

COMMUNITY-LED URBAN STRATEGIES IN HISTORIC TOWNS (COMUS)

Funded
by the European Union
and the Council of Europe



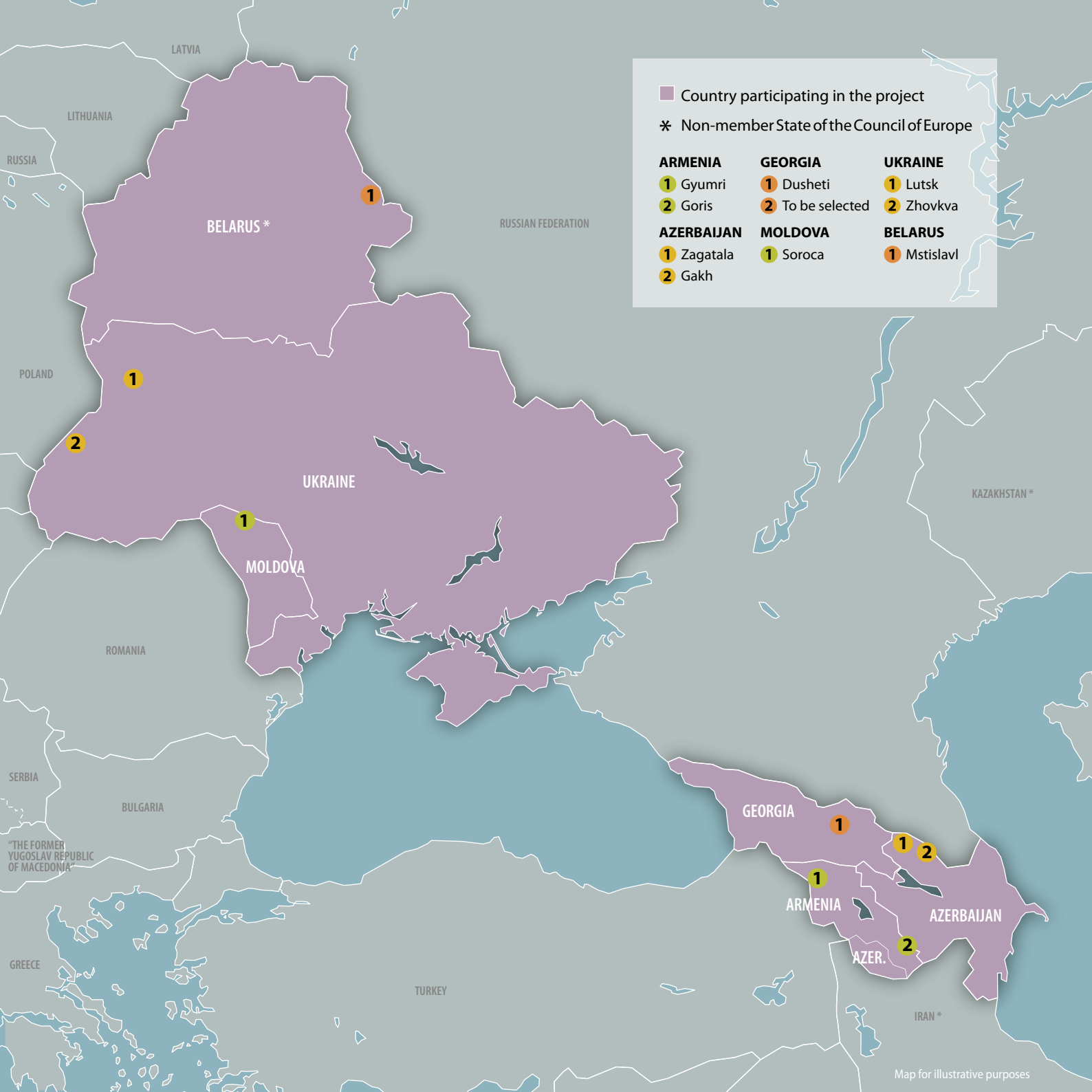
EUROPEAN UNION

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Implemented
by the Council of Europe



Country participating in the project
 ✖ Non-member State of the Council of Europe

ARMENIA	GEORGIA	UKRAINE
1 Gyumri	1 Dusheti	1 Lutsk
2 Goris	2 To be selected	2 Zhovkva
AZERBAIJAN	MOLDOVA	BELARUS
1 Zagatala	1 Soroca	1 Mstislavl
2 Gakh		



UKRAINE ► LUTSK



GEORGIA ► DUSHETI

COMMUNITY-LED DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

— The COMUS project is a joint Council of Europe/European Union initiative that is part of the second Eastern Partnership Culture Programme. It seeks to stimulate social and economic development by enhancing cultural heritage in historic towns.

— The project is being carried out in 10 small and medium-sized historic towns in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. It introduces innovative approaches that use “urban rehabilitation” as a means of contributing to wider objectives, such as the celebration of diversity, constructive dialogue and the promotion of mutual respect between people of different cultures and religions, greater well-being and better quality of life.

FACTS AND FIGURES

The COMUS project started on 1 January 2015 and will continue until 30 June 2017. With a budget of €650 000, the Council of Europe, in partnership with the Organization of World Heritage Cities (OWHC), is assisting the pilot towns in developing innovative strategies for urban development. Associated historic towns interested in the novelty of the COMUS approach in participating countries, as well as the OWHC partner cities that will accompany the process, will ensure wide dissemination of experiences.



ARMENIA ► GYUMRI

ENHANCING HERITAGE VALUES FOR SOCIETY

■ The participating pilot towns are looking for specific responses to a number of issues related to sustainable local development.

- ▶ How to make the most of cultural diversity in order to foster local and European citizenship.
- ▶ How to combine actions that link the living environment and the quality of life to new economic models based on local resources.
- ▶ How to promote new good governance based on democratic participation.

■ COMUS has a very clear position on these issues and seeks innovation through:

- ▶ broadening the concept of heritage, in the context of human rights and democracy, as a resource resulting from the interaction over time between generations of people and specific places, which inhabitants consider as a reflection and expression of their values, knowledge and common traditions;
- ▶ empowering communities and citizens as the main actors in carrying out their development projects in support of public action.



AZERBAIJAN ► ZAGATALA



BELARUS ► MSTISLAVL

CAPITALISE ON EUROPEAN EXPERIENCE

■ The COMUS methodology is based on a set of conceptual guidelines which have been improved over the years thanks to the earlier Council of Europe/ European Union Kyiv Initiative Programme, and other European projects such as Heritage as Opportunity (HerO).

■ The four-phase process covers seven fields of intervention identified as priorities for improving the quality of life and the living environment of inhabitants in the pilot towns:

- ▶ enhancement of heritage and urban landscapes;
- ▶ housing improvement;
- ▶ tackling social concerns;
- ▶ traffic management;
- ▶ development of activities;
- ▶ reduction of urban wastelands;
- ▶ improvement of public spaces.

PARTNER

Based in Quebec (Canada), the Organization of World Heritage Cities (OWHC) gathers mayors from 250 cities inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The city of Regensburg (Germany) has the regional secretariat for the north-west Europe region, comprising 20 cities in 13 countries and from which international expertise will be provided for COMUS.

www.ovpm.org



MOLDOVA ► SOROCA

CONNECTING PILOT TOWNS TO EUROPEAN TRENDS

COMUS promotes the implementation of heritage-led urban projects that respond to current challenges and reflect common objectives regarding the future of European cities and the need to define new modernity principles, such as:

- ▶ introducing the **direct engagement of inhabitants** to define shared visions for the future development of their cultural environment;
- ▶ building **urban resilience mechanisms** through the adaptation and revitalisation of old buildings, and interventions on a number of key sites capable of generating long-term dynamics;
- ▶ promoting a **place-based approach** that capitalises on the towns' distinctive features to define their attractiveness as local resources in order to encourage investment and develop economic activity;
- ▶ fostering **good governance** based on an integrated and multidisciplinary approach involving all levels of responsibilities and competences in order to combine valuable expertise.



UKRAINE ► ZHOVKVA

ARMENIA ► GORIS

LONG-TERM, SUSTAINABLE IMPACT

COMUS is part of the Flagship Initiative on Sustainable Municipal Development created in early 2015 in response to the EU's and partner countries' common interest to encourage local authorities to co-operate with civil society organisations in order to enhance accountability, exchange best practices and strengthen municipalities' capacity to become more efficient and effective administrations for local development.

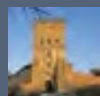
Concrete rehabilitation projects will be designed and promoted in each pilot town with the aim of mobilising public investment and attracting private investors. The results of the COMUS experience will be presented at a final conference encouraging national authorities to recognise heritage as a factor of development in national and local sectorial policies, and notably to include urban regeneration and a heritage-led approach when developing economic policies and national priorities.

The flagship activities are closely linked to the Covenant of Mayors initiative that supports the development of sustainable energy action plans and the Mayors for Economic Growth project aiming at implementing local economic strategies. Of the 10 COMUS pilot towns, four (Gyumri, Lutsk, Soroca and Zhovkva) are already signatories of the Covenant of Mayors.

http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/ neighbourhood/pdf/riga/20150518_flagship_smd.pdf

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www.coe.int/comus



www.coe.int

The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 member states, 28 of which are members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

The European Union is a unique economic and political partnership between 28 democratic European countries. Its aims are peace, prosperity and freedom for its 500 million citizens – in a fairer, safer world. To make things happen, EU countries set up bodies to run the EU and adopt its legislation. The main ones are the European Parliament (representing the people of Europe), the Council of the European Union (representing national governments) and the European Commission (representing the common EU interest).

