



## IN-HABIT - INclusive Health And wellBeing In small and medium-size ciTies

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# THE IN-HABIT PROJECT FINANCED BY THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION WILL TRANSFORM FOUR SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED EUROPEAN CITIES INTO FOUR INNOVATIVE HUBs OF INCLUSIVE HEALTH AND WELLBEING

**Cordoba, Pisa, Nitra, Riga, 14th of October 2021.** The new EU Horizon 2020 project - **INclusive Health And wellBeing In small and medium-size ciTies (IN-HABIT)** has been introduced today. IN-HABIT pilots innovative solutions to drive Inclusive Health and Wellbeing (IHW) in Small and Medium-Sized cities (SMSCs). **Cordoba (Spain), Riga (Latvia), Lucca (Italy), and Nitra (Slovakia) will take the lead in testing visionary and**



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**integrated solutions to foster IHW).** In each of the four pilot cities, the project will investigate how the mobilisation of existing undervalued resources, such as culture and heritage, food, human-animal bonds, and art and environment, might contribute to boosting health and wellbeing, with a focus on gender, diversity, equity, and inclusion (GDEI).

The integrated approach will combine technological, digital, nature-based, cultural, and social innovations in the selected urban public spaces. These solutions will be co-designed, co-deployed, and co-managed with local inhabitants and stakeholders. The project will be implemented over a five-year period (2020-2025).

#### **Four pilot cities, four different urbanistic and inclusive wellness projects**

The IN-HABIT project takes into account all the dimensions of health and wellbeing that go alongside urban transformation with a GDEI perspective. For this reason, each city is piloting a possible transformation that could be replicated around the world in other SMSCs. While the Cordoba pilot will replicate the traditional patios (courtyards) of the historical centre in Las Palmeras (a disadvantaged neighbourhood), in Riga, a multifunctional food hub will be created in the area of the Agenskalns local market. Lucca will become the first Human-animal (Hum-an) smart city in Europe, and in Nitra, a Reversible Multifunctional Open-source Urban Landscape will be created along the 8 km cycle road connecting the Dražovce district with the city centre.

#### **Integrating visions and knowledge to include and involve target groups and local communities, both offline and online, and to replicate actions across Europe and beyond.**

To ensure solutions that truly work for the cities and their inhabitants, IN-HABIT will put people at the centre of its strategy, creating People-Public-Private- Partnerships (PPPPs) including policymakers, urban planners and administrations, (social) businesses, and researchers. To foster mindset and behavioural changes, the project will engage children and youth, cultural/ethnic and sexual minorities, women, elderly and disabled people, to achieve its inclusion and diversity goals. In addition to local stakeholders in each city, IN-HABIT will collaborate with institutions and organisations at both European and international levels.



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The project coordinator Prof. Mar Delgado from UCO - Universidad de Córdoba - describes the project's large impact as: "A unique opportunity to investigate how small and medium-sized cities can put in place strategies to boost inclusive health and wellbeing by integrating different resources that already exist but have not yet been valorised."

### **The project partners**

- University of Cordoba
- Ayuntamiento de Córdoba
- Neighbourhood Association of Las Palmeras
- Baltic Studies Centre
- Riga Planning Region
- Kalnciema Quarter
- University di Pisa
- Comune di Lucca
- Lucca Crea
- Slovak University of Agriculture
- Mesto Nitra
- Hidepark Civic Association Triptych
- University of Reading
- isIMPACT
- Tesserae
- Bridge for Billions
- Design for Change Spain
- Book on a Tree
- Engie Laborelec
- Wellness TechGroup
- Pontificia Universidad Javeriana

All the contents and videos in HD are available at this [link](#).

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## About IN-HABIT

IN-HABIT, a newly-launched EU H2020 project, will mobilise undervalued resources (culture and heritage, food, human-animal bonds, and art and environment) in four SMSCs to boost IHW, with a focus on gender and diversity. The integrated approach will combine technological, digital, nature-based, cultural, and social innovations in selected urban public spaces, focusing on underserved areas and vulnerable target groups in each city. These solutions will be co-designed, co-deployed, and co-managed with and by local stakeholders.

The project will develop an innovative assessment framework to analyse inclusive health and wellbeing as urban commons, (social) business models to provide livelihood opportunities and promote healthier lifestyles, and an app to measure impact and boost behavioural change.

The IN-HABIT project responds to European research and innovation (R&I) gaps in catering to the needs of peripheral SMSCs. Most urban R&I in Europe is located in Central and Nordic countries and in large cities, while 65% of the urban population lives in cities with fewer than 500,000 inhabitants. IN-HABIT will work to advance knowledge on the health and wellbeing R&I needs of peripheral SMSCs, define frameworks for the collection and assessment of data at city level, and for monitoring both the city-level evolutionary trajectories and the impact of policy actions. A systemic urban planning framework will be developed based on a GDEI perspective for boosting IHW. The results will enhance the understanding of how peripheral SMSCs work in practice while driving IHW in the four pilot cities.

**IN-HABIT IN CORDOBA** will investigate how the co-creation and replication of patios (inner courtyards) in different city areas can boost IHW. IN-HABIT will create an intangible corridor connecting Las Palmeras and Axarquia neighbourhoods through patios. Patios are one of the most representative elements of the city and might play a key role in addressing global challenges such as climatic change or pandemic situations.



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Patios are efficient ecosystems in which mechanical refrigeration is minimised, whilst providing increased comfort in both houses and public spaces, but they are also spaces for social interactions. These actions will deliver relevant information for other Mediterranean cities. Quote from the project coordinator Prof. Mar Delgado from UCO - Universidad de Córdoba: “We need to investigate the role of patios as eco-social builders and boost strategies of urban regeneration through social innovations in Mediterranean cities.”

## **IN-HABIT IN NITRA**

### **IN-HABIT IN LUCCA**

Lucca will be the first city in Europe designed to foster the relationship between human and animal. Among the various initiatives, there are the "animabili", intelligent urban routes dedicated to animals and their owners, which can connect the center to the suburbs. To create these new inclusive infrastructures, the Municipality of Lucca has networked the experts of the University of Pisa with Lucca Crea: the aim of the project is to reconsider the presence and role of animals in the city, placing them at the center of daily life and creating new opportunities to experience the city together. Not only that: with regard to inclusiveness and attention to the most fragile subjects, In-Habit will allow animals to be interpreted as mediators and resources in a perspective of assistance, rescue, development of autonomy. Lucca will therefore be the first European city that concretely creates a new way of enjoying spaces and the environment, more human-friendly, but also tailored to the animals that live in close contact with humans, through an overall rethinking of public spaces of the future.

**IN-HABIT IN RIGA**, a multifunctional food hub will be created in the area of the Agenskalns local market. “I am particularly glad that initiatives of this project will take place in Āgenskalna market,” said Alija Turlaja, Former President of the Riga Neighbourhoods Association and the Deputy of the Riga City Council. “Together we can go towards self-sufficient neighbourhoods and much healthier people in our cities.” In Riga, the team will concentrate on: (i) improvements of physical public infrastructures in and around the territory of Agenskalns market in Riga, and (ii) the promotion of food-related educational and consumption practices. While some key components of the solutions (spaces to be renovated, main infrastructures and functions, key innovations) have been defined, many elements of the transformation plan will be co-designed with local stakeholders.



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The press release is available in:  
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