

Brussels, 17 May 2024

COST

## DECISION

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Subject: Memorandum of Understanding for the implementation of the COST Action  
“Architectural and Urban Ambiances of European Cities” (CitySenZ) CA23145

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The COST Member Countries will find attached the Memorandum of Understanding for the COST Action Architectural and Urban Ambiances of European Cities approved by the Committee of Senior Officials through written procedure on 17 May 2024.

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## **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

For the implementation of a COST Action designated as

### **COST Action CA23145 ARCHITECTURAL AND URBAN AMBIANCES OF EUROPEAN CITIES (CitySenZ)**

The COST Members through the present Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) wish to undertake joint activities of mutual interest and declare their common intention to participate in the COST Action, referred to above and described in the Technical Annex of this MoU.

The Action will be carried out in accordance with the set of COST Implementation Rules approved by the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO), or any document amending or replacing them.

The main aim and objective of the Action is to The main objective of this action is to advance scientific knowledge in architectural and urban ambiances through international and interdisciplinary efforts, integrating ambiances into legislation, policies, and practices for better city planning. The Action aims at harmonizing various perspectives, emphasizing sensory aspects and improving the quality of living spaces.. This will be achieved through the specific objectives detailed in the Technical Annex.

The present MoU enters into force on the date of the approval of the COST Action by the CSO.

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## **OVERVIEW**

### **Summary**

In the manufacturing process of living spaces, a predominant top-down approach, from project inception to delivery to users, has often led to post-construction issues that are costly to resolve. These issues may include areas overexposed to noise, a lack of cool shaded spaces, and various other challenges that affect the quality of life. This highlights the significance of exploring the lived spaces through ambiances in the missing "bottom-up" flow.

Moreover, ambiances studies, which has evolved since the 1980s, offers a more comprehensive understanding compared to earlier post-project evaluations, including post-occupancy assessments that originated in the 1960s. It encompasses various trends, such as the phenomenological approach, artistic works that utilize ambiances as a creative medium, environmental psychology, ambiance engineering, and architectural achievements by figures like Peter Zumthor. These trends significantly contribute to our understanding of architectural and urban ambiances.

This COST Action seeks to unite diverse perspectives and methodologies to understand, exchange and harmonize the concepts, definitions, by collecting archives, and defining cooperative objectives by harmonizing the technical language and draw perspectives for the future of architectural and urban ambiances in European cities and beyond. It focuses on holistically integrating the "bottom-up" approach, including sensitive experiences of ambiances, into the design, construction, and management of living spaces. By emphasizing the sensory dimension of ambiances, this aims to highlight solutions that prioritize the human experience in urban planning. One uses a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach to positively influence architectural and urban policies and practices both in Europe and globally.

<b>Areas of Expertise Relevant for the Action</b>	<b>Keywords</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other humanities: Cultural heritage, cultural memory</li> <li>• Arts: Performing arts</li> <li>• Other social sciences: Qualitative methods for the social sciences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ambiances</li> <li>• Quality of life</li> <li>• Sensitive space</li> <li>• Cultures</li> <li>• Urban strategic vision</li> </ul>

### **Specific Objectives**

To achieve the main objective described in this MoU, the following specific objectives shall be accomplished:

#### Research Coordination

- **DEFINING:** The goal is to establish a shared definition of ambiances to serve as a common reference for the project.
- **DATA COLLECTION AND ARCHIVING:** To systematically collect and organize data and resources related to architectural and urban ambiances.
- **BALANCING AND ALIGNING:** Create a common understanding of ambiances by aligning diverse perspectives within the project.
- **INNOVATION SCOUTING:** Identify exemplary projects that successfully incorporate sensory aspects and ambiances into their designs.
- **OUTREACHING AND TRAINING:** Expand project influence through result-sharing, public awareness, partnerships, and stakeholder training.
- **International Best Practices:** Systematically research and compile global best practices demonstrating

effective ambience use in public space design, creating a repository of successful case studies.

- **Conceptual Framework:** Develop influential concepts for enhancing public space ambience, harmonizing and translating definitions for ambience, comfort, experience design, and sustainability.
- **Future Perspectives:** Identify emerging issues that will shape the future of ambience research and practice, providing a forward-looking perspective.

#### Capacity Building

- **Collaborative Expertise:** Facilitate collaboration among diverse stakeholders, including NGOs, associations, artists, architects, and designers to document their ambience-shaping expertise, amplifying a spectrum of perspectives.
- **Expert Knowledge Exchange:** Establish a cross-disciplinary platform for architects, landscape architects, designers, and artists to share insights on ambience.
- **Regulatory Assessment:** Collaborate with city managers to assess existing ambience-related regulations, their effectiveness, and the need for new or revised regulations.
- **Tools and Innovations:** Partner with SMEs to identify tools, techniques, and innovations for shaping ambience, structuring practical knowledge.
- **Innovative Education:** Identify methods for teaching and managing public space ambience, enhancing private and public space quality.
- **Strategic Communication:** Organize a strategic campaign via the Action website and social media to share findings, best practices, and knowledge.

## TECHNICAL ANNEX

### 1. S&T EXCELLENCE

#### 1.1 SOUNDNESS OF THE CHALLENGE

##### 1.1.1. DESCRIPTION OF THE STATE OF THE ART

This COST Action deals with the architectural and urban Ambiences of European cities and beyond. It seeks to unite diverse perspectives and methodologies to understand, exchange and harmonize the concepts and definitions by collecting archives, and defining cooperative objectives by harmonizing the technical language and draw perspectives for the future of architectural and urban ambiances in European cities and beyond.

Urbanization in Europe is marked by processes of creating living spaces, both indoor and outdoor, private and public, which follow a top-down approach, from project commissioning to delivery to the end user. However, once put into use, the resulting ambiances often bear certain shortcomings. These issues may include areas overexposed to noise, leading to public health costs, and a lack of cool shaded spaces, which impacts the environment negatively when energy-intensive technical solutions are implemented and various other challenges that affect the quality of life and natural environments. The costs of rectifying these errors are greater than if sensitive aspects and ambiances were considered earlier in the construction and urbanization process. On the other hand, a key concept deserving in-depth exploration is 'bottom-up' flow.

Since the 1980s, the field of ambiance theory has made significant progress, delving more deeply than post-project evaluations. Various trends have arisen, including the phenomenological approach, environmental psychology, ambiance engineering (focusing on thermal and acoustic aspects), and the work of architects like Peter Zumthor and Elisabeth Diller, who emphasize the sensory aspects of spaces. Artists have also explored ambiance in their works, utilizing sensory elements to engage with the public and present fresh perspectives on living. These artistic contributions have been instrumental in expanding our comprehension of ambiances and highlighting their impact on our encounters with urban and architectural settings, each in their own way and sometimes with different definitions and vocabulary.

While the regulation and standardization of living spaces in Europe are extensive and field-specific, covering aspects like thermal and acoustic considerations, there remains a lack of clarity on how these various environmental factors interrelate and affect end-users, even though the concept of ambiance has been well-researched since the 1980s.

Even more, many actions have already taken this path of paradigm shift, such as: (1) Consideration of the composition of the soundscape instead of simple noise control; (2) The more ecological approach to architecture and landscape accelerated by the climate emergency; (3) The very recent need to propose a new reflection through a European project, which is already under construction, a New-Bauhaus adapted to the recent needs of our time (whose principles of the original initiative were educational reform, the unification of the arts and know-how, functionality and rationalization, the use of new materials, gender equality as a social action, the encouragement of artistic and experimental research, which made it possible to develop new ideas and techniques, etc.).

The question that then arises is, do all these approaches, as necessary as they are, work in the same concerted direction?

The primary hypothesis of this action is that the concept of Ambiance, characterized by its trans-disciplinarity, human scale, focus on citizens' lived experiences, and consideration of sensory and environmental dimensions, serves as an effective solution to align various trends, beginning with individual experiences and extending to larger scales, including cities. The core idea is that by creating environments that address the sensory, emotional, social, and technical requirements of individuals, the action can significantly contribute to the management of environmental equilibrium at a broader level.

This holistic approach aims to address contemporary challenges, encompassing energy efficiency,

ecology, and practicality while respecting nature, ultimately paving the way for sustainable and resilient urban and planetary environments that harmonize with societal and environmental needs.

What topic will all these stakeholders discuss?

## AMBIENCES-ORIENTED DESIGN

Design professionals in the realm of living spaces are increasingly attuned to the sensory aspects of the environment and user perception. However, introducing the concept of ambience as an integral component in the city-making process presents challenges, as it defies easy technical mastery and is inherently multidisciplinary and dynamic. This contrasts with the established constancy and permanence associated with traditional construction practices. Yet, addressing ambiances retrospectively often results in increased costs and environmental impacts. The action advocates that integrating the ambience concept into the early design phases of living spaces holds the potential for more cost-effective and ecologically sound solutions, thus underscoring the need for this endeavor?

Combining the notion of ambience and design is at first glance a challenge. This brings us back to the question: Who sets the ambiances?

Asked in this way, the question of competencies raises just as many questions.

- the user who makes and unmakes the ambiances according to his practices and the variations of his environment and even the artist with regard to the expression he claims;
- the designer, artist, architect, or urban planner, who configures the devices installed, built or fitted out and who promotes the use of certain ambiances and omits others; and finally
- researchers who highlight this experienced and observable phenomenon, systematize, theorize, and teach it.

The core objective of the *CitySenz | Architectural and Urban Ambiances* Cost Action is to tackle the challenge of ambience-oriented design by harmonizing three crucial categories. The first category centers on understanding ambiances, cultivated through meticulous observations of real-life scenarios. The second category encompasses the intuitive know-how developed in the workshops of architects and urban planners. The third category involves accumulated experiences derived from the history of architecture, urban sociology, and the daily practices of users. The primary methodological challenge of this action research is to unite these three groups to enhance the creation of ambiances, thereby promoting a more sensitive, inclusive, and integrated approach to design in architectural and urban contexts.

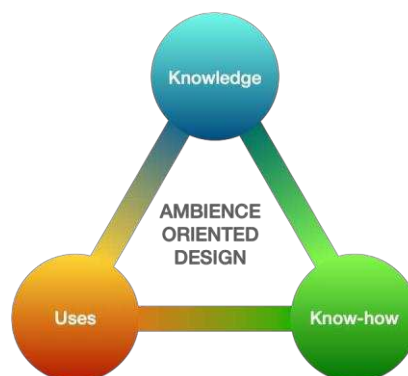


Figure 1: Ambience Oriented Design Diagram

The enthusiasm for ambiances in the world of research and in the practice of architectural and urban design is notable. Four quadrennial international congresses were organized in the last twenty past years. Other conferences, funded research and publications are numerous. Whether interest was taken in lived space and its phenomenological considerations in the 1960s or in the ecological awareness that followed and confirmed this trend, it was in the early 1990s that the convergence was logically oriented towards the concept of architectural and urban ambience. Once scientifically highlighted, theorized, and then taught, it is currently at the center of much discourse on the city or on inhabited spaces.

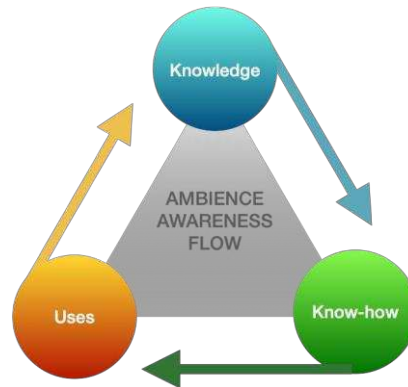


Figure 2: Ambience Awareness Flow Diagram

Originating from direct observations of real-life situations (fig. 2), the concept of ambience has refocused architecture, landscape, and urban planning on the user's experience. It highlights the importance of the overall ecological perspective concerning the human environment, rather than a politicized "green ecology." While design is often associated with the creation of practical objects, it has evolved into various practical domains, such as social design and interface design. The question for the *CitySenz* | *Architectural and Urban Ambiences* Cost Action is how to apply this practical knowledge to conceive living spaces with an Ambience-Oriented Design approach?

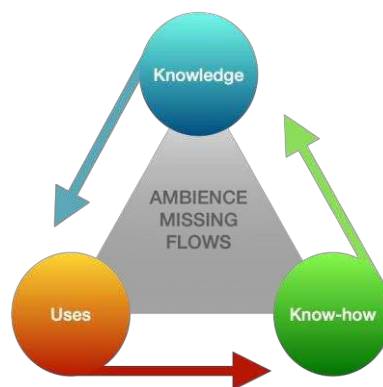


Figure 3: Ambience missing flows

One guess that another flow of awareness is still missing (fig 3.). What will be then the practice of the designers if they pay more attention to the uses? How can the practice of ambience-design contribute to and enrich knowledge about ambiances? And how can the holders of knowledge on ambiances popularize and disseminate it directly for the citizen and user? These are the three challenges that this action will take up over 4 years by bringing together all the stakeholders and drawing out the solutions or operational recommendations that will guide the ambience-oriented design.

### THE DEFIANCE OF AMBIENCE

However, it's crucial to recognize that ambiances encompass more than just tangible and intangible data. They are intertwined with sensory characteristics (sounds, smells, lights), sociocultural aspects (collective representations), and physical contexts (urban and architectural spatial support). In contemporary perspectives, built or furnished spaces must consider the presence of users and their everyday aesthetics, transcending mere form and aesthetics. Elements like walls and trees are valued not just for their appearance but for the emotions they evoke in passers-by, such as shadow, silence, and the desire to linger. In ambiances, every component works together to transform a space into a place. The field of ambiances draws from various disciplines, spanning quantitative aspects like signal engineering and spatial topography, to the humanities, which focus on creating meaningful, beautiful, and emotionally resonant spaces. Cognitive sciences provide insights into the human body's interaction with the environment, comfort conditions, and the ease of using living spaces.

Consolidating the state of the art in ambience knowledge has become possible as the concept is recognized and defined by researchers globally. Embracing the nuances of this concept allows diverse research groups to collaborate, establishing shared vocabulary while respecting differences in interpretation. Oversimplifying the meaning is to be avoided. Defining the state of the art in ambience design know-how is the most challenging aspect of this research. Ambiances are implemented

implicitly or explicitly, from initial orders and specifications to construction and, eventually, when they become a part of an existing space. Designers, contractors, and citizens all contribute to creating ambiances. Discussions and workshops will involve these stakeholders, emphasizing the dynamic interplay between knowledge and practical ambiance creation. This dialogue elevates the importance of ambiance early in the design process and throughout.

### 1.1.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE CHALLENGE (MAIN AIM)

The main objective of this action is to advance scientific knowledge in architectural and urban ambiances through international and interdisciplinary efforts. It seeks to integrate ambiances into legislation, policies, and practices for better city planning. It aims to harmonize various perspectives, emphasizing sensory aspects and improving the quality of living spaces.

This Action's primary goal is to bring together researchers, professionals, and user representatives to incorporate ambiance into space design at all stages. It fosters sensitivity and understanding of ambiances in space production. The Action is based on discussions involving various European stakeholders, such as architects, designers, businesses, regulators, and user associations, to achieve these goals.

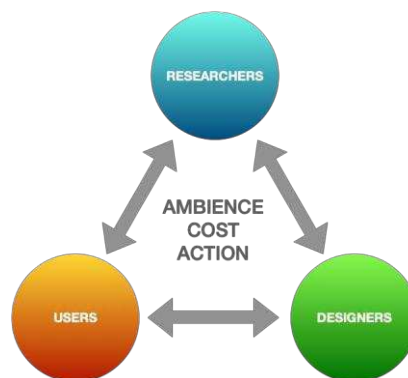


Figure 4: Ambience Action Challenge

This Action is based on crossed discussions about achieved results from different European laboratories, Research Teams and Bottom-Up considerations coming from the invited stakeholders (such as architects' studios, professional designers, business enterprises, city hall practitioners and others, regulators, user associations etc.)

Regarding to the methodological challenge as illustrated in figure (3), this action will have to impulse the ambiance missing flows:

#### Users to Designers:

- **User-Centric Collaboration:** Organize events where users, including NGOs and neighborhood associations, express their concerns about ambiance issues. Collaborate with artists specializing in ambiance to foster a shared understanding of ambiance in public spaces.
- **Integration of Expertise:** Encourage scientists and specialists in the team to develop methods for valuing inhabitants' expressions and perceptions within their living spaces. This multidisciplinary approach enhances research quality.
- **Cross-Collaboration with Artists:** Facilitate collaboration between guest artists and the design, architecture, and public space development team to create ambiances complementing physical environments.
- **Interdisciplinary Knowledge Exchange:** Promote knowledge exchange among experts, decision-makers, citizens, creators, and public space users. This cross-disciplinary approach contributes to a comprehensive ambiance understanding.

**Designers to Researchers:** Organize conferences with specialists in project research, research by design, social design, DI interface design, and DX experience design. This will illuminate how these design methods affect ambiance design. The objective is to integrate and advance the design aspects of ambiance research.



**Researchers to Users:** Develop a digital platform, including the website and social media, to facilitate the dissemination of research findings, training materials, and short media materials. This objective ensures that the knowledge is accessible and relevant to an optimal, targeted audience.

## 1.2. PROGRESS BEYOND THE STATE OF THE ART

### 1.2.1. APPROACH TO THE CHALLENGE AND PROGRESS BEYOND THE STATE OF ART

The challenge is to identify professionals in the field of ambiances and create a platform that connects theory and practice:

1. **User Engagement and Methodology:** Involve various users in surveys, interviews, and workshops to understand their needs and preferences. Artists will translate this into creative design solutions.
2. **Depth of Engagement:** Implement a comprehensive plan to create a common environment for content production, encourage idea exchange, and prioritize user input.
3. **Concrete Test Beds:** Define specific contexts for practical testing in real urban settings during workshops.
4. **Professional Milieu:** Organize events like seminars and training schools to raise awareness of the professional field of ambiances and promote knowledge transfer among professionals, artists, and users.
5. **Connecting Knowledge with Know-How:** Bridge the gap between academic knowledge and practical expertise by fostering dialogues, creating a shared vocabulary, and harmonizing the understanding of ambiances for professional designers.

### 1.2.2. OBJECTIVES

#### 1.2.2.1. Research Coordination Objectives

**(A) DEFINING:** The goal is to establish a shared definition of ambiances to serve as a common reference for the Action.

**(B) DATA COLLECTION AND ARCHIVING:** To systematically collect and organize data and resources related to architectural and urban ambiances.

**(C) BALANCING AND ALIGNING:** Create a common understanding of ambiances by aligning diverse perspectives within the Action.

**(D) INNOVATION SCOUTING:** Identify exemplary projects that successfully incorporate sensory aspects and ambiances into their designs.

**(E) OUTREACHING AND TRAINING:** Expand the Action influence through result-sharing, public awareness, partnerships, and stakeholder training.

**(F) International Best Practices:** Systematically research and compile global best practices demonstrating effective ambience use in public space design, creating a repository of successful case studies.

**(G) Conceptual Framework:** Develop influential concepts for enhancing public space ambience, harmonizing and translating definitions for ambience, comfort, experience design, and sustainability.

**(H) Future Perspectives:** Identify emerging issues that will shape the future of ambience research and practice, providing a forward-looking perspective.

#### 1.2.2.2. Capacity-building Objectives

To make the objectives more **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART)** while addressing the issues of clarity, alignment with the overarching mission is as follows:

1. **Collaborative Expertise:** Facilitate collaboration among diverse stakeholders, including NGOs, associations, artists, architects, and designers to document their ambience-shaping expertise, amplifying a spectrum of perspectives.

2. **Expert Knowledge Exchange:** Establish a cross-disciplinary platform for architects, landscape architects, designers, and artists to share insights on ambience.
3. **Regulatory Assessment:** Collaborate with city managers to assess existing ambience-related regulations, their effectiveness, and the need for new or revised regulations.
4. **Tools and Innovations:** Partner with SMEs to identify tools, techniques, and innovations for shaping ambience, structuring practical knowledge.
5. **Innovative Education:** Identify methods for teaching and managing public space ambience, enhancing private and public space quality.
6. **Strategic Communication:** Organize a strategic campaign via the Action website and social media to share findings, best practices, and knowledge.

## 2. NETWORKING EXCELLENCE

### 2.1. ADDED VALUE OF NETWORKING IN S&T EXCELLENCE

#### 2.1.1 ADDED VALUE IN RELATION TO EXISTING EFFORTS AT EUROPEAN AND/OR INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

At the European and international levels, several initiatives address ambiances in private and public space design. However, these initiatives often focus on specific disciplines and lack diversity in exploring the concept of ambience. This Action aims to bridge these gaps through a multidisciplinary approach, bringing together experts in various fields such as architecture, urban planning, arts, and civil engineering.

This COST network on ambiances includes participants from humanities, arts, and engineering sciences, ensuring a balanced and diverse perspective on ambience. This diversity is crucial for tackling the challenge of operability in private and public space design. The network provides a unique opportunity to foster a comprehensive understanding of ambience by harnessing the varied expertise of its members, enabling holistic and innovative exploration.

The initial participant profile shows a balance between arts (34.5%), other humanities (24.1%), and engineering sciences (27.6%). This interdisciplinary approach will add significant value to the field of ambience knowledge, stimulating discussions and directing expertise toward design and projects. Some members are practicing designers and architects, with additional guests joining during conferences.

### 2.2. ADDED VALUE OF NETWORKING IN IMPACT

#### 2.2.1. SECURING THE CRITICAL MASS, EXPERTISE AND GEOGRAPHICAL BALANCE WITHIN THE COST MEMBERS AND BEYOND

The members of the network of proposers were carefully selected from many expressions of interest, ensuring a critical mass of expertise. They come from various mailing lists, primarily related to ambiances, as well as other mailing lists for urban planners, architects, and artists already aware of this topic. Each member has a specific role to play based on their skills, contributing to the overall Action. The intellectual contributions of these members will lead to publications, including conference proceedings and a final book reflecting the four years of collaborative work, becoming a reference in the field.

#### 2.2.2. INVOLVEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS

Based on each Proposer's institutional affiliation, the network of proposers is clearly higher education dominant. 79.3% Higher Education & Associated Organizations  
13.8% Business enterprise  
3.4% Standards Organization  
3.4% Private Non-Profit without market revenues, NGO

Distribution by Sub-Field of Science

34.5% Arts, 24.1% Other humanities; 13.8% Civil engineering; 13.8% Other engineering and technologies; 10.3% Other social sciences; 3.4% Other. This justifies that the invited stakeholders will come from the following institutions, who are the most influential in their profession:

- a) Government and Town Planning Representatives: Engage government representatives in

architecture and town planning regulations as keynote speakers in conferences and workshops.

- b) Architects' Councils: Collaborate with European and national Architects' Councils from the Action's outset and throughout key events.
- c) Landscape and Urban Planning Councils: Foster collaboration with landscape and urban planning councils in countries hosting conferences.
- d) Public Space Art Associations: Invite representatives from public space art associations to participate in workshops, training schools, and conferences.
- e) Inhabitants and Public Space Quality Advocates: Identify and invite relevant associations of inhabitants and quality advocates to participate in suitable activities.
- f) Art, Design, and Architecture Schools: Seek schools specializing in space design and invite them to engage in the Action activities, potentially becoming members.

### 3. IMPACT

#### 3.1. IMPACT TO SCIENCE, SOCIETY AND COMPETITIVENESS, AND POTENTIAL FOR INNOVATION/BREAKTHROUGHS

##### 3.1.1. SCIENTIFIC, TECHNOLOGICAL, AND/OR SOCIOECONOMIC IMPACTS (INCLUDING POTENTIAL INNOVATIONS AND/OR BREAKTHROUGHS)

The *CitySenz / A+U Ambiences* Action can have a positive impact in several key areas:

- Scientific research: open the field of research to more operational approaches to design.
- Quality of Living Spaces: Enhancing the understanding of architectural and urban ambiances can lead to more comfortable, enjoyable, and functional living spaces.
- Health: Attention to ambiances can reduce stress and promote mental and physical well-being.
- Culture: Exploring ambiances can contribute to cultural preservation by recognizing their importance in creating historical places.
- Tourism: Enhanced urban environments can draw more tourists, benefiting the tourism industry while preserving a carefully desired and defined coexistence with permanent residents, the end users.
- Economy: Improved quality of life and tourism can stimulate economic growth.

Successful impact depends on the implementation of research results and recommendations by various stakeholders. Nonetheless, the Action has the potential to positively influence these aspects of society.

#### 3.2. MEASURES TO MAXIMISE IMPACT

##### 3.2.1. KNOWLEDGE CREATION, TRANSFER OF KNOWLEDGE AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

The foundation of ambience theory was rooted in the meticulous observation of real-life situations where it naturally exists. The core objective of the *CitySenz / Architectural and Urban Ambiences* is to take this theory further by consolidating knowledge on implementing ambience considerations upstream in the design process in the project specifications and their special requirements. This knowledge will be an evolving entity, enriched through the collective expertise of designers, artists, inhabitants, users, and other stakeholders.

To address the professional development aspect, particularly for young academics and researchers, the action recognizes the inherent hierarchical challenges in academic circles. Young researchers often encounter hurdles in career advancement beyond the post-doctoral stage. *CitySenz / Architectural and Urban Ambiences* acknowledges the potential role it can play in fostering career development. The workshops, training schools and the 4 short-term scientific missions is a beginning to explicitly outline a comprehensive career development plan within this proposal to ensure clarity on this front. This plan encompasses mentoring, capacity-building initiatives, and opportunities for young academics to actively engage in the collaborative research process, shaping the future of the field. By

offering these career advancement avenues, the action aims to empower the next generation of researchers and ensure a sustainable legacy for the knowledge generated within this network.

### 3.2.2. PLAN FOR DISSEMINATION AND/OR EXPLOITATION AND DIALOGUE WITH THE GENERAL PUBLIC OR POLICY

This dissemination plan encompasses a diverse set of audiences to maximize the impact of this research:

**Large Audience:** (1) Create an informative website to gather insights from workshops and training schools and link to social media platforms for broader outreach; (2) Organize an open-to-the-public final conference and distribute communication kits to local media in the conference cities for increased visibility.

**Decision Makers:** Invite policymakers and decision-makers to conferences to facilitate the translation of research into practical policies and urban planning strategies. Outstanding ones may be keynote speakers.

**Professionals in Design and Planning:** Active involvement of designers, architects, landscape architects, and urban planners is crucial to directly influence industry practices and design standards within this action.

The actions aim to maximize the clarity and impact of the knowledge creation, transfer of knowledge, and career development initiatives. The action plan to foster active engagement between the scientific community and the broader public, including policymakers:

#### Dissemination Strategy:

- **Comprehensive Website:** The interactive website will feature forums, surveys, and comment sections. It will be linked to social media for webinars, live discussions, and audience polls.
- **Engagement on social media:** The website will be closely connected to various social media platforms, emphasizing interactive formats like webinars, live discussions, and audience polls.
- **Dialogue-Driven Conferences:** Conferences will have sessions for science-policy dialogues, including roundtable discussions to allow policymakers, academics, and the public to share their views on relevant issues, bridging theory and practice.

#### Exploitation of Results:

- The results will be systematically consolidated and made available through reports, publications, and other academic channels.
- The action will actively engage with policymakers through direct communication and policy briefs, ensuring that the findings are effectively translated into actionable policies.
- To reach the general public and communities, the communication kit will be designed to provide simplified and digestible information about the research findings. This kit will be disseminated widely through mass media, ensuring that the insights reach a broader audience.

By implementing these strategies, the action aims to create an ecosystem where science, policy, and the general public can actively participate in a meaningful dialogue. This enhanced plan offers a clear and attainable pathway to foster broader engagement with the research and promote its utilization in both policy and practice.

## 4. IMPLEMENTATION

### 4.1 COHERENCE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE WORK PLAN

#### 4.1.1. DESCRIPTION OF WORKING GROUPS, TASKS AND ACTIVITIES

##### WG1 - DEFINING:

##### Description of the task:

**Objective:** The "Definition" task aims to foster a deeper understanding of ambiances and facilitate discussions among diverse Action members.

**Exploration of Diverse Perspectives:** Members will explore the multidisciplinary and multiform nature of ambiances, considering sensory, psychological, cultural, technical, and spatial aspects that impact the quality of life in the city and the environment.

**Consensus Definition:** This task seeks to reach a shared definition of ambiances to ensure a common understanding among the Action participants, serving as a reference point for the entire Action.

**Key steps:**

1. **Literature Review:** Task members will conduct an in-depth review of existing literature, theories, policies and research related to ambiances. This will provide a basis for discussion and help identify key concepts, elements and variables associated with ambiances.
2. **Expert Dialogue:** Workshops, seminars and discussions will be organized to enable experts to share their ideas, theories and experiences regarding ambiances. These dialogues will promote interdisciplinary discussions, encouraging participants to learn from each other.
3. **Comparison of approaches:** Different approaches to understanding ambiances will be compared and contrasted. This may include phenomenological approaches, psychological perspectives, architectural considerations, etc. The Action members will explore and comment on these approaches complementing or diverging from each other.
4. **Iterative process:** The definition search process will be iterative and involve several rounds of discussions and refinements. Working group members engage in constructive debate, question assumptions and challenge preconceived ideas, seeking clarity and consensus.
5. **Documentation:** The final consensus definition will be documented and disseminated to all Action members, ensuring that everyone shares a common point of reference.

**WG2 - DATA COLLECTION AND ARCHIVING:**

**Task Description:** Objective: The main objective of the "Data Collection and Archiving" task is to exclusively collect and organize a wide range of data, information and resources related to architectural and urban ambiances. This task is a fundamental step in creating a comprehensive knowledge base to support the Action objectives.

**Resource Types:** The task includes collecting various types of resources, including but not limited to:

1. **Literature, and Research:** Bring together academic articles, books, articles and research related to ambiances, including historical, contemporary and interdisciplinary perspectives.
2. **Case studies:** document and archive real case studies of architectural and urban environments, which may include successful examples and those that can be improved.
3. **Expert Interviews:** Conduct interviews with experts, researchers and practitioners with knowledge and expertise in ambience.
4. **Visual and sensory materials:** Collection of visual materials such as photographs, drawings and sensory data that help illustrate and convey different ambiances.
5. **Regulatory and policy documents:** Compilation of regulations, policies and guidelines relating to the creation and management of architectural and urban ambiances in European cities.

**Resource Acquisition:** Involves identifying and accessing resources using academic databases, archives, online repositories, surveys, interviews, and collaboration with experts.

**Data Organization:** Focuses on systematic resource organization, creating a structured database or digital repository for easy access.

**Metadata and Documentation:** Resources come with comprehensive metadata for effective cataloging and referencing.

**Quality Control:** Ensures the reliability and relevance of collected resources, verifying source credibility.

**Access and Dissemination:** Makes resources accessible to all Action members and may involve creating a user-friendly platform.

**Preservation:** Emphasizes preserving materials for long-term use, including archiving for future reference.

STSMs will be organized to focus on the aim of this WG.

### WG3 - BALANCING AND ALIGNING

**Objective:** "Balancing and Aligning" aims to create balance and align the different approaches, perspectives and concepts relating to architectural and urban ambiances within the Action. This involves ensuring a common and coherent understanding of the ambiances, while recognizing the diversity of perspectives brought by participants from various disciplinary backgrounds.

**Synthesis of Concepts:** Participants will synthesize ambiances-related definitions and approaches to create a comprehensive and nuanced consensus definition.

**Unification of Terminologies:** The task aims to harmonize and unify vocabulary for clear communication.

**Identification of Convergences and Divergences:** Participants will identify common ground and differences in ambiances approaches, working on clarification and compromise.

**Training and Awareness:** Action members will receive training for a shared understanding, fostering effective participation and awareness.

**Participatory Validation:** A participatory validation process will allow members to comment, evaluate, and validate alignment results.

**Continuous Review:** Balancing and Aligning is an ongoing process that may evolve with new ideas and research.

STSMs will be organized to focus on the aim of this WG.

### WG 4 - INNOVATION SCOUTING

Task D consisting of identifying and selecting exemplary or remarkable creations and designs, as well as success stories linked to the question of sensoriality and ambiances, is crucial for the Action. It aims to highlight concrete projects that have successfully integrated the principles of sensory design and ambience into their implementation:

#### Task: Identification and Selection of Exemplary Creations and Success Stories

**Objective:** The main objective of this task is to identify exemplary projects, artistic creations and designs that have succeeded in exceptionally integrating sensory aspects and ambiances into their creations. These examples will serve as inspiration and references for the Action, demonstrating how theoretical concepts can be successfully put into practice.

**Project Categorization:** Participants will categorize projects based on criteria like application field, scale, location, and sensory approach.

**Documentary Research:** Comprehensive research will gather project information from various sources, including descriptions, images, plans, reports, and testimonials.

**Selection Criteria:** Criteria will be developed to assess project relevance and quality, considering factors like innovation, community impact, ambiances, sustainability, and accessibility.

**Peer Review:** Projects will undergo peer review within the working group to ensure unbiased selection based on discussions and debates.

**Documentation:** Detailed documentation for each project will be established, including descriptions, photos, videos, and analyses to create a shareable database.

**Dissemination of Examples:** Chosen projects will be showcased in the project, publications, presentations, and workshops to inspire others in the field.



**Impact:** This task will inspire and guide the project by highlighting notable accomplishments in architectural and urban ambiances. These success stories will serve as practical examples of sensory design principles improving built environments' quality of life.

STSMs will be organized to focus on the aim of this WG

## WG 5 - OUTREACHING AND TRAINING.

Task E “Outreaching and Training” in the *CitySenz / Architectural and Urban Ambiances* action aims to expand the influence and reach of the Action by raising awareness, building partnerships and providing training:

### Task: Awareness and Training

**Objective:** The main objective of the "Outreach and Training" task is to expand the influence of the Action by sharing its results, raising public awareness of the importance of architectural and urban ambiances, entering partnerships and providing training for the parties concerned.

**Public Awareness:** This involves targeted campaigns through workshops, seminars, exhibitions, conferences, and online efforts to inform the general public about architectural and urban ambiances.

**Partnership Establishment:** The task aims to create partnerships with institutions, universities, organizations, companies, and government entities interested in ambiances.

**Training and Workshops:** Training programs will be developed for professionals, including urban planners, architects, and designers, to teach ambient design principles.

**Online Resources:** A website will offer educational materials, guides, case studies, videos, and training content to reach a broader audience.

**Strategic Communications:** This task includes a communication strategy, including reports, publications, videos, social media, and channels to effectively disseminate the Action results.

**Impact:** Vital for maximizing the Action impact by sharing knowledge, raising awareness, educating professionals, and building lasting partnerships in urban and architectural design.

The main objective of the "Outreach and Training" task is to expand the influence of the Action by sharing its results, raising public awareness of the importance of architectural and urban ambiances, establishing partnerships and providing training to academics and stakeholders concerned through Actions such as training schools, workshops, conferences, Short Term Scientific Missions, etc.

STSMs will be organized to focus on the aim of this WG

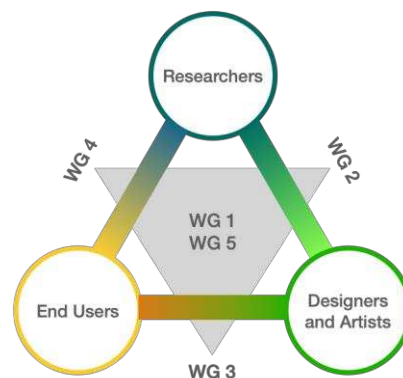


Figure 5: Working Groups Diagram

The global methodology of this Cost Action is to impulse and dynamize the missing flows of circulation of the notion of ambiances as shown in (fig.5) by putting together the three involved communities in this challenge.

Working Groups	Task Number	ACTIVITY TYPE					TASKS	Objectives						
		Conference	Steering Committee	Workshop	Training	Website updates		DEFINING	DATA COLLECTION ARCHIVING	BALANCING ALIGNING	INNOVATION SCOUTING	OUTREACHING TRAINING		
							TASKS ARE MOTIVATED BY THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS							
DEFINING														
WG1	1	X	X	X		X	What is the state of the art of Ambiance Theory?	X	X	X		X		
	2	X		X	X		Why is multi-modal observation of in-situ perception a condition of understanding Ambiances?	X		X		X		
	3	X			X		What are the main disciplines involved in this theory?	X		X				
	4	X			X		Why are inter/trans-disciplinary approaches necessary and how do the action achieve effective dialogue across disciplines and practices?	X				X		
	5	X		X	X		What can be and what cannot be measurable in ambiances? What can be modellable or not? What is only shaped or only described?	X		X		X		
DATA COLLECTION AND ARCHIVING														
WG2	1	X					What types of resources related to architectural and urban ambiances do the action need to collect and archive to support the Action's objectives?		X					
	2	X		X	X		How can the action ensure that the collected resources cover a diverse range of aspects of ambiances, including historical, contemporary, and interdisciplinary perspectives?		X	X				
	3	X				X	What are the most reliable and relevant sources to access these resources, including academic papers, case studies, expert interviews, regulatory documents, etc.?		X			X		
	4			X			How can the action efficiently organizes and index the collected resources to facilitate their access and referencing?		X			X		
	5			X			What quality and relevance criteria should be applied when collecting and archiving resources?		X	X				
	6						How can the action ensures the long-term preservation of these resources for future use?		X					
	7			X			How can the action ensure that all collected resources are accessible to Action members in a user-friendly manner?		X			X		
	8	X		X			How can the action measures the impact of the "Data Collection and Archiving" task on the research and activities of the Action as a whole?	X	X	X	X	X		
BALANCING AND ALIGNING														
WG3	1	X					How can the action reaches a consensus definition of architectural and urban ambiances that is acceptable to all members of the working group?	X		X				
	2			X			What are the key areas of divergence among the various approaches and perspectives on ambiances, and how can the action resolves them constructively?			X				
	3			X			What are the best practices for unifying terminologies and concepts related to ambiances to ensure clear and consistent communication within the working group?			X	X			
	4	X					How can the action identifies and strengthen points of convergence among the different approaches to ambiances to create a common understanding?	X		X		X		
	5			X			What are the potential benefits of adopting a unified methodology for ambiances research, and how can the action develops such methodologies?	X		X		X		
	6				X		How can the action effectively trains working group members to adopt a harmonized perspective on ambiances?			X		X		
	7			X			How can the action ensures the participation and validation of results by all working group members?			X		X		
	8	X					How can the "Balancing and Aligning" task make a significant contribution to harmonizing concepts and achieving the overall Action goals related to architectural and urban ambiances?	X	X	X	X	X		
INNOVATION SCOUTING														
WG4	1			X			What about sustainability, inclusive concerns, costless solutions learned from traditional techniques or innovative solutions? Are there enough good practices that deserve to be highlighted?		X		X	X		
	2			X			How to process quantitative and qualitative data by crossing the epistemological chasm between the engineering sciences and phenomenological approaches? Which pertinent examples are to be considered?	X		X	X			
	3	X	X				How could methods based on participatory research such as interviews and sensory walks be useful for design?			X	X	X		
	4	X		X			Which relevant tools and technologies are available for Ambiance-Oriented Design? Simulation, modelling, augmented reality?		X		X	X		
	5	X		X	X		What about Ambiances in a project specification that are imposed on designers?			X	X	X		
	6			X			How can the action identifies and select exemplary and remarkable projects related to sensory experiences and ambiances?		X		X			
	7	X		X			What criteria should be used to categorize the identified projects (e.g., application domain, scale, geographic location, sensory approach)?	X	X		X			
	8	X		X			What methods and sources can be used for comprehensive documentation of these projects, including descriptions, photographs, reports, and evaluations?	X	X		X			
	9			X			How can the action evaluates and prioritize the selected projects based on criteria such as innovation, impact, consideration of sensory factors, and sustainability?		X		X			
	10				X		How can the documentation of selected projects be organized and shared as a valuable database for the project and other researchers?		X		X			
	11			X	X		How can the selected exemplary projects be effectively highlighted within the project through publications, presentations, and workshops?				X	X		
	12			X	X	X	What potential impact can this "Innovation Scouting" task have on the broader understanding and practical application of sensory design and ambiances in architectural and urban contexts?	X	X	X	X	X		
OUTREACHING AND TRAINING														
WG5	1	X		X	X	X	How to communicate what has been done until now it in the most comprehensible and practicable way?			X	X	X		
	2	X		X	X	X	What and how to communicate about ambiances and lived spaces to DESIGNERS					X		
	3	X		X	X	X	What and how to communicate about ambiances and lived spaces to RESEARCHERS					X		
	4	X		X	X	X	What and how to communicate about ambiances and lived spaces to END USERS					X		
	5	X		X	X	X	What and how to communicate about ambiances and lived spaces to POLICY-MAKERS	X	X	X	X	X		

Table 1: Methodology Consistency Table



#### 4.1.2. DESCRIPTION OF DELIVERABLES AND TIMEFRAME

The Outputs of these synergic network are as follows:

1. **A Website:** (also powered by the multimedia materials produced during workshops and training schools) linked to **social medias:** (Facebook – Instagram-LinkedIn)
2. **A Communication kit** will be sent to the mass media of the towns where conferences will take place.
3. **A White Paper** including:
  - Good practices in architectural design: the practical dimension of the project inscribed under the sign of the Ambiances will be referenced to reveal the diversity and the operational cultural differences in the common singularity of the whole.
  - Decalogue Manifesto for Ambiances in 10 points
  - Recommendations for Orders: What and how the Ambience-Oriented Design could change the ordering process and at all stages of the project.
  - Streamlines for the development of guidance adapted to European cities and based on qualitative ambiances (for decision makers)
4. **A Multilingual Dictionary** of ambiances for designers: because each language brings different inflections to any sensitive notion.
5. **A Book of Proceedings** of each annual conference

A few Short Term Scientific Missions will be dedicated to these Deliverables with the Steering Committee.

#### PROPOSED TIMEFRAME

<b>Quarter 1:</b>	Kick-off ♦ Votes ♦ 1st Management Committee meeting ♦ setting up and launching the website All The members will attend this first day of CitySenz Cost Action. A previous virtual meeting will be organized to prepare it.   Nearly 43 members will take part of this first MC. This first MC meeting could be hybrid. (total 43)
<b>Quarter 2:</b>	MC ♦ 1st conference with the 5 WG ♦ Website Update All The members will attend this first Conference   43 MC members will take part of this first MC + 3 invited International Speakers + Local Invited Stakeholders.
<b>Quarter 3:</b>	Training school and workshop ♦ 1st STSM ♦ SC - Steering Committee ST + Leaders and Coleader of WG (10 members) + ST + up to 10 other selected members from the MC + 15 students + Local Invited Stakeholders
<b>Quarter 4:</b>	STSM ♦ Website Update
<b>Quarter 5:</b>	MC ♦ 2nd Conference with the 5 WG 43 MC members + Invited International Speakers + Local Invited Stakeholders.
<b>Quarter 6:</b>	SC ♦ STSM ♦ Website Update.
<b>Quarter 7:</b>	MC ♦ Training school and workshop Leaders and Coleader of WG (10 members) + ST + up to 10 other selected members from the MC + 15 students + Local Invited Stakeholders.
<b>Quarter 8:</b>	STSM ♦ Website Update.
<b>Quarter 9:</b>	MC ♦ 3rd Conference with the 5 WG 43 MC members + Invited International Speakers + Local Invited Stakeholders.
<b>Quarter 10:</b>	SC ♦ STSM ♦ Website Update.
<b>Quarter 11:</b>	MC ♦ Training school and workshop Leaders and Coleader of WG (10 members) + ST + up to 10 other selected members from the MC + 15 students + Local Invited Stakeholders.
<b>Quarter 12:</b>	STSM ♦ Website Update.
<b>Quarter 13:</b>	MC ♦ 4th Conference with the 5 WG 43 MC members + Invited International Speakers + Local Invited Stakeholders
<b>Quarter 14:</b>	SC ♦ STSM ♦ Website Update.
<b>Quarter 15:</b>	MC ♦ Training school and workshop Leaders and Coleader of WG (10 members) + ST + up to 10 other selected members from the MC + 15 students + Local Invited Stakeholders.
<b>Quarter 16:</b>	MC ♦ 5th Conference with the 5 WG ♦ Website Update Leaders and Coleader of WG (10 members) + ST + up to 10 other selected members from the MC + 15 students + Local Invited Stakeholders.

#### 4.1.3. RISK ANALYSIS AND CONTINGENCY PLANS

The expectable risk that can happen is the misunderstandings between fields of practice, the disciplines or cultures since the native languages of the team are various. Ambience is itself a cultural phenomenon. These expected conflicts, in fact, constitute the core that will energize the Action. Instead of undermining the differences, the misunderstandings or the discordances, the strategy of contingency is to put them forward in the debates during the conferences, the workshops, the Management Committee, and the Steering Committee Meetings.

The management structure is organized to keep the SC Steering Committee always near to the Working Groups and to the whole team that is the Management Committee.



Figure 7: Management Diagram

The risk of expected debates facing difficulties is low. Action members are well-versed in ambience theory, open to different perspectives, and have a long history of multidisciplinary practice. The inherent transdisciplinary nature of the ambience concept has promoted cross-disciplinary exchange, and the team values multidisciplinary as a quality criterion in their work.

To minimize risks and tackle complexities when establishing a multidisciplinary foundation for engaging various stakeholders including those outside academia, in a COST Action about ambiances, a thoughtful approach should be considered:

1. **Mapping of stakeholders:** Identify and select stakeholders based on their expertise.
2. **Clear Communication:** Maintain clear and accessible communication.
3. **Engagement Strategy:** Develop tailored engagement strategies for various stakeholder groups.
4. **Inclusivity:** Promote inclusivity and respect diverse perspectives.
5. **Interdisciplinary workshops and training:** Conduct interdisciplinary workshops and training.
6. **Translation of concepts:** Translate academic concepts into understandable language with examples.
7. **Regular meetings:** Hold regular meetings for discussions and decision-making.
8. **Flexibility:** Be open to flexibility and project adaptations (under authorization).
9. **Conflict Resolution:** Resolve conflicts constructively to stay on track.
10. **Feedback loops:** Establish feedback loops for continuous improvement.
11. **Mentoring and support:** Provide mentoring and support for less experienced individuals.
12. **Monitoring and evaluation:** Monitor and evaluate the Action progress and adjust strategies as needed.

