

EUSBSR Annual Forum, Visby 30.–31.10.2024



Liveability

**Designing public services for
resilient neighbourhoods**

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Interreg
Baltic Sea Region



Co-funded by
the European Union



RESPONSIVE PUBLIC SERVICES

Liveability

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About the Liveability Project

Designing public services for
resilient neighbourhoods

01.01.2023 – 31.12.2025 (3 years)

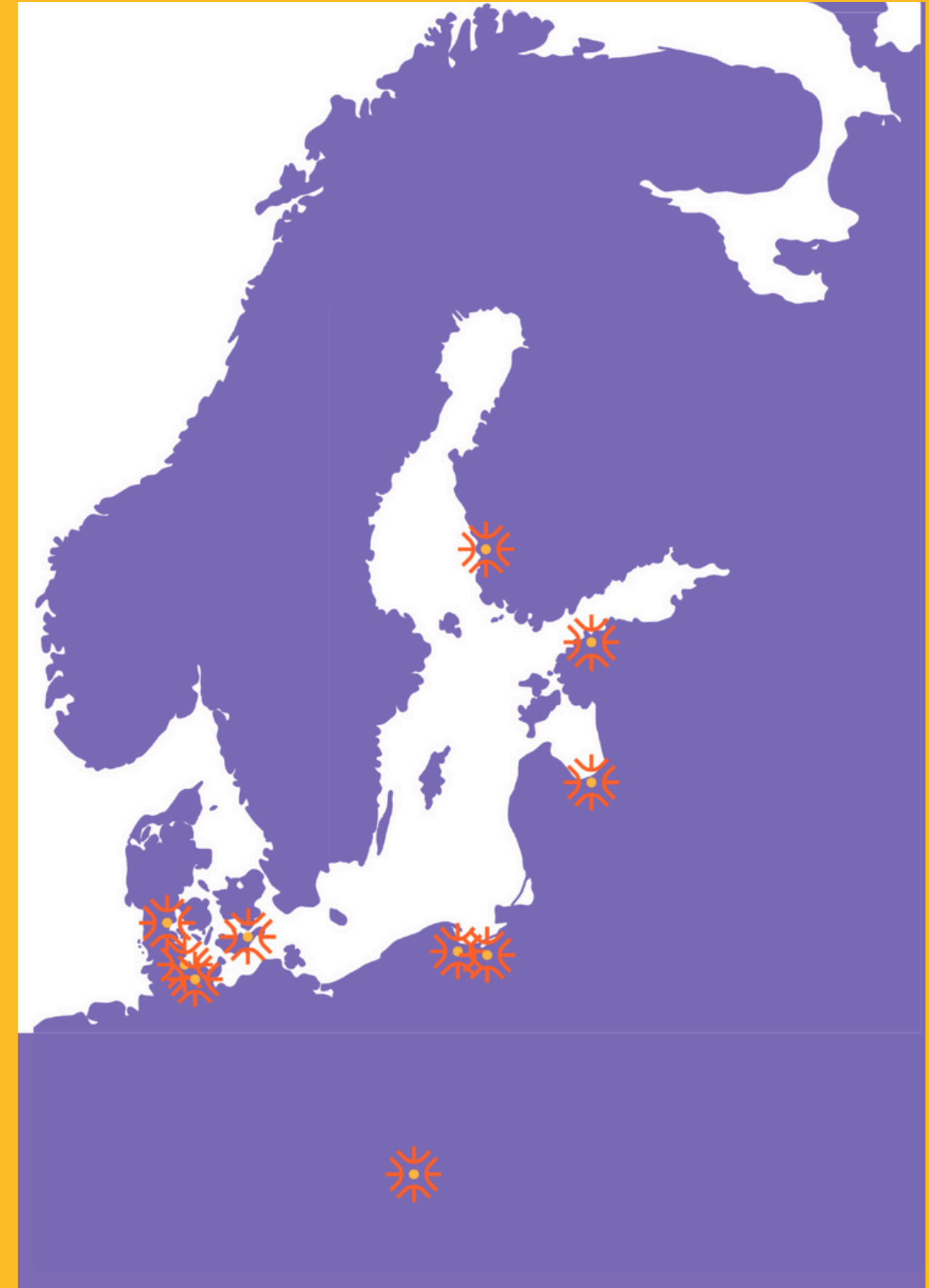
11 Partners

6 BSR Municipalities

Kiel (DE), Gdynia (PL), Guldborgsund (DK),
Kolding (DK), Pori (FI) and Riga (LV)

15 Associated Organisations

Co-funded by: Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme
Programme Priority: Innovative Societies
Programme Objective: Responsive public service



How do we (together) shape the future of our cities?

- **How** can cities **re-shape** their ways of working, collaborating and communicating towards Liveability?
- **How** can city administration **enable and empower** civil servants, citizens and other stakeholders to engage in this transformation process?
- **How** can design approaches support cities around the Baltic Sea to become **more liveable**?



Transforming challenges to opportunities

Increased complexity

- Pre and post COVID 19 crisis.
- Cities facing complex social, environmental, and economic **challenges**, including social inequalities.
- **Adverse impacts** of climate change and demographic changes.

A chance to co-create

- Changing work & life patterns as an **opportunity** for cities to **attract** by being liveable.
- Following an integrated & balanced approach for the built environment.
- **Foster** innovation culture, public services and socio-cultural life.
- Becoming **resilient** by being able to **adapt** and **enhance transformation skills**
- **Evoking a strong sense of active citizenship.**

Steps towards liveability

How Can Design Approaches Empower Co-Creation for More Liveable Baltic Sea Cities?

1. Identifying Real Challenges:

Facilitating the understanding of core urban challenges, helping to address the root issues.

2. Empowering Co-Creation in Public Services and Planning:

The focus is on collaborative development of public services, planning, and projects that enhance city liveability.

3. Shifting to a Systemic Approach:

Moving away from rigid, one-size-fits-all methods, aiming for adaptable, holistic solutions that consider interconnected urban needs.



Steps towards liveability

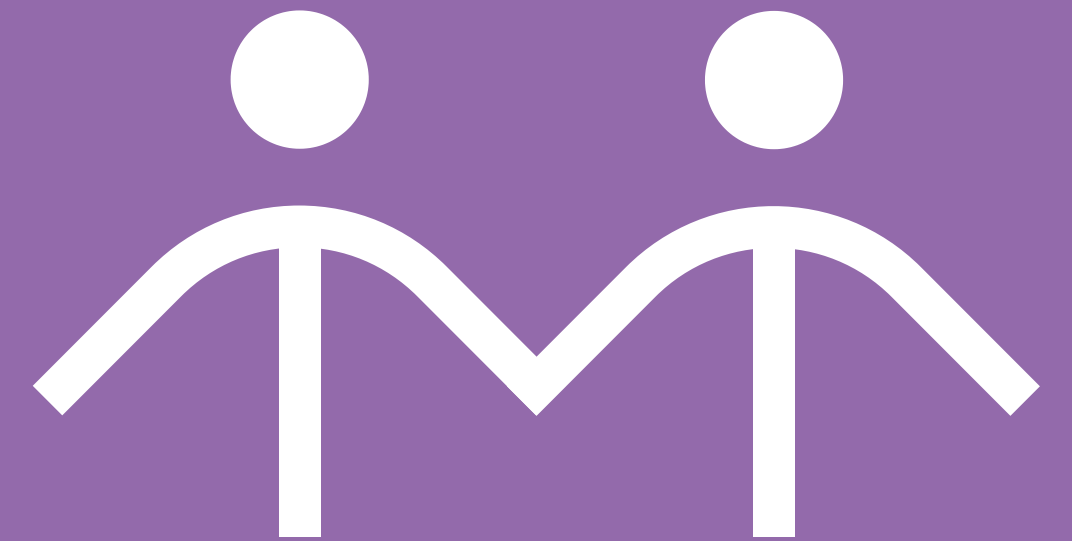
Public Interest Design (PID)

A **participatory design approach**, an overarching concept that can take inspiration from established and recent design approaches aiming at collective well-being.

- **Empower** public administrators and residents to connect.
- Help to build a city-wide foundation for **taking collaborative action**.
- Facilitate and **enhance the thinking about the challenges** you want to tackle so that you can identify the real problem
- **Enable residents** to participate in co-creating public services, developing neighbourhood projects and shaping their own living environment.



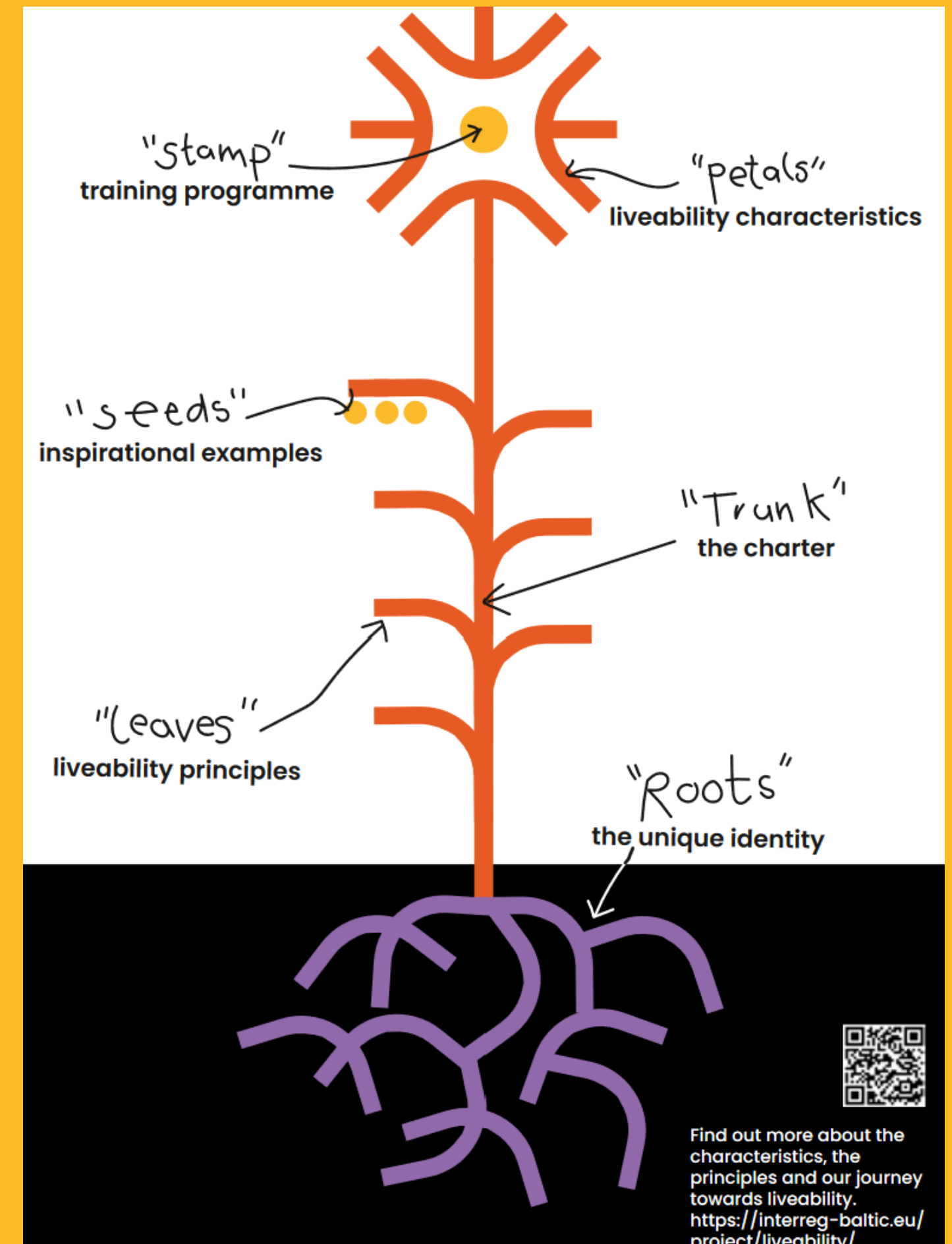
THE LIVEABILITY DESIGN APPROACH



The Liveability Design Approach

The Analogy of a flower

- The “Roots”: The City’s **Unique Identity**
- The “Trunk”: **A Charter** for Designing Liveable Cities
- The “Leaves”: Liveability **Principles**
- The “Petals”: Liveability **Characteristics**
- The “Seeds”: Inspirational **Examples**
- The “Flower Stamp”: **Training Programme**



A Charter for Designing Liveable Cities

- **Purpose:** strategically **anchoring design principles** in decision-making and to create a forward-thinking mindset at all levels of public administration.
- **Vision:** Liveable cities prioritize well-being, green spaces & creativity – described by the **characteristics**
- **Guiding Principles: Inspiration** for cities to rethink policy and programme planning to be better able to cope with current and future transformative challenges and to become closer to citizens.



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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.



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* This is a shortened version of the Charter for Designing the Liveable City. The current full version you can find on the Interreg website: <https://interreg-baltic.eu/project/liveability/>



A Practice guide

- **Guidance** on how to start your journey towards liveability
- **Reflections** from Partner cities on the Liveability principles and how to use them in practice
- **Orientation** on how to design processes

PRACTICE GUIDE

FOR PUBLIC INTEREST DESIGN



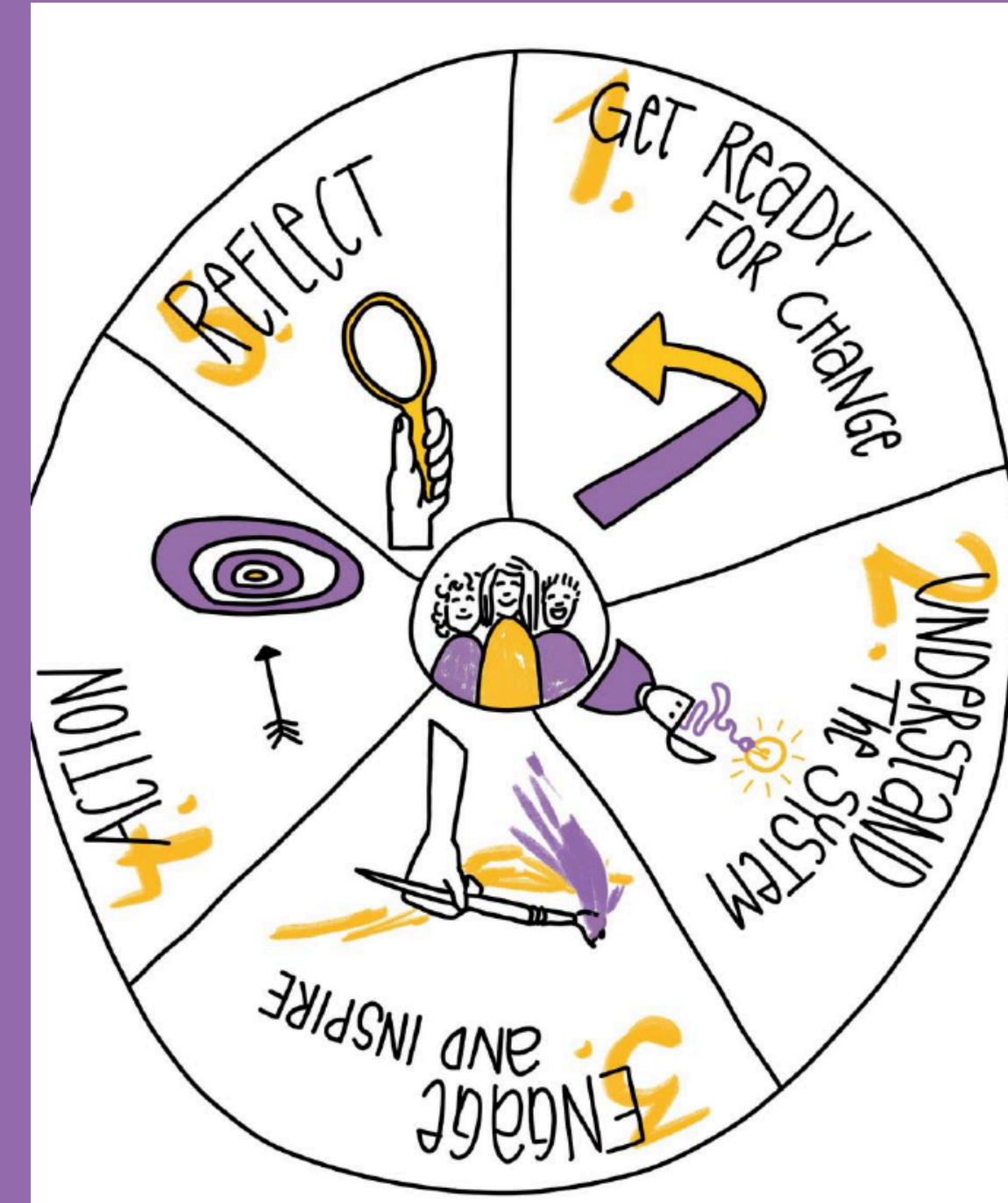
The Training Programme

Educational space:

- a safe space to **learn**
- a safe space to **apply**
- a safe space to **experiment**
- a safe space to **fail**

Educational material:

- **Microlectures** about specific tools, methods and ideas
- Printouts for doing **exercises**
- A mentoring/friend system for collaboration with others
- Inspirational **Talks**
- ...





The Journey towards Liveability...



Our pilot projects

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

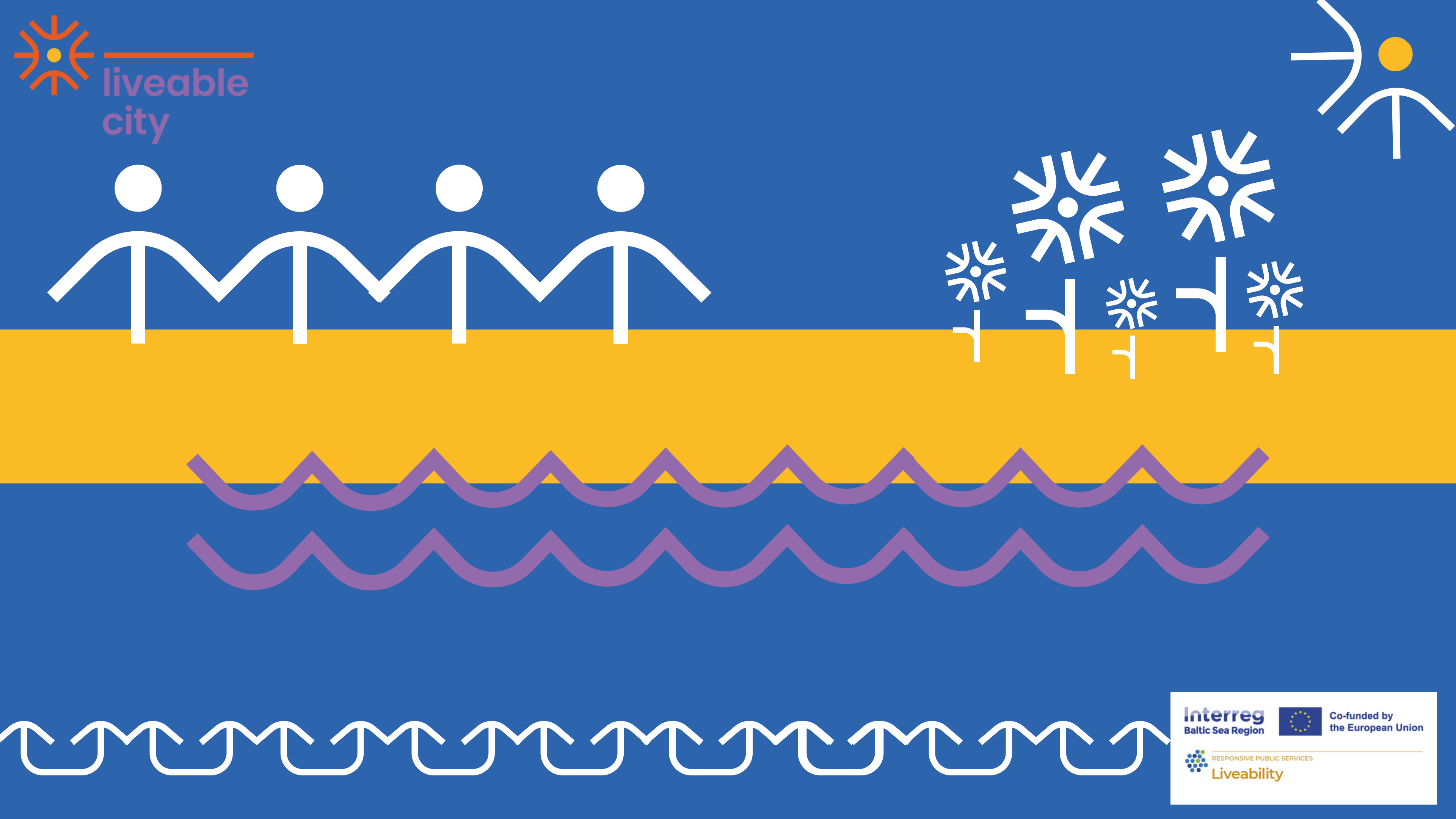
Guldborgsund, DK - Empower citizens with providing holistic services to support them: One Citizen, a Plan,.

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

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

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

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





Preview – Starting in 2025:



The Liveable City Label

- To receive the label, a city does not have to be liveable, it has **to demonstrate** a credible effort to become **liveable**.
- The label brings to light the **efforts** & **achievements** of (especially small and medium-sized) cities to be **attractive** & **desirable places** for residents and businesses.

The Network of Liveable Cities

- A **forum for city-cooperation** with similar goals, even if different strategies and tools are employed
- A **community of practice** for forward-thinking representatives of local public administration and civil society
- A **source of inspiration** for innovative practices and participatory practices in city decision – making across the Baltic Sea region.

Start your own journey towards liveability!

Become a candidate city

Explore the
Liveability Design Approach

Connect with other Baltic cities to
share best practices

Start a local pilot project for liveability

Sign the 'Charter for Designing Liveable
Cities' in 2025

Receive the "Liveable City" label

Become an active member of the
Network of Liveable Cities



Join our new series of events – the Liveability Talks!

- One **expert talk** per month
- Discover **success stories** & **lessons** learned from other cities!
- Understand what works, what doesn't, and how to **adapt ideas to your local context**.
- **Engage** with and be inspired by renowned experts!
- **Register** online!



Are you passionate about designing liveable cities?

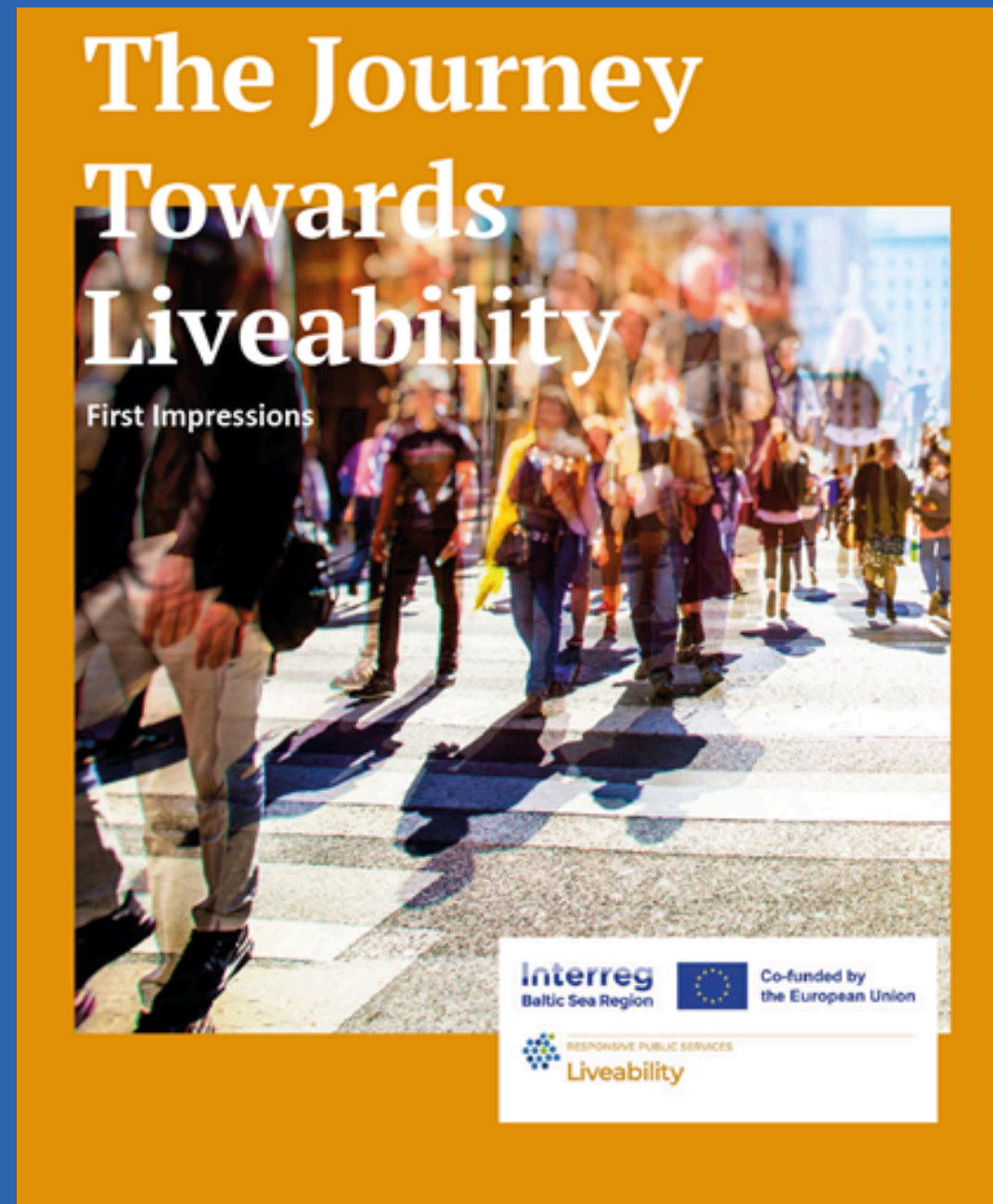
Charles Landry

November 7th at 14-16:00 PM (CET)

Jaakko Blomberg

December 8th at 14-16:00 PM (CET)

Let's grow liveable cities together!



Find us:

Instagram: [_liveable_cities_](#)

Website: interreg-baltic.eu/project/liveability/



Contact us:

info@liveable-cities.net

Join the blooming community!

Find more about the project in our brochure!

