# Governance Matters! Developing the Foundations for a Transnational Integrated Planning Network

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**Abstract.** Spatial planning is a dynamic process, continuously evolving throughout the years. As complexity increase and basic needs change, this requires new perspectives in planning considering diverse roles, disciplines, and methods to address spatial, environmental, and societal challenges. Hence, integrated approaches should be at the forefront, building new initiatives that bring all these actors together. This calls for the establishment of wide Network fostering systemic transnational collaboration, under a multi-stakeholder scheme, that considers planning-related HED institutions and relevant practice, policy, research actors, and the planning community in general. Moreover, this network should cultivate an inclusive and active participatory approach in all actions of the network and especially in the knowledge exchange/co-creation/sharing process.

Bearing upon this critical gap, this study will lay the Charter of this Transnational Network developed via a detailed scoping literature review on related endeavours. Thereupon, the organisational model (depicted in the charter) describes the scope, governance, principles, values and activities of the network, as well as the means and processes for systemic knowledge exchange, sharing, and co-creation among its members. This model also explains the procedures for joining the network and how this differs for individuals and organisations.

Establishing a Network for Integrated Planning is a challenging endeavour; however, it is essential for novel planning actions. There is an imperative need for truly realising integrated actions in planning practice and engaging different actors (academia, policymakers, practitioners and citizens). Subsequently, this study comprises an initial step for embracing integrated planning in various scales and dimensions.

**Keywords:** Integrated Planning · Urban governance · Cooperation · Policy · Network development

## 1 Introduction

Planning is an ongoing and dynamic process that continuously adapts and evolves over time [1]. With societal needs shifting and urban and environmental complexities intensifying, planning must embrace new perspectives that integrate multiple roles, disciplines, and methodologies [2]. These evolving challenges necessitate a more holistic

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and collaborative approach to spatial, environmental, and societal issues [3]. Therefore, it is important to prioritise integrated strategies that bring together diverse stakeholders, fostering cross-disciplinary dialogue and cooperation [4].

In response to these pressing demands, the establishment of a broad and inclusive network is essential; one community that promotes systemic, transnational collaboration under a multi-stakeholder framework (similar communities are the International Conference on Computational Science and Its Applications, ICCSA, Interdisciplinary Social Sciences Research Network, etc.). This network should actively engage higher education institutions (HEIs) focused on planning, alongside practitioners, policymakers, researchers, and the wider planning community [5]. By doing so, it can facilitate knowledge-sharing, innovation, and coordinated action across different sectors and geographical boundaries. Furthermore, an inclusive and participatory approach should be embedded in all aspects of the network's activities, particularly in the processes of knowledge exchange, co-creation, and dissemination [6].

Addressing this critical gap, the present study seeks to lay the groundwork for such a Transnational Network through a comprehensive scoping literature review of existing initiatives and related endeavours. More specifically, the objective of this paper is to articulate the conceptual and organisational model of a Transnational Integrated Planning network, reflecting its need and role both in the academic and policymaking realm. This entails a thorough assessment of the existing framework, policies, and operational guidelines governing relevant organisations/associations dealing with urban planning, transport, geography, environment, participatory and evidence-based planning. This review will reveal the key points of existing organisational models, providing a foundation for the development of a robust and comprehensive charter for an Integrated Planning Network.

This charter will function as a helpful tool in guiding the network's future activities. It will outline the vision, mission, and strategic objectives of a Transnational Network. What is more, it will show the structure, roles and responsibilities and define distinct protocols for decision-making. Moreover, it will explicitly underscore membership conditions and the merits of joining the network. Notably, the charter will align with international standards to ensure the network operates efficiently and sustainably. Last, this charter will also be a means for communicating the objectives of the network itself. By developing a coherent organisational framework, this paper aspires to improve stakeholder engagement and foster a collaborative environment that promotes clarity and collaboration.

The remainder of the paper is structured as follows. The second section build the theoretical background including the necessity for a charter in integrated planning. The third section briefly describes the methods followed, while the fourth presents the main results of this study and builds a solid charter for an Integrated Planning Network. Finally, the fifth section discusses the results and illustrates the concluding remarks of this research work.

## 2 Theoretical Background

Charters or statutes could be deemed as an indispensable element for associations and organisations, underlining the basic objectives and regulations [7]. A "charter" indicates the terms governing the operation of an organisation or association [8]. It is demonstrated that well-functioning governance enhances the trustworthiness of the organisation [9]. Every association requires a charter, which must be drawn up and agreed on common principles by the founding members of the association. In other words, one could stress that a charter is the equivalent of a constitution. Similarly to countries, organisations should adhere to specific regulations and ensure rights and duties to their members. Hereby, there are several key reasons why articulating a solid charter is meaningful for every association and organisation or network [9, 10].

- Clarity of purpose and vision: a charter should present the mission and objectives of the network in a distinct manner, preparing the ground for a common understanding among the members. Transparent procedures contribute to efficient operationalisation of efforts and resources
- Guidance for actions: a charter can formulate the organisational framework of a network including governance, decision-making process and proper procedures for memberships, meetings and activities. To this end, it prepares the appropriate standards.
- Member rights and duties: a charter should demonstrate the rights and obligations of members, ensuring fairness and protection within the network. It safeguards its members against arbitrary decision-making and provides recourse in case of disputes or conflicts.
- Transparency and accountability: By clearly displaying the member rights and duties, as well as the responsibilities of the administrative board, a charter ensures transparent procedures within the network. Based on a cohesive charter, the network can establish key monitoring processes for oversighting every action.
- Legal and formal recognition: a charter is a means for establishing legal recognition to the network, based on the official requirements. It formalises the entity's legal existence and is usually essential for obtaining funding, engaging into contracts, or in other legal transactions.
- Sustainability and continuity: a charter provides a stable framework for the network's operations, promoting continuity over time and achieving a sustainable profile. Through administering procedures that help adapt to different circumstances or needs, makes a charter a so-much needed document for every network.
- Credibility and trust: a well-articulated charter improves the credibility of the network, both internally (members) and externally (stakeholders, public). Credible network structure will ensure integrity and soundness.

To summarise, a charter is an essential document which not only describes the purpose and vision of a network or an organisation, but also articulates the governance structure, regulations, principles that dictate its operation and activities, thus stimulating transparency, continuity and clarity. Bearing upon the importance of delivering a coherent charter for the Transnational Integrated Planning network, this paper explored relevant charters.

## 3 Methods

This section demonstrates a comprehensive narrative review of charters or statutes established by similar organisations, networks or associations, aiming to illuminate their fundamental principles and elements. This descriptive technique offers a broad understanding of the topic, allowing for a flexible selection of core documents [11–13]. By delving into these documents, we seek to unveil the underlying frameworks governing their operations and endeavours. Through detailed examination, we will elucidate the key points encapsulated within these charters, offering insights into how we can develop a similar charter for our network. This qualitative analysis serves as a basis for understanding the organisational landscapes that steer the selected associations missions. The basic steps of the review process can be found in the next diagram (see Fig. 1).




**Fig. 1.** Basic steps for reviewing relevant charter documents

It should be highlighted that the selected methodology adopts a comprehensive research design to ensure robust findings on relevant charters or statutes. Initially, an extensive review of grey literature meaning charters and statutes of planning related networks, associations and organisations takes place. This process ensures the formulation of a solid document pool that will undergo a detailed screening process, assessing their relevance based on specific fields, language and availability criteria to ensure consistency and applicability. All relevant and available documents will be subjected to a thematic analysis and particularly to a qualitative content analysis for determining key criteria and elements for the new charter.

### 3.1 Selected Associations and Organisations

In this stage, we selected the associations or organisations to be included in the sample for reviewing their charter documents. These entities should be related to urban, transport, spatial, environmental or participatory planning and they should operate under some basic regulations. The initial sample consisting of 25 documents is displayed in Table 1. Notably, Table 1 provides a comprehensive overview of the selected charters, detailing various aspects including the name, the type and the range of the authoring organisation or association, as well as the membership type, the availability of the document and some general comments on the document.

Concerning the potential values encountered in Table 1, the type of organisation could be professional/advocacy, academic or both. Next, the selected associations are categorised based on their focus or range of operation, i.e., international, national or regional level. The membership type could be individuals, organisations or both. Finally,

the availability of the charter documents could be either full, partial or not applicable (in case the document is not found). This detailed breakdown briefly elucidates the structure and key characteristics of relevant charters, providing valuable insights into its operational structure and member engagement strategies.

**Table 1.** Reviewed charter documents

| id | Name | Type | Focus/ range | Membership | Thematic focus | Availability |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Association of European Schools of Planning AESOP [14] | Academic | European | Organisations Individuals | Planning | Full 10 article groups with 29 articles |
| 2 | Association of Geographic Information Laboratories in Europe AGILE | Academic | European | Organisations | Geography | N/A |
| 3 | Walk 21 Europe [15] | Professional | International | Individuals | Transport | Full 21 articles with 68 sub-articles |
| 4 | European Association of Geographers EUROGEO [16] | Academic Professional | European | Individuals | Geography | Full 11 main articles with 52 sub-articles |
| 5 | International Seminar on Urban Form ISUF [17] | Academic | International | Organisations Individuals | Architecture | Full 9 articles |
| 6 | Association for European Transport AET [18] | Academic Professional | European | Individuals | Transport | Partial A vision statement and a brief structure |
| 7 | Transportation Research Board TRB | Academic Professional | National | Individuals | Transport | N/A |
| 8 | International Sociological Association ISA [19] | Academic Professional | International | Organisations Individuals | Sociology | Full 15 articles with 8 bylaws |
| 9 | Regional Studies Association RSA [20] | Academic Professional | International | Individuals | Planning | Full 9 main articles with 15 sub-articles |
| 10 | International Society of City and Regional Planners ISOCARP [21] | Professional | International | Organisations Individuals | Planning | Full 15 articles |

(*continued*)

**Table 1.** (*continued*)

| id | Name | Type | Focus/ range | Membership | Thematic focus | Availability |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11 | International Association of Public Transport UITP [22] | Professional | International | Organisations | Transport | Full 22 Titles with 73 articles |
| 12 | Association of African Planning Schools AAPS [23] | Academic | African | Organisations | Planning | Full 11 articles |
| 13 | European Platform of Transport Sciences EPTS [24] | Academic | European | Organisations Individuals | Transport | Full 17 articles |
| 14 | Institute of Transportation Engineers ITE [25] | Professional | National | Individuals | Transport | Full 11 articles with 62 sections |
| 15 | Hellenic Institution of Transportation Engineers SES [26] | Academic Professional | National | Individuals | Transport | Full 15 articles |
| 16 | Association of Greek Urban & Spatial Planners SEPOX [27] | Academic Professional | National | Individuals | Planning | Full 6 sections with15 articles |
| 17 | Union of International Associations UIA [28] | Academic Professional | International | Organisations Individuals | Science | Full 5 sections with 15 articles |
| 18 | Transport Planning Society TPS [29] | Professional | National | Organisations Individuals | Transport | Full 32 articles |
| 19 | American Planning Association APA [30] | Professional | National | Individuals | Planning | Partial A vision statement and strategic goals |
| 20 | European Geography Association for students and young geographers EGEA [31] | Academic | European | Individuals | Geography | Full 18 articles |
| 21 | European Council of Spatial Planners ECTP-CEU [32] | Academic Professional | European | Organisations Individuals | Planning | Full 6 chapters with 30 articles |
| 22 | International Federation of Landscape Architects IFLA-Europe [33] | Academic Professional | European | Organisations Individuals | Architecture | Full 21 chapters with 52 articles |

(*continued*)

**Table 1.** (*continued*)

| id | Name | Type | Focus/ range | Membership | Thematic focus | Availability |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 23 | International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives ICLEI [34] | Professional | International | Organisations | Policymakers | Full 8 articles with 37 charters |
| 24 | European Network of Living Labs EnoLL [35] | Academic Professional | European | Organisations | Policymakers | Full 4 Titles with 27 articles |
| 25 | C40-Cities | Professional | International | Organisations | Policymakers | N/A |

Notably, the thematic focus of the examined charters varies greatly; seven different disciplines are represented, ensuring once more a broad range of perspectives and specialisations. The majority belongs to transport and planning (32% and 28% respectively), while science and technology are only 8% (4% each). Afterwards, we reviewed the documents that were fully available. Consequently, 20 documents were included in the final pool of reviewing (Table 1). Most of them (65%) have over 10 sections or main articles.

## 4 Results

### 4.1 Literature Review Findings

Hereupon, we proceed with the main findings related to the structural elements of the proposed Charter. In reviewing the relevant charters, we identified four core categories that encapsulate the foundational elements necessary for establishing a robust and effective network: a) Mission, b) Content, c) Governance, and d) Logistics, as depicted in the following conceptual diagram (Fig. 2). Each category comprises key structural elements that collectively ensure the network's comprehensive and efficient operation.

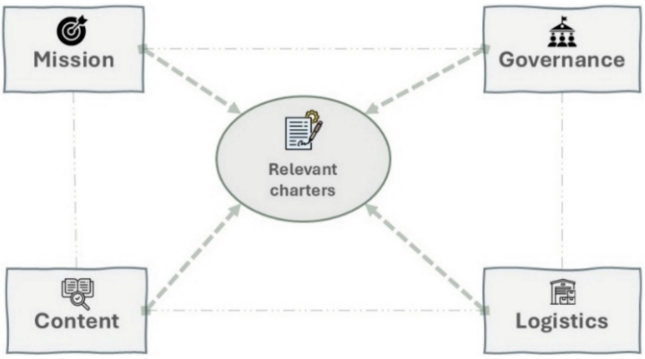



**Fig. 2.** Core categories for an Integrated Planning Network charter

Mission: The mission of any network is its driving force, providing a clear sense of purpose and direction. In the context of our study, the mission encompasses the network's vision, objectives, principles, and type of organisation. Vision portrays the strategic aspiration of the network, in other words what is the new ethos that the network tries to promote. Objectives detail the specific goals the network aims to achieve, guiding all activities and initiatives. Principles reflect the core values and ethical standards upheld by the network, ensuring consistency and integrity. The type of organisation defines the nature and scope of the network, outlining its structural and operational framework. Additionally, membership criteria fall under this category, specifying who can join the network and the terms of their participation, thus fostering the network's commitment to inclusivity and diversity.

Content: This category focuses on the substantive elements that define the network's operational framework. More specifically, it includes the rights and duties of members, providing clarity on the roles and responsibilities within the network. This category also outlines how committees are structured and operate, which is very pivotal for decision-making processes or monitoring. The advisory board, which is another crucial element, provides expert and strategic guidance, thus facilitating the network's effectiveness. Additionally, the procedures for modifying the charter are detailed in this category. Modifying a charter will increase the network's responsiveness to emerging needs and challenges.

Governance: Governing structures and the process of governing per se, are critical for maintaining credibility and transparent operations within the network. This category includes the assembly, which functions as the primary decision-making body, and the regulations that dictate the network's operations. The directorate of the network is responsible for implementing decisions and managing daily activities, properly ensuring alignment with the network's purpose and objectives. Plus, funding and financing mechanisms are integral to this category, since they provide the financial resources necessary not only for fostering, but also expanding the network's activities. This category also stresses the role of advisory boards and committees in supporting all types of governance actions, thereby supporting decision-making processes.

Logistics: This category addresses the practical and administrative aspects truly essential for the network's operation. It includes the name and address of the network, which are the most common identifiers. This category also entails the logistical aspects of funding and financing and has the potential ensure that resources are managed efficiently to support the network's activities. The type of organisation, while also a mission element, is crucial here as it defines the structural and administrational form required for logistic endeavours. Additionally, procedures for joining the network, detailed within this category, outline how individuals and organisations can become part of the network, thereby fostering growth and engagement.

What is more, we identified some key structural elements common in most relevant charters:

Membership: Membership criteria define who can join the Integrated Planning Network and under what conditions. Inclusive and diverse membership will enable a wide range of stakeholder to engage into the network's activities.

Objectives: The objectives present the specific goals that the network aims to achieve. They provide a clear direction for all the network's activities and initiatives, thus ensuring the purpose of the network.

Principles: Principles represent the core values and ethical standards adopted by the network. They guide decision-making processes and actions, ensuring integrity and consistency.

Rights and Duties: This element clarifies the roles and responsibilities of network members. Transparency and accountability can only be ensured, when a network defines clearly what is expected from and what is entitled to each member.

Committees: These are special groups destined to handle specific tasks or topics within the network. Committees facilitate effective decision-making, contributing to the efficient operation of the entire network.

Advisory Board: The advisory board provides expert guidance and oversight. Its role is to support the network's leadership with ideas, insights and recommendations. It could facilitate the network's efficiency.

Modification of Charter: Procedures for modifying the charter ensure that the network remains responsive to upcoming needs and challenges. This element allows for updates and (major or minor) changes to the document representing and governing the network.

Assembly: The assembly reflects the primary decision-making body within the network. It is responsible for major decisions and policies, safeguarding that the network's activities align with its objectives.

Regulations: Regulations are the rules that govern the network's operations. They provide consistency through a coherent but flexible framework for all activities and interactions within the network.

Directorate: The directorate is responsible for implementing decisions and managing daily activities of the network. This element ensures that the network's strategic objectives are translated into practical actions.

Funding-Financing: These elements involve the mechanisms for acquiring and managing financial resources necessary for sustaining the network's activities. Without proper funding the network might not experience growth or even stability.

Type of Organisation: This element defines the structural framework of the network. It outlines the nature and scope of the organisation, providing a clear understanding of its orientation, purpose and actions.

Name: The name is the main identifier of the network. It provides a unique identity, ensuring recognition and differentiation from other entities.

Address: The address serves as the physical or official location of the network. It is essential for administrative purposes and provides a point of contact for stakeholders.

The following table (Table 2) offers a detailed classification of these key structural elements across the four core categories. For instance, membership is crucial both for defining the network's mission and for ensuring a structured content framework. Similarly, funding and financing span governance and logistics, highlighting their dual role in strategic management and operational sustainability. This overlap manifests the interconnected nature of such categories, demonstrating how elements like advisory boards and committees are vital for various aspects of the network's structure.

**Table 2.** Reviewed charter documents

| | Mission | Content | Governance | Logistics |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Membership | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Objectives | ✓ | | | |
| Principles | ✓ | | | |
| Vision | ✓ | | | |
| Rights and Duties | | ✓ | | |
| Committees (Thematic, Advisory board and Directorate) | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Modification of charter | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Assembly | | | ✓ | |
| Regulations | | | ✓ | |
| Funding - Financing | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Type of Organisation | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| Name | | | | ✓ |
| Address | | | | ✓ |

In case the Transnational Network of Integrated Planning Labs, addresses the aforementioned elements properly, then it can ensure a robust organisational and conceptual model. This model not only supports effective knowledge exchange and collaboration among members but also ensures the network's resilience and adaptability in a dynamic environment. The comprehensive framework provided by these categories facilitates a structured yet flexible approach to building and sustaining the network, aligning its strategic objectives with practical operational needs.

### 4.2 Building a Charter for a Transnational Integrated Planning Network

The proposed Transnational Network should foster innovation, collaboration, and knowledge exchange among professionals, academics, and organisations. This section demonstrates the development of a proper charter, which is a rather critical step to ensure a successful operation of a network. Apparently, this charter outlines the vision, mission, structure, and guiding principles of the network, providing a solid foundation for its operations and growth. Before concentrating on the charter itself, we should underscore the key terms and the operational framework that dictate the rationale of such a network focused on Integrated Planning. First and foremost, this Network endeavours to influence higher education ecosystem towards integrated planning by approaching integration under a comprehensive threefold framework:

- *Discipline-based integration*: Highlighting the complementary value of different disciplines relevant to sustainable planning (urbanism, mobility, transport planning, participatory planning, evidence-based planning, urban analytics, social sciences etc.)

- *Method-based integration*: Initiating the dialogue among different approaches and schools of thought involved in planning (quantitative approaches, qualitative approaches, participatory approaches)
- *Role-based integration*: Including the different city-panning knowledge actors (urban education and research, urban practice, urban policy) and the different experiences they provide, as crucial input for creating knowledge towards integrated planning.

The key terms of this charter are: a) Integrated Planning and b) Network.

Integrated Planning reflects a holistic approach to spatial development, combining urban planning, mobility, and participatory processes to ensure sustainable and functional urban communities. Our focus extends beyond traditional rationales where planners acted independently, thus fostering multi-disciplinary collaboration to address the complex challenges of modern cities.

The Transnational Network is a gathering of professionals, academics, policymakers and community leaders connected across various places, but united by a common goal: to initiate the dialogue between the different city planning approaches in terms of disciplines, methods and roles. Through this network, members gain access to a rich reservoir of resources, data, expertise, and collaborative opportunities. The network facilitates active interaction and communication between each member and promotes Integrated Planning principles to the broader community.

The most essential parts (i.e., starters) are shown with red line colour, whereas parts that should be addressed in the future, following the establishment of the network, are illustrated in orange line colour (Fig. 3).




**Fig. 3.** Structure of the proposed Transnational Network Charter

Hereby, we present each article of the charter. First, we show the most essential parts (8 articles) that should be well-defined by the initiators.

1. Network Name: Transnational Network of Integrated Labs
2. Objectives: The multi-stakeholder network will aim at: a) Systemic transnational collaboration between different Labs, b) inclusive and participatory approach during the Network's activities, c) knowledge co-creation between various planning actors, d) upskilling planning actors on climate-resilient integrated planning, e) cultivating an integrated planning culture and f) a long-term hub bringing together different stakeholders.
3. Vision: The network envisions becoming a leading network of (diverse) labs that pioneers integrated urban planning methods and drives the global agenda for climate-resilient and vibrant cities. Plus, the network endeavours to advance HEd ecosystem knowledge for promoting truly integrated planning. Actually, this planning concept embraces integration based on combining disciplines, roles and approaches (qualitative, quantitative and participatory).
4. Purpose: The purpose of the Transnational Network of Integrated Labs is to facilitate knowledge exchange, research collaboration, and capacity-building activities among member institutions, promoting best practices and innovative solutions in spatial planning, urban planning, and transport planning.

4a. Principles

The network is firmly dedicated to core principles which are the following: Sustainability, Climate Justice, Spatial Justice and Equity, (Active) Participation, Democratic procedures, Knowledge exchange and Inclusiveness. These principles function as a strong guidance for the network's operations and underpin our commitment to an Integrated Planning rationale. The network stands for bringing different actors together under the common vision of making our cities better.

5. Target groups: The project aims to appraise diversity and cooperation; therefore, it addresses the needs of various target groups, which one may find below, categorised in primary and other:

Primary target groups

- City Planning Higher-Education Students: As future practitioners and academics in city planning, these students will benefit significantly from the network's initiatives.
- City Planning Academics (HE Education Teachers and Researchers): These essential actors in city planning education and research will be provided with innovative educational methods, tools, and materials through the network's database.

Other target groups

- Officers in Public Administration and City Authorities: These city planning policymakers will gain insights into policy recommendations and integrated planning applications, which are crucial for their roles.
- City Planning Practitioners: As direct implementers of urban and mobility projects, practitioners will benefit from improved insights into the needs for integrating comprehensive planning in practice.
- Community Members and Associations: Representing a broader group, community members and local associations interested in climate-resilient and integrated planning approaches receive fruitful support from the network. Plus, the network may provide

substantial basic knowledge on integrated planning to these groups and help them engage actively in planning processes.

6. Registered address:
   The administrative headquarters of the network shall be located at a designated office address, as determined by the initiators.
7. Membership: Membership is open to individuals, institutions, associations, organisations and civic society dealing with spatial, urban or transport planning. Our network aims to support diversity by bringing together members coming from different expertise and perspectives. These members could be supported by the network to co-create innovative planning solutions.
8. Rights and Duties:

8a. Rights:

- Participation in Activities: Members have the right to participate in all network activities like seminars or webinars, workshops, and conferences.
- Access to Resources: Members can access several data resources and information shared within the network.
- Collaboration and Synergies: Members can collaborate with other members to develop synergies and support the network's role.
- Plan Communication Events: Members can organise academic and professional events to share their knowledge and best practices.
- Receive Updates: Members will receive the latest news and publications from the network.

8b. Duties:

- Adherence to Policies: Members have to respect the network's principles and ethical guidelines. This will ensure that activities are carried out with integrity and professionalism.
- Contribution to Initiatives and Actions: Members should contribute to various initiatives, working groups, and committees in order to advance the network's objectives.

8c. Desirable contributions:

- Active Participation: Members are expected to actively engage in meetings, projects, initiatives and discussions, (especially) fostering collaboration actions.
- Data Contribution: Members are encouraged to contribute their own data to support the network's initiatives. All data contributions will be reviewed before being included in the Virtual Knowledge Hub by the Executive Committee.

By upholding these rights and duties, members help create a dynamic, inclusive, and effective network dedicated to innovative planning solutions.

Hereupon, we demonstrate the parts that should be decided in advance. We do not only briefly describe these parts, but in some of them we also provide initial thoughts.

9. Management-Administration: The network shall be managed and administered by an Executive Committee, composed of representatives from member institutions. The Executive Committee is responsible for strategic planning, resource allocation, and decision-making processes.
10. Assembly: An annual assembly of members (representatives) shall be convened addressing the following: a) to review the network's activities, b) to discuss key issues, and c) set priorities for the upcoming year or years. The assembly is the central platform for discussion, collaboration, and networking among the members of the network.
11. Representatives: In case of an institution, then a representative shall be appointed to serve as a liaison with the network and participate in meetings and other decision-making events on behalf of their respective institutions. The Members-Representatives are pivotal for the network with key responsibilities such as:

- Representation: Presenting the endeavours of their organisations and (preferably) echoing diverse perspectives in decision-making.
- Annual Meetings: Attending and (if possible) contributing to discussions on strategic decisions or local initiatives.
- Working Groups: Participating in committees dealing with research, policy, member engagement and specific projects.
- Voting Rights: Voting on key issues; for instance, elections of Executive Committee members and approval of projects/actions.

12. Committees: The Executive Committee will establish thematic committees or working groups to address specific topics, initiatives or projects, considering the network's activities and objectives. These committees shall mainly consist of members appointed by the Executive Committee. Nevertheless, they could also include external experts or stakeholders if needed.

12a. Executive Committee: This group is responsible for daily management and oversight of the network. Composed of elected and appointed members, their responsibilities include:

- Strategic Leadership: Setting the strategy, developing long-term plans and monitoring process.
- Policy Development: Formulating policies on membership, ethics, partnerships and financial management.
- Financial Monitoring: Managing financial conditions, preparing budgets and achieving sustainability through fundraising and grants.
- Operational Management: Steering initiatives, supporting the actions of working groups and managing the members of the network.
- Communication and Outreach: Setting communication strategies, managing the website, social media, newsletters and public relations.
- Evaluation and Improvement: Assessing network performance, collecting feedback and making necessary adjustments for improvement.

12b. Thematic committees: These groups focus on specific areas, supporting decision-making and the strategy of the network. Each committee will include diverse experts and stakeholders that will meet specific criteria and will have crystal-clear leadership roles. Their primary responsibilities shall be the following:

- Research and Events: Conducting research, organising events and developing policy recommendations.
- Trend Analysis: Identifying trends, challenges, and opportunities within their topic.
- Collaboration: Working with other committees and external partners to enrich insights and strategies.
- Regular Meetings and Reporting: Meeting regularly, submitting reports and adhering to the network's principles.
- Performance Evaluation: Carrying out regular evaluations and incorporating feedback for continuous improvement.

13. Modification of Articles: Any modification to this charter shall require approval by a two-thirds majority vote of the Executive Committee, followed by ratification by the general assembly of members. Amendments may be proposed by the Executive Committee or by member institutions in good standing, with due consideration given to the network's objectives and principles.
14. Funding-Financing: This is a forthcoming element. Specifically, funding and financing issues should be addressed in the future, following the establishment of the network. Initially, the network will not have the capacity to manage economic resources and funding.

## 5 Discussion and Conclusions

This deliverable has successfully established a preliminary charter for an Integrated Planning Network by incorporating a comprehensive narrative review of existing charter documents. As a foundational step in the creation of the Transnational Network, this charter is of preeminent importance, as it describes the scope, governance, principles, values, and activities of the network (in line with [7, 36]). However, it does not only outline the operational framework of the network but could also serve as a vital instrument for outreach and engagement, facilitating the dissemination of the Integrated Planning principles within the broader planning community. After all, dissemination is an integral part of any research initiative [37].

The developed charter underscores the democratic identity of the network, highlighting the necessity for integrated planning when it comes to contemporary urban, mobility and environmental challenges [4]. By adhering to the outlined methodology, we ensured that the development process was thorough and inclusive, reflecting a wide range of perspectives and best practices from existing charter documents. Notably, this study lays a solid foundation for future efforts, providing a clear and structured basis for potential members to join and actively participate in such a network. To this end, the authors developed two fundamental tools for accommodating potential members to join the network; a) an open leaflet outlining the key principles and actions of the network and b) a user friendly form enabling registration with the network. Furthermore, the cohesive and participatory structure of the charter ensures that it can effectively guide the network towards its goals of fostering collaborative and integrated planning solutions. Moving on to the target groups, it has been already underlined that this paper aims to foster diversity and cooperation. Consequently, the developed charter targets various groups that will benefit distinctly from the activities of the proposed network. Demarcating explicitly the

target groups of planning processes will support the actions of the Integrated Planning Network through an inclusive manner.

The establishment of a Transnational Planning Network reveals significant implications for integrated spatial planning [38]. By fostering a transnational collaboration framework, the network can serve as a prototype for promoting interdisciplinary approaches and ensuring that planning processes consider diverse perspectives. The importance of such a network lies in its capacity to facilitate knowledge exchange and support innovative planning strategies tailored to contemporary urban, transport and environmental challenges. However, making this network a reality requires overcoming key obstacles, such as aligning different planning methodologies and governance structures. The development of the charter was a crucial step in this process, as it obtained insights from multiple existing charters. This process, while invaluable in ensuring solid findings, also presented a notable challenge in terms of interpreting diverse sets of information coming from different organisational frameworks.

Despite the preliminary formulation of the charter, several limitations and areas for future research remain. Additional charters from various associations could further refine the principles and operational mechanisms of the present network, thus, ensuring broader representation. Moreover, a participatory approach in co-creating or periodically updating the charter would enhance its responsiveness to evolving planning needs. Another critical take is the dissemination of the network; strategies should be developed to enhance its visibility and encourage active engagement from policymakers, practitioners, and researchers. Plus, further exploration is needed to clarify the specific benefits the network offers to its members, ranging from knowledge-sharing platforms to policy implications and collaborative projects. These considerations will be crucial for strengthening the network's long-term impact and ensuring its role as a vivid and inclusive space for integrated planning initiatives.

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