



## The Liveable Cities Network

The Liveability Design Approach (LDA) has been developed within the Interreg Baltic Sea Region Liveability project partnership. Our team includes experts from cities, municipalities, project management and academia. By combining both research and practical expertise, the LDA provides tested know-how and how-to. Let's join forces and improve the liveability of our cities together!

## Urban Challenges

Our cities are in the middle of dealing with the complex social, environmental and economic challenges of the 21st century. Some of the challenges we are tackling in the Liveability project are:

1. Health and Care crisis
2. Emptying city centres
3. Lack of community and togetherness
4. And more...



## The Liveability Design Approach

Supports cities and municipalities to adapt to challenges and enhance the quality of life for their citizens, by helping them to increase their capabilities in creativity, flexibility and transparency.

We use Public Interest Design (PID) to make cities, communities, and neighbourhoods more liveable. It places the public interest and the collective well-being at the centre of urban planning processes and leads to more inclusive and sustainable development of public services.

The Liveability Design Approach consists of the three key components: The Charter for Designing the Liveability City, the Practice Guide for Public Interest Design Projects and the Training Programme.



# THE JOURNEY TOWARDS LIVEABILITY

Design approach towards liveable neighbourhoods

## Our pilot projects

**Kiel, DE** - Develop the adult education centre as a space for interaction and education that is inviting and empowering for all.



**Guldborgsund, DK** - Empower citizens with providing holistic services to support them: One Citizen, a Plan.



**Kolding, DK** - Strengthen urban life and promote retail in the city centre.

**Riga, LA** - Support neighbourhood associations to create more inclusive, sustainable, and community-driven approaches and strategy.



**Gdynia, PL** - Socio-cultural integration of new citizens and existing residents in community centres.



**Pori, FI** - Bring life back to the city centre by revitalising vacant spaces.



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 www.interreg-baltic.eu/project/liveability/

# CHARTER FOR DESIGNING LIVEABLE CITIES

## 6 Principles

The „Charter for Designing the Liveable City“ is the core of the Liveability project. It contains our vision of how a liveable city looks and feels like. Additionally, it gives us as employees in public administration guidance. It gives us an idea of how we can work together with citizens, companies and civil society organisations towards making our cities more liveable. We use the charter as a starting point from where to begin the conversation about liveability in our administration and the whole community. The charter combines design principles such as curiosity and empathy with core values of democratic societies such as trust, transparency and collaboration. We propose Public Interest Design (PID) as a guiding principle to enhance urban liveability, a core aspect in our Liveability Design Approach (LDA). Our motivation is to foster the liveability characteristics such as emotional well-being, green, blue and healthy infrastructure as well as creativity and participation so that our cities and its inhabitants may thrive.

### 1. Design principles for the public good

Design principles are essential for fostering creativity and innovation in public administration. Employees need time, space, and resources to apply these concepts. Design steps are: deep understanding of challenges, empathizing with users, generating and testing ideas, and promoting team diversity for effective solutions. These principles enhance functionality, usability, and relevance in our work.

### 4. Strengthen trust, transparency, communication and collaboration

We aim to make diverse collaboration a core principle in public administration. To foster innovation, staff need mental and physical space for collaboration and experimentation. As municipalities, we welcome experimentation and unorthodox solutions and believe that diverse teams can solve complex problems effectively. We value different perspectives and commit to sharing skills and knowledge openly to learn from each other, all in pursuit of creating a liveable city.

### 2. Integrated and holistic planning

We recognize the value of diverse perspectives in addressing current and future city challenges. We engage local inhabitants and institutions in city planning, acknowledging them as experts on their needs. Our approach is integrated, considering various viewpoints and leveraging the strengths of public administration to develop solutions that are environmentally, economically and socially sustainable for the whole city.

### 5. Co-design with citizens

We acknowledge the importance of involving those affected by our decisions and aim to empower inhabitants and encourage their input to actively shape the city for the common good. We promote diverse participation formats to ensure community voices are integrated into city planning. We value artistic, aesthetic, and socio-cultural actions for revealing new perspectives and consider the diverse needs of citizens in designing participatory processes. Acknowledging our responsibility, we strive to create accessible, transparent mechanisms for collaboration. People need places where they can come together, get to know one another and form resilient neighbourhoods. We specifically want to strengthen inhabitants who want to take responsibility and create value for their neighbourhood.

### 3. Sustainable strategic city management

We want to build a feeling of shared ownership for our cities' development. We see it as helpful to identify the authentic identity of our cities – our city's DNA. We aim to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement (historically, socially, culturally, environmentally, and economically) in our city. Based on that city identity, a coherent vision for our city can be developed. We want the vision to be actively communicated to staff and citizens. We identify and circulate knowledge about innovative and creative best practices within the public administration.

### 6. Become a learning city/municipality

We believe the journey toward liveability is a learning process and aim to foster an organizational culture that encourages people to learn and thrive. We promote an error-friendly organisational culture where staff can safely develop and test new solutions on a small scale with actual users. Failures are seen as learning opportunities, guiding us to better meet inhabitants' needs. We actively collaborate with national and international partners to gain fresh perspectives, enrich our practices, and challenge current path dependencies and existing norms. Working together with inhabitants and across departments changes our perspective on the known and can open our eyes to possibly inconceivable solutions and ideas.

