

Measuring and Monitoring (M&M) Working Group Report

LORDIMAS Experts Meeting: Policy Recommendations

September 2025



Funded by
the European Union

GO-LI.EU

Project identification

Project full title Governance of the Living-in.EU

Project acronym Go Li.EU

Project number 101083615

Call DIGITAL-2021-DEPLOY-01

Starting date 1 October 2022

Duration 48 months

Document identification

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Internal reviewers

Work package Monitoring and Measuring

Tasks involved Discussion on amendments to be made to the Policy Recommendations on the LORDIMAS Dashboard and group brainstorming session on community engagement tied to said recommendations.

Type Monitoring and Measuring

Dissemination level Internal (Meeting itself) with outputs external (amendment of Policy Recommendations and execution of community engagement strategies)

Delivery date 2025

Submission date 2025

Version	Date	Contributor	Description
0.1	23/09/2025	Kyle Galea	First Draft

0.2



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1 Introduction

The meeting was formally opened by the M&M working group lead, who welcomed participants and set the tone for this second and final expert session of the year. They underlined the strategic importance of this gathering, noting that the agenda was structured around three priorities: first, a review of the current setup of the LORDIMAS policy recommendations tool; second, a discussion on the identification of key policy learnings and recommendations derived from presented good practices; and third, a forward-looking exploration of how policy recommendations can feed into community building and practical engagement with local and regional authorities.

The chair of the M&M working group, Jordi Ortuño Ribé, drew attention to the significant milestone achieved in terms of participation. LORDIMAS had nearly reached 400 participants, a figure deemed significant given the crowded landscape of EU-level digital platforms and tools. This achievement reflects both the quantitative momentum of the initiative and the qualitative richness of best practices submitted by cities across Europe. However, the chair also stressed that participation numbers and data collection, while vital, are not sufficient on their own. The next step must be to translate this input into meaningful outcomes. Policy recommendations should thus serve as one of the most tangible outputs of the platform, ensuring they reflect the diversity of cities in Europe, ranging from large metropolitan hubs to small municipalities, and provide actionable guidance that supports digital transformation at the local level.

The chair highlighted that LORDIMAS is not an isolated tool but a part of a larger ecosystem. The insights and data gathered feed into EU-wide initiatives on digital twins and citizen-centred digital services. This underscores the long-term potential of the platform: beyond serving as an assessment tool, LORDIMAS is positioned as an engine for shaping policy, driving adoption and embedding digital transformation practices across Europe.

2 Context and background

The Monitoring and Measuring Working Group (M&M WG) operates under the Living-in.EU initiative as a collaborative platform uniting local and regional authorities, EU institutions and key stakeholders such as ESPON, ERRIN and the Committee of the Regions. Its core mandate is to co-create methodologies and tools that support the systematic tracking of digital transformation across Europe's cities and regions. Through regular engagement and technical input, the group has shaped the foundational frameworks behind both the LORDI indicators and the LORDIMAS self-assessment tool. Since early 2023, the group has facilitated expert consultations, piloting activities, and iterative feedback processes to ensure the tools are practical, relevant, and grounded in local realities.

LORDI is a conceptual framework designed to assess digital transformation at the local and regional level using a structured set of 29 indicators across seven dimensions: **Governance, Service Design, Data Management, Interoperability, Technology, Service Delivery, and Networking**. Developed through a collaborative process and informed by the practical needs of public authorities, the framework serves as a reference model for measuring progress in digital maturity. By offering a consistent yet adaptable approach, LORDI enables policymakers, administrators, and stakeholders to benchmark their digital capabilities, identify gaps, and align efforts with EU-level digital objectives and funding priorities.

LORDIMAS is a digital self-assessment tool developed from the LORDI framework, offering local and regional authorities a user-friendly way to evaluate their digital maturity annually. Designed

in partnership with ESPON and co-developed with the European Commission and Committee of the Regions, LORDIMAS allows cities and regions to assess their performance, compare results across peers, and access tailored policy recommendations. Since its launch in 2023, the tool has gained significant traction, with close to 400 local authorities participating. A first annual report based on 99 submissions was published in December 2024, drawing conclusion regarding EU cities’ digital maturity and providing qualitative assessment at subnational level for the Digital Decade annual report. The tool supports both strategic planning and evidence-based policymaking, while also fostering peer learning and identifying leading practices in Europe’s digital transformation landscape.

The LORDIMAS experts, a selected group of practitioners, policymakers, and digital transformation specialists from across Europe who contribute their practical knowledge and strategic insight to improve the LORDIMAS tool and its broader ecosystem, convened on the 19th of June 2025 in order to share a number of local and regional best practises curated by the experts themselves towards both mutual learning as well as to upload said best practises to the LORDIMAS portal itself.

A list of the experts and key be found below:

Expert and Key Participants:	
Name	Region / Organisation
Turczl Vanda	Burgundy-Franche-Comte Regional Council, France
Sveva Ianesse	University of Padova (Italy)
Andrea Pareschi	Emilia-Romagna Region (Delegation to the EU)
Aur�lie Louguet	SILK Association, France.
Barbara Santi	Emilia-Romagna Region
John Tziouras	Region of Western Macedonia (Greece)
Laurence Johannsen	Luxembourg Institute of Science and Technology (Luxembourg)
Maurits Hagemans	PXL University of Applied Sciences & Arts (Belgium)
Raffaele Bini	EDIH DATAlife (Galicia, Spain)
Roberto Carella	MT.EUROPE, Apulia Region (Italy)
Rodolphe Doit�	FARI – AI for the Common Good Institute (Brussels, Belgium)
Susanna Fontana	Fondazione FORMIT (Italy)
Anke Schuster	Committee of the Regions (CoR)
Marek Bobis	Committee of the Regions (CoR)
Jordi Ortu�o Rib�	Barcelona City Council and the Chair of the Monitoring & Measuring Working Group

3 Review of Policy Recommendations on the LORDIMAS Tool

The discussion then turned to a review of how policy recommendations are currently presented and communicated through the LORDIMAS platform. Participants generally welcomed the clarity and usability of the existing recommendations, but several important shortcomings were identified. The current recommendations tend to be generic, often not sufficiently tailored to the specific needs or maturity levels of individual cities. This dilutes their practical utility. Experts emphasized the need for greater

contextualisation, linking recommendations more explicitly to the digital maturity scores generated by the tool.

Another recurring theme was the need to make policy recommendations more actionable. At present, the recommendations provide guidance at a high level, but they often fall short of offering concrete pathways to implementation. The inclusion of references to EU-developed frameworks, open-source technologies, and existing guidance materials was seen as a necessary next step. For example, procurement guidelines, co-creation toolkits, and interoperability frameworks already exist within the EU ecosystem and could be integrated into LORDIMAS as complementary resources.

Experts also strongly supported building explicit links between policy recommendations and the best practices already submitted to the platform. By showcasing use cases, such as the examples from Helsinki, Zagreb or Portuguese municipalities, LORDIMAS can help cities see how abstract policy advice has been successfully translated into practice. This bridging function between recommendations and real-world implementation was viewed as critical to ensuring impact.

Key recommendations included:

- Tailor policy recommendations to different maturity levels (e.g., emerging, intermediate, advanced), making them more relevant for cities at different stages of digital transformation.
- Provide contextual resources alongside each recommendation, such as links to EU frameworks, open-source solutions, or procurement guides.
- Connect recommendations with specific use cases from the platform, highlighting replicable lessons and strategies.
- Consider visual tools such as roadmaps or dashboards to help cities understand which recommendations are most relevant at different stages of maturity.

4 Identification of Key Policy Learnings and Recommendations from Good Practices

This agenda point focused on the substantive aspect of the Policy Recommendations, requesting that the LORDIMAS experts critically analyse the present set of recommendations towards ensuring that they have remained fit-for-purpose and relevant in a changing European policy environment. Experts and working group leaders reflected on submitted recommendations, shared their own insights, and proposed concrete amendments to strengthen the recommendations. What emerged was a rich set of cross-cutting lessons that provide not only validation of existing approaches but also suggestions for refinement.

Governance

A consistent theme across the governance-related discussions was the central role of **political support and transparency**. Good practices such as those in Zagreb demonstrated that projects with strong political buy-in, from mayors, city councils or senior leadership, had a greater chance of success. Experts proposed amending the recommendations to explicitly highlight the importance of political backing as a precondition for effective digital transformation.

Transparency and inclusivity were also emphasised. Leaders suggested that recommendations should encourage municipalities to adopt “transparency by design” approaches, embedding openness and

accountability into governance structures. In addition, inclusivity should not be treated as optional; vulnerable groups must be explicitly considered in digital strategies.

Another amendment proposed was to explore ways of linking governance recommendations with the **maturity scores** produced by LORDIMAS. Instead of generic advice, recommendations could be adapted to reflect whether a city is at an early, intermediate, or advanced stage of maturity. While technically challenging, this would ensure relevance and applicability.

Key governance-related recommendations:

- Ensure political will and leadership are explicitly integrated into governance recommendations.
- Promote transparency by design and embed inclusivity, with a focus on vulnerable groups.
- Consider tailoring recommendations to different maturity levels, possibly grouped into low, medium, and high ranges.
- Explore connections with best practices such as Helsinki's flexible governance models (e.g., public sector-owned companies).

Service Design

In the domain of service design, the focus was on embedding iterative and citizen-centred approaches. Experts noted that digital transformation is not a one-off process: services must evolve continuously to remain relevant. Recommendations were amended to include **agile and iterative methods**, incorporating periodic citizen feedback loops.

Another key amendment concerned procurement. Drawing on examples such as Berlin, participants suggested that procurement processes should include **testing phases** and promote open-source solutions. This would help avoid vendor lock-in and allow smaller municipalities to experiment with innovative approaches before full-scale roll-out.

Key service design-related recommendations:

- Embed agile, iterative processes with regular citizen feedback.
- Mandate inclusion of testing phases in procurement processes.
- Encourage adoption of open-source tools to reduce dependency on single vendors.
- Link service design recommendations with existing use cases in the LORDIMAS platform to show practical implementation.

Data Management

Data management emerged as one of the most discussed areas. Amendments focused on three key points:

- **Adoption of EU frameworks:** Experts suggested explicitly recommending that municipalities build on existing EU-developed frameworks such as data spaces, interoperability standards, and ethics guidelines to ensure coherence.
- **Data sovereignty and reversibility:** Concerns about over-reliance on global technology providers led to recommendations encouraging the adoption of sovereign European solutions and ensuring reversibility of data (so municipalities can switch providers without losing control).

- **Citizen empowerment:** Policy recommendations should include clearer guidance on how municipalities can empower citizens by communicating the benefits of data practices transparently, thereby encouraging trust and participation.

Key data management-related recommendations therefore included:

- Encourage adoption of EU frameworks and standards to ensure coherence.
- Promote sovereign European solutions and safeguard data reversibility.
- Build citizen trust by communicating clearly about data usage and benefits.
- Maintain technology neutrality while ensuring interoperability across solutions.

Interoperability

For interoperability, participants stressed that one-size-fits-all solutions are unrealistic. Instead, interoperability must be ensured across a diversity of systems, especially as different municipalities pursue different data models. The principle of **technology neutrality** was highlighted as essential: policy recommendations should not privilege a single model of data sharing or architecture, but rather ensure that diverse approaches can work together.

Key interoperability-related recommendations:

- Emphasise technology neutrality in interoperability policy.
- Promote practical mechanisms for ensuring systems can communicate across different local and regional contexts.
- Link interoperability to best practices where small municipalities have successfully adopted shared solutions.

Service Delivery

Service delivery was highlighted as the most critical pillar for small municipalities, since it represents the most direct interface between digital transformation and citizen experience. Working group leaders noted that while other pillars may appear abstract, service delivery is where outcomes are most tangible. Yet, the current LORDIMAS recommendations in this area are relatively sparse.

Experts called for expanding the scope of recommendations, with a focus on **peer learning and replication**. Small municipalities, in particular, benefit from learning about how similar-sized peers have delivered services digitally. Experts also suggested referencing repositories such as the AI Watch Tech repository, which includes use cases that could inform municipal service delivery.

Key service delivery-related recommendations:

- Expand the number of service delivery recommendations in LORDIMAS.
- Promote peer-to-peer learning and replication of service models.
- Encourage use of repositories and case collections such as AI Watch Tech.
- Recognise that for smaller municipalities, service delivery is often the entry point into digital transformation.

Technology

The technology pillar was seen as underdeveloped, with only one existing recommendation in the tool. Participants strongly advocated for expanding this section. Amendments included better alignment with the data management pillar, ensuring that technological adoption strategies are consistent with broader data strategies.

Open-source solutions and advanced technologies (such as AI and digital twins) should be encouraged where appropriate, but balanced by a focus on sustainability and usability for municipalities with limited capacity. Experts also stressed the importance of linking technology adoption to governance, procurement, and citizen engagement.

Key technology-related recommendations:

- Expand the number of recommendations under the technology pillar.
- Align technology adoption with data management strategies.
- Encourage open-source and advanced technologies while ensuring sustainability and usability.
- Link technology choices to governance, procurement, and citizen engagement structures.

Networking

Finally, the networking pillar was discussed as a means to embed LORDIMAS within broader ecosystems. Experts proposed strengthening recommendations to encourage cities to participate in **multi-level networks** (local, regional, national, EU) that provide knowledge exchange and advocacy opportunities.

Another suggestion was to include references to **digital innovation hubs (DIHs)**, which can act as intermediaries helping municipalities to adopt technologies, share knowledge, and access EU funding opportunities. Experts also raised the possibility of formalising networks of universities, research institutes, and consultancies that already support municipalities, ensuring that LORDIMAS is recognised and promoted within these ecosystems.

Key networking-related recommendations:

- Encourage active participation in multi-level networks to exchange knowledge and practices.
- Link municipalities with digital innovation hubs (DIHs) as intermediaries.
- Leverage universities and research institutes to document and validate good practices.
- Position networking as a means of amplifying the impact of LORDIMAS across Europe.

This input has been used to update the [recommendations available on the LORDIMAS platform](#).

5 Policy Recommendations and Community Building

The final discussion focused on strategies for community building and for leveraging LORDIMAS as a platform to engage participants more deeply. The central challenge identified was ensuring that the tool does not remain a static dashboard but evolves into a living community of practice. Several proposals emerged around how to sustain engagement and foster long-term value.

One proposal was to establish a network of “ambassadors”, practitioners and experts who can represent LORDIMAS at local and regional events, acting as multipliers of knowledge. This would help to raise visibility and encourage uptake, particularly among municipalities that have not yet engaged. Complementing this, experts recommended the development of toolkits and ready-

made communication materials that make it easier for cities to understand and promote the benefits of participation.

Another key point was the need to connect LORDIMAS more systematically with existing EU-funded digitalisation initiatives. By embedding the tool into ongoing dissemination efforts, it could gain greater visibility and be positioned as a standard methodology for assessing digital maturity. Particular attention was given to the needs of small municipalities, which often face barriers to participation due to limited resources and technical capacity. Tailored support mechanisms, such as simplified guidance, partnerships with digital innovation hubs, or targeted incentives, were suggested to address this gap.

Finally, participants raised concerns about the long-term sustainability of the community, particularly as the Living-in-EU initiative approaches its conclusion. LORDIMAS should be anchored as one of its concrete outputs, with a clear plan for continuation, funding, and political recognition. By positioning the tool as a source of evidence for policymaking at EU and national levels, its strategic relevance can be reinforced.

Key recommendations for community building:

- Establish a network of ambassadors to promote LORDIMAS locally and regionally.
- Provide toolkits and ready-made materials to lower entry barriers for participation.
- Integrate LORDIMAS into EU-funded project dissemination channels.
- Develop tailored support strategies for small municipalities, including links to digital innovation hubs.
- Ensure sustainability by anchoring LORDIMAS as a recognised outcome of the Living-in-EU initiative.
- Advocate for political recognition and funding to strengthen LORDIMAS as an evidence base for digital policy.

6 Next Steps and Conclusion of the Meeting

Participants reflected on the progress made and the steps that must follow. The discussion confirmed that LORDIMAS has matured into a widely recognised EU-level tool for assessing digital maturity but also highlighted that its long-term success depends on sustained development, user engagement and institutional anchoring.

Several concrete follow-up actions were identified. Experts committed to submitting further amendments to the shared template so that policy recommendations can be refined pillar by pillar. The chairs stressed that written inputs would be critical to consolidate the diverse perspectives expressed during the meeting into a coherent set of actionable outputs. Participants were also encouraged to continue submitting best practices to enrich the repository, ensuring that examples remain up to date and reflective of the full diversity of European municipalities.

The idea of creating a safe, possibly anonymised space for sharing “bad practices”, or lessons learned from failures, was welcomed as a novel way of increasing honesty and practical value. A small working group of interested experts was invited to convene separately to explore how such a mechanism could be designed.

Looking forward, the chairs reiterated the importance of positioning LORDIMAS within the broader Living-in-EU movement and related European initiatives. They underlined the ambition for a year-

end report synthesising findings, mapping progress across Europe, and highlighting best practices such as the Portuguese case. This report will serve both as feedback to participants and as a dissemination tool for broader political advocacy.

Finally, there was consensus that community building must remain a top priority. Engagement cannot stop at assessment; municipalities need to feel supported and connected to a wider ecosystem that helps them act on the insights produced by LORDIMAS. Building ambassador networks, linking with digital innovation hubs, and providing toolkits will be key to translating participation into tangible impact.

In their closing remarks, the Chairs thanked all participants for their active contributions and collaborative spirit. They stressed that while challenges remain, particularly around tailoring recommendations, engaging small municipalities and ensuring sustainability, the trajectory of LORDIMAS is highly promising. The tool has already achieved broad uptake and proven its value as a dashboard of digital maturity across Europe. The next phase must focus on consolidating these gains, refining recommendations, and ensuring that communities can translate assessment into meaningful digital transformation.

As for concrete next steps, this meeting served as the final official convening of the LORDIMAS Experts group for the year 2025. The programme for the next and final year of the Go Li.EU CSA will be developed within the Living-in.EU Consortium. The LORDIMAS experts were invited to pass on their own recommendations and suggestions for key topics and agenda items to be considered moving into the future.

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