tallinn: 5 participants
- Athens: 3 participants
- Aarhus: 2 participants
- Kajaani: 3 participants

19 participants decided to take the final exam on 13 November 2025, all of whom passed successfully and were consequently certified. This results in the following number of certified European Nature-based Solutions Manager in each of the cities:

- Cluj-Napoca: 3 European NbS Manager
- Madrid: 3 European NbS Manager
- Pilsen: 2 European NbS Manager
- Leuven: 2 European NbS Manager
- Parma: 1 European NbS Manager
- Tallinn: 3 European NbS Manager
- Athens: 2 European NbS Manager
- Aarhus: 0 European NbS Manager
- Kajaani: 3 European NbS Manager

2.3 Practical Information about the Training Mission

At the inaugural meeting on 16 January 2025, the concept underlying the Training Mission was explained, the overarching learning targets (see 2.4) were defined, the module coordinators and instructors were introduced (see Table 2 below), and participants were instructed to network creating and using virtual business cards. The second session (23 January 2025) served as an introduction to the field of Nature-based Solutions in order to ensure that all participants had the same level of knowledge. These two sessions, together with the synthesis sessions in October and the feedback session in November, form the framework sessions that provide a starting point for the design of the four modules.

Based on this, the individual sessions of the four modules were organised as follows (see annex for illustration):

- Online via Microsoft Teams, each session was recorded and shared on Microsoft Teams (folder called 'URBREATH Training Mission') with all participants after the session with the goal of making available the session to those that for external or private reasons could not attend the respective session.
- 90 - 120 minutes.
- day: Thursday 11 a.m. - 12.30 p.m. CET.
- Prototypical structure: input by module coordinator, case studies by cities or experts, Q&A.

Table 2: Module Coordinators & Respective Organisations

Visioning, Spatial Planning & Governance - Polimi	Stakeholder Engagement - FHG/USTUTT	Innovative Procurement and Financing - SPG	Digital Technologies - TAL
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Apart from the framing sessions, the individual sessions were usually introduced with brief input from the module coordinators, in which theoretical and conceptual foundations analogous to the session topic were presented. The length of the input varied depending on the module and session, with case studies from cities or experts, constituting the main part of the sessions, usually presented after the

input (the module coordinators contacted cities and experts, e.g. based on key questions). The case studies served to expand and illustrate theoretical and conceptual knowledge, to enhance cooperation and knowledge exchange across Europe, and to share best practice knowledge in the fields of (1) Visioning, Spatial Planning & Governance; (2) Stakeholder Engagement; (3) Innovative Procurement & Financing; (4) Digital Technologies.

The course materials were made available to the city representatives for each session by the respective module coordinators. The course materials included the respective slides from the module coordinators (e.g. organisation, modalities & input), the bibliography, slides from the case studies and invited experts, Mentimeter results, and the recordings. To help participants prepare for the test, the four module coordinators compiled a reader containing the key content of the four modules of the Training Mission and made it available to all participants approximately three weeks before the exam.

A final exam session comprising single-choice and open questions was conducted on 13 November 2025. The exam was conducted online via Microsoft Forms and included questions on the four modules. After the start of the exam, participants had 90 minutes to answer the questions. To pass, at least 50% of the points (80 points in total) had to be achieved. Following the results from the test, a finale certificate of completion (see Figure 1) was issued to all successful participants via email together with the exam results. The certificate contains a list of the modules and teaching unites completed, the signatures of all module coordinators and was customised for each city according to a template, with images from the respective cities depicting NbS filling the upper quarter of the certificate.



Figure 1: European Nature-based Solutions Manager Certificate Template

2.4 Learning Targets of each of the Modules and Framing Sessions

The ultimate common goal was to equip up to four (exceptions exist, see 2.2) members of staff per pilot city with skills and knowledge to become certified European Nature-based Solutions Manager. Six overarching certification objectives have been defined, which also form the guideline for the structure of the individual modules:

1. Capacity building: strengthen problem-solving capacity and ability to act of participants.
2. Skill enhancement: increase performance and effectiveness of individuals.
3. Policy integration: solve complex problems which cannot be tackled by a single policy area or authority.
4. Networking and knowledge exchange: open new opportunities, improve chances, receive support, promote innovation & creativity and improve problem-solving skills.
5. Interdisciplinary collaboration: combine unique skills, perspectives and knowledge from different fields and disciplines to solve complex problems.
6. Sustainability and resilience exchange: improve ability of organisations, communities and societies to adapt to change and act sustainably in the long term.

These six overarching learning targets encompass the sub-goals of the individual modules. The sub-goals were developed primarily by the respective module coordinators in consultation with the coordinators of the other modules. Accordingly, the number and form of sub-goals varies depending on the module. The sub-goals were defined as individual learning targets for each session or guiding questions for each session (depending on the module, see 2.4.1-2.4.6).

2.4.1 Introduction to the Field of NbS

The introduction aimed to bring all participants to the same level of knowledge and ensure success by closing knowledge gaps. To this end, three learning targets/guiding questions were defined:

1. How can NbS be defined and what criteria can be used to distinguish NbS from related concepts?
2. In which areas of application are NbS used against the backdrop of pressing socio-ecological challenges?
3. How is the use of NbS evaluated by research?

2.4.2 Visioning, Spatial Planning & Governance

At the end of this module, the learners should be able to consider different approaches, methods and tools in preparing Urban Nature Plans by:

1. Understanding and designing a long-term vision.
2. Designing and organising co-creation and cross-departmental collaboration processes.
3. Developing communication strategies and managing conflicts for integrating NbS and renaturing policies and actions in urban contexts.

Based on this, sub-goals were defined for sessions 2 to 4 of the first module:

Session 2 - Stakeholders Engagement

1. Designing long-term vision for NbS.
2. Organising co-creation and cross-departmental collaboration.
3. Developing communication and conflict management strategies.

Session 3 - Preparation: Cross-departmental Collaboration & Co-creation

1. Explain how co-creation approaches can strengthen collaboration within local governments.
2. Identify methods to improve stakeholder alignment through participatory processes.
3. Demonstrate how collective ownership and experimentation can contribute to the transformation of urban spaces.

Session 4 - Action Planning: Actions, Responsibilities, Communication & Conflict Management

1. Describe how effective communication and transparent decision-making can prevent polarisation and build trust.
2. Apply strategies for early stakeholder involvement to enhance collaboration across diverse groups.
3. Explain how constructive dialogue can transform conflicts into opportunities for shared learning and innovation.

2.4.3 Stakeholder Engagement

Five overarching learning targets structured the four sessions and the corresponding sub-goals:

1. Understanding how different strategies, (exchange) platforms and toolkits foster stakeholder engagement.
2. Gaining experience in using strategies, (exchange) platforms and toolkits.
3. Introduce participants to concepts of stakeholder engagement in other EU cities.
4. Introduce strategies, (exchange) platforms and toolkits + holistic overview.
5. Engage stakeholders to support effective implementation of NbS.

Based on this, key questions to be answered were defined as sub-goals for the four sessions:

Session 1 - Introducing the Basics of Stakeholder Engagement

1. Why does stakeholder engagement matter, and how can we recognise its impact?
2. How do we define and understand stakeholder engagement in urban development?
3. What are the major difficulties and opportunities raised by the engagement of citizens/stakeholders?

Session 2 – Prioritisation & Analysis of Stakeholder Groups

1. Why analyse and prioritise stakeholders?
2. How to identify, prioritise and analyse stakeholders?
3. What tools are there to analyse stakeholders and their interests?

Session 3 - Strategies & Methods for Successful Stakeholder Engagement

1. How to define 'successful' stakeholder engagement?

2. What levels and methods of stakeholder engagement are there?
3. What strategies and practical approaches can help to achieve successful stakeholder engagement?

Session 4 – Implementation, Monitoring & Continuous Improvement:

1. What participation forms support effective and inclusive stakeholder engagement?
2. What methods or criteria can be used to monitor stakeholder engagement processes and their success?
3. How can evaluation and continuous improvement cycles enhance long-term quality and impact?

2.4.4 Innovative Procurement & Financing

Four overarching learning targets structured the four sessions and the corresponding sub-goals:

1. Learn about innovative NbS finance opportunities and strategies, and innovative ways for procurement of NbS.
2. Financial mechanisms: exploration of diverse funding models and sources.
3. Private sector engagement: how to attract investment and foster collaborations.
4. Case studies and best practices from the URBREATH pilot cities and other cities: learn from successful NbS financing examples.

Based on this, sub-goals were defined for sessions 1 to 4 of the third module:

Session 1 - Sources of Financing for Urban NbS

1. Gain understanding of various sources of finance, specific to urban greening.

Session 2 - Forms of Financing for Urban NbS

1. Understand in what forms finance for urban NbS might come and what are the pros and cons of each form.

Session 3 - Challenges & Strategies to Mobilise Financing

1. Expand your understanding of challenges and strategies to mobilise finance.

Session 4 - Innovative Approaches to Procurement of NbS in Cities

1. Learn innovative approaches to procurement linked to NbS.

2.4.5 Digital Technologies

Five overarching learning targets structured the four sessions and the corresponding sub-goals:

1. Understanding how more inclusive and democratic processes support finding solutions to challenges in the field of NbS, climate change adaptation and planning.
2. Gaining experience in Virtual Reality (VR), Augmented Reality (AR) and Urban Digital Twins for NbS.
3. Collaboration and stakeholder engagement in NbS.
4. Scenario visualisation in VR.
5. NbS and Citizen Science.

Based on this, key questions to be answered were defined as sub-goals for the four sessions:

Session 1 - Introduction: Digital Twins, Data & Visualisation

1. How can digital twins improve public participation and decision-making in cities?
2. What are the main challenges and risks associated with using highly realistic visualisations in digital twins?
3. What conditions are most important for ensuring that digital twins are adopted in inclusive and democratic ways?

Session 2 - Digital Tools for Participatory Planning & Collaboration

1. What three digital tools and techniques can support stakeholder engagement?
2. How do digital tools improve participation and communication among stakeholders?
3. What are some limitations or challenges associated with using digital participation tools?

Session 3 - Digital Tools Used in Tallinn Detailed Planning

1. What digital platforms and tools are used to support public engagement?
2. How does Tallinn integrate physical and digital methods in participations?
3. How are emerging technologies reshaping participatory processes?

Session 4 - Estonia's National Digital Twin & the E-Construction Platform

1. What is the purpose of Estonia's national digital twin?
2. How does the e-Construction Platform integrate with Estonia's digital twin?
3. What types of data and registries are linked within Estonia's digital twin?
4. What are the main challenges for further development of Estonia's digital twin?

2.4.6 Synthesis Sessions

No learning objectives were defined for the two synthesis sessions, as these serve to repeat the four modules. Accordingly, two modules were repeated per session, with the module leaders reviewing key content/concepts in preparation for the exam and clarifying any questions participants had.

3 Conclusions and Lessons Learned

This document summarises how the Training Mission was planned, prepared and realised in order to certify 19 representatives (out of 31 participants) of nine European cities as European Nature-based Solutions Manager participating in the Training Mission. The planning started in early 2024, with planning and preparation intensifying following the kick-off in Madrid in October 2024. The module coordinators met monthly during task lead meetings to discuss learning targets, teaching format, scheduling, teaching methods and the module content so that the framing sessions could begin in January 2025.

Starting from a collectively shared knowledge base, participants were taught exam-relevant knowledge in four thematically different modules between February 2025 and September 2025, which was then reviewed in two synthesis sessions in October and tested in a final exam in November. The four modules covered the following topics:

1. Visioning, Spatial Planning & Governance
2. Stakeholder Engagement
3. Innovative Procurement & Financing
4. Digital Technologies

Each module consisted of four sessions. Each session was held online via Microsoft Teams on Thursdays from 11 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. CET and lasted 90 to 120 minutes. The sessions were recorded and shared on Microsoft Teams with all participants after the session. The prototypical structure of the sessions was: input by module coordinator, case studies by cities or experts, Q&A.

The training mission was evaluated by participants for the first time in May 2025 upon completion of the second module. In November 2025, one week after the final exam, participants were given the opportunity to provide feedback on the entire Training Mission via Microsoft Forms.

The evaluation in May revealed that there is consensus that the sessions were well planned and organised and that the training materials were helpful and relevant. However, one person (out of twelve who filled out the evaluation form) reported having issues accessing all the documents on Microsoft Teams. Concerning the organisation of content, the learning objectives were clearly communicated and aligned with the content. Moreover, the module coordinator's communication style was generally well liked, although participants remarked that lecturers should avoid reading directly from slides. In addition, the scheduling (dates and times), the frequency of the sessions, the duration of each session and the number of sessions per module were evaluated as appropriate. Only one person commented that the sessions occasionally fell on bank holidays, however, considering the international nature of the Training Mission, this may be unavoidable, and the person still joined the sessions.

Nevertheless, the evaluation revealed subtle discrepancies between the participants' expectations and the Training Mission. Regarding the review of input, the evaluation showed that while the cities experiences and input were very well liked, the more interactive parts of the session (e.g. discussions and group work) need adjustment to allow for more participation. It was also reported that the theoretical

framework of certain sessions should be better developed, as participants prefer research-based, university-style sessions with practical insights. To this end, it was suggested that experts from outside the URBREATH consortium could be involved. This allows more urban topics to be addressed, complementing the main themes of the sessions.

The feedback provided in November (seven people completed the feedback form) essentially confirms the feedback from May. Principally, the organisation, administration, availability of teaching staff, the content and structure of the reader for exam preparation, and the combination of theory and practice are praised. However, there have been complaints that the connection to NbS was not always present or obvious, especially since the Training Mission aimed to highlight possible synergies between NbS and topics addressed in the four modules in order to support sustainable urban development. It was also noted that more information should have been provided on specific solutions that are suitable for NbS implementation under different conditions. This corresponds with the feedback received in May that there are minor discrepancies between participants' expectations and the content of the Training Mission. Furthermore, it was also suggested that, in addition to online meetings and site visits, further face-to-face meetings would be ideal in order to exchange experiences in person and jointly explore how NbS works. As not all participants were funded by the project, this was not possible. Ultimately, it was noted by one participant that the final exam was difficult to complete in its current form, as too much was required in 90 minutes, and, according to this person, the exam questions were more focused on knowledge reproduction than on understanding and application.

The evaluation and the experiences gained during the Training Mission have implications for the format and future design of similar supranational training programmes. First of all, the overall organisation of the sessions could remain unchanged, especially in terms of format or duration, as 90 to 120 minutes are considered sufficient. Nevertheless, when planning future projects and training programmes, it should be considered that knowledge exchange and transfer thrive on encounters, and future projects should therefore be allocated an appropriate budget to enable such encounters and full funding for all participants. On the one hand, this makes it easier to gather information about participants' expectations and prior knowledge across cities, thereby reducing discrepancies between content and expectations. On the other hand, this could also promote partnerships, as already explained, the Training Mission provided a suitable framework for this by creating virtual business cards, that turn local change agents into global change agents. Moreover, feedback indicates that further standardisation and uniformity in the organisation and implementation should be considered in order to ensure qualitative comparability between the modules. A uniform approach should also be considered with regard to the case studies and the invited experts, e.g. superordinate coordination of who is going to be invited, a uniform template for the case studies, a detailed record of the content provided by the experts, etc. Additionally, it must be ensured that all participants have access to the necessary materials and information, which is why these should be made available simultaneously via several platforms (e.g. Teams, e-mail, etc.). Finally, the participation formats within the sessions need to be reconsidered. To this end, additional formats provided by the technology used should be integrated in a didactically meaningful way, e.g. breakout rooms or Mentimeter, which enable the exchange of knowledge and experience in

a protected way. Anonymous exchange has the advantage that more reserved participants can overcome their inhibitions and thus participate in the exchange. Summa summarum, these structural modifications could break down barriers hindering knowledge acquisition, exchange and transfer, enabling local change agents to be trained in a target-oriented manner with regard to the challenges that affect them, so that they can use their newly acquired expertise to contribute to the sustainable urbanisation outside their own cities.

Annex: Additional Photographs

Figure 2: Defining the Primary Goal of the Training Mission

Figure 3: Defining the Goals of a Session

Figure 4: Knowledge Alignment - Explanations of the NbS concept

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2. NbS: confusing concept?

"[...] **inspired and supported by nature**, which are **cost-effective**, simultaneously provide **environmental, social and economic benefits** and help build **resilience** [...] bring more, and more **diverse, nature and natural features** and processes into cities, landscapes and seascapes, through **locally adapted, resource-efficient** and **systemic interventions**." (Dumitru/Wendling 2021: 17)

"[...] actions to protect, conserve, restore, sustainably use and manage **natural or modified** terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine **ecosystems** which address **social, economic and environmental challenges effectively** and **adaptively**, while simultaneously providing **human well-being, ecosystem services, resilience and biodiversity benefits** [and] play an essential role in the overall global effort to **achieve the Sustainable Development Goals** [...]" (UNEP 2022: 2)

"Actions to protect, sustainably use, manage and restore **natural or modified ecosystems**, which **address societal challenges, effectively** and **adaptively**, providing **human well-being and biodiversity benefits**" (IUCN 2020: 2)

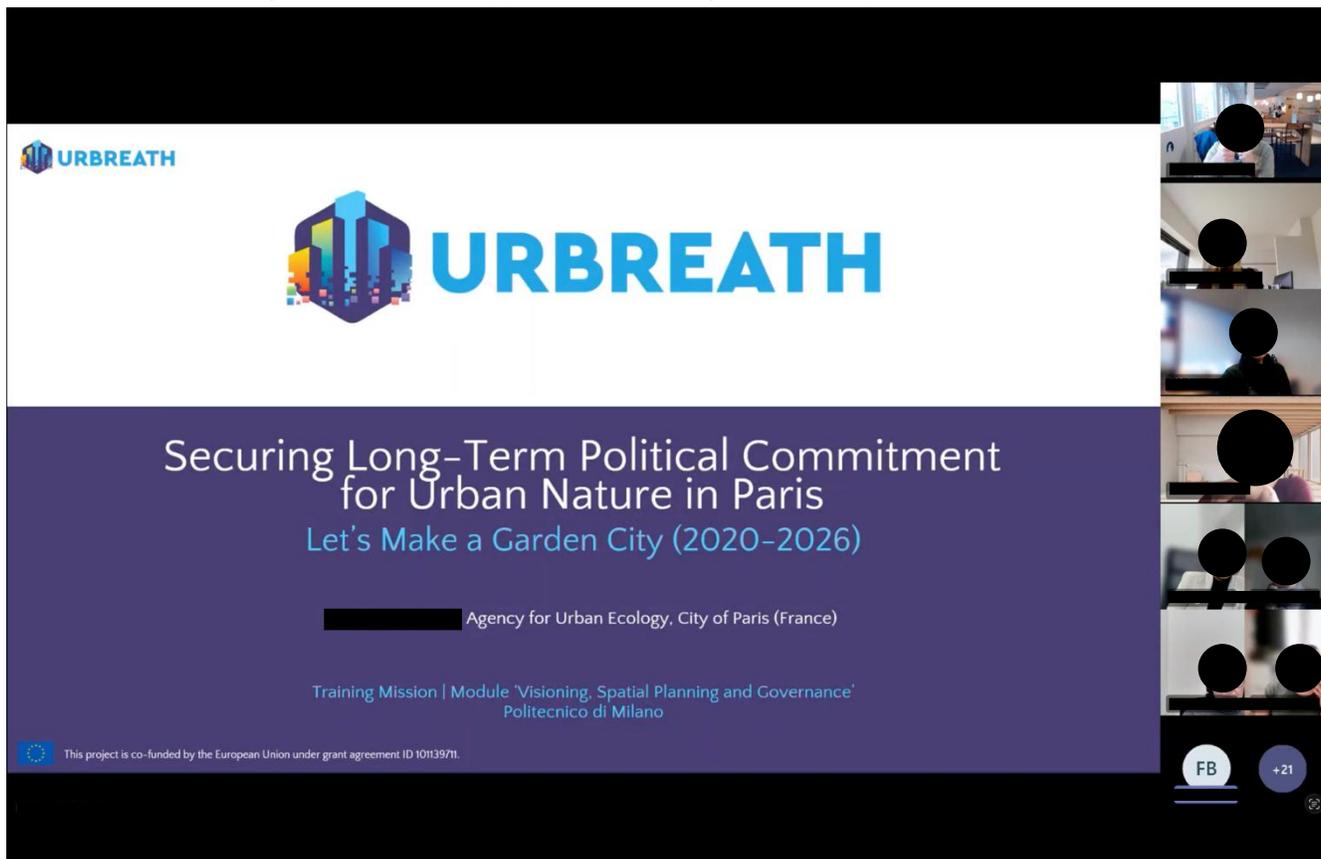
Figure 5: Interactive Part of a Session

Join at menti.com | use code 2934 4334

What springs to your mind when you hear "innovative sources of financing NBS" in an urban context?

crowdfunding problems
green bonds smarter choices
challenges co-budgeting
grants private-public partnershi
cooperation crypto parks creativity
pay-per-use park benches
novelty common good community funds
private funding
community financing
private involvement

Figure 6: Case Study presented during a Session by a Guest Lecturer



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Securing Long-Term Political Commitment for Urban Nature in Paris

Let's Make a Garden City (2020-2026)

Agency for Urban Ecology, City of Paris (France)

Training Mission | Module 'Visioning, Spatial Planning and Governance'
Politecnico di Milano

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