

Brussels, 9 December 2020

## **Improving Services to people, Sustainability and Connectivity in next-to-metropolitan areas**

### *Good practices and experiences from the province of Barcelona*

On 3 December 2020, [Next2Met](#) partners and stakeholders came together for their third Policy Learning Event during an online meeting hosted by Barcelona Provincial Council. This open event aimed at fostering interregional exchange in order to increase the attractiveness of the regions through soft digitalisation measures. The event, gathering more than 40 participants, represented an opportunity to discover innovative solutions implemented in the province of Barcelona and opened a discussion on their transferability to other areas that face similar challenges.

Barcelona Provincial Council presented a variety of initiatives in the fields of digitalisation and climate action, smart services, sustainable tourism and innovation labs, which address main challenges faced by territories situated close to metropolitan areas. These [good practices](#) demonstrated on one hand the need for digitalisation to improve services to people, sustainability and connectivity and on the other hand underlined the great potential of peripheral areas, and in this case of the province of Barcelona. The motto of this territory, as mentioned by **Mr Gregori Mora, Smart Region Manager from Barcelona Provincial Council** and by other participants, is in fact “*Barcelona is much more*”, indicating that there are many opportunities to discover and possibilities to unlock in the territories around the city.

The event saw the participation of local stakeholders who presented [good practices](#) developed in the region, such as the Internet of Things Network based on LoRaWan (Terrassa City Council), 5G projects across the territory (Fundació i2Cat), Sport City Lab (Calella City Council) and Neàpolis, an ecosystem for the promotion of innovation and digital entrepreneurship (Vilanova i la Geltrú City Council). This moment represented an occasion to get inspiration from local practices and further explore opportunities to cooperate among regions.

In Spring 2021, a fourth Policy Learning Event will be organised by Next2Met partners from Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly (Ireland), which will focus on the question of leveraging funding.

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**Next2Met** is an innovative European cooperation project co-founded by the European Regional Development Fund through the Interreg Europe Programme. For further information about Next2Met, visit the project's online media

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