



Terms of Reference

# Network of Follower Cities



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# 1. Introduction

## The deployEMDS project

The deployEMDS project supports the European Commission's (EC) initiative on a common European mobility data space (EMDS) that aims to facilitate data access, pooling and sharing for more efficient, safe, sustainable and resilient transport. It builds on initiatives and applications related to transport data and will be supported by initiatives to boost interoperability, security, and the availability and provision of data and services in the mobility domain. The EC outlined its proposed way forward in its [Communication on the creation of a common European mobility data space](#).

Aligned with the [European data strategy](#) and the [Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy](#), deployEMDS will support policymaking by enabling data sharing and reuse for efficient multimodal mobility and traffic management, as well as for measuring progress of sustainable urban mobility across Europe.

Following a use case approach, deployEMDS supports the EMDS initiative through 9 local implementations in: Barcelona, Budapest, Flanders, Île -de-France, Lisbon, Milan, Sofia, Stockholm and Tampere. These locations will be the setting for 16 use cases which will focus on the following broad themes:

- Data for mobility planning
- Public transport operation
- Multimodality
- Speciality travel information

## Network of Follower Cities

The Network of Followers Cities is established under the EU-funded deployEMDS project to engage with external local and regional public authorities interested in collaborating with the project and shaping the future common European mobility data space.

# 2. Objectives

The Network of Follower Cities aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Support the development of the European mobility data space by integrating the needs of cities into the project activities and validating deployEMDS solutions to ensure their wider relevance.
- Establish a space for local and regional public authorities to engage in peer-learning with deployEMDS cities, facilitating knowledge exchange on EMDS developments.
- Foster collaboration with industry, academia, and other stakeholders represented in the Innovation and Scaling Group (ISG) to create future use cases addressing real-life mobility challenges.



### 3. Benefits for participants

Cities who join the network will receive benefits including:

- **Shaping the future European mobility data space:** By participating in the project, follower cities and regions will have a unique opportunity to contribute to the development of future policies and standards within the EU, ensuring their interests and perspectives are considered in shaping the landscape of mobility data and the EMDS.
- **Learning opportunities from front-runner cities:** Through direct access to deployEMDS cities, follower cities and regions will be able to engage in peer-learning workshops, gaining insights and best practices from leading cities in the implementation of mobility data solutions. This exchange of knowledge can enable them to adopt innovative approaches and strategies tailored to their own contexts.
- **Capacity building on data spaces and data governance:** Follower cities and regions will benefit from targeted capacity-building activities focused on data spaces and governance in the form of trainings and workshops, both online and in person. These activities equip them with the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively manage and utilise mobility data, enhancing their ability to make informed decisions and drive sustainable urban development.
- **Collaboration with industry leaders:** By collaborating with established industry players and platforms represented in the ISG, follower cities and regions will have the opportunity to co-create future use cases addressing real-world mobility challenges. This collaboration will showcase the practical value of leveraging data space building blocks for data sharing, fostering innovation, and driving positive outcomes for communities.

### 4. Composition

The Network of Follower Cities and Regions will bring together European local and regional public entities working in the field of transport and mobility. Comprising at least 15 active organisations, the group will draw on the project's established networks, namely POLIS and EMTA, and will be open to external organisations outside these networks. Additionally, the network will remain open and inclusive throughout the project's duration, recognising the possibility of some authorities exiting while welcoming new stakeholders.

The Network's aim is to engage authorities of various sizes, experience levels, and stages of maturity, ensuring representation from diverse member states. Members will be affiliated with one of the following organisations:

- Local governments
- Regional governments
- Public transport authorities
- Public transport operators

This diverse composition will enrich the network's discussions, foster collaborative learning, and enable the sharing of best practices across different jurisdictions and levels of government.



## 5. Main activities of the Network

The activities involving the Network of Follower Cities are expected to evolve and expand over the project's duration, initially encompassing:

- Bilateral interviews, joint workshops, and focus groups to gather requirements and needs from public entities outside the consortium and to validate the proposed deployEMDS solutions in terms of technical frameworks and governance mechanisms.
- Training sessions covering the EMDS vision, the building blocks of mobility data space (technical, business, governance and legal) and how to overcome the challenges of deploying local mobility data spaces and use cases based on the foundations of the EMDS.
- Peer-learning workshops with deployEMDS cities centred on deployment and use case implementation.
- Co-creation workshops in collaboration with the ISG to develop future use cases addressing concrete mobility challenges.

The aim is to develop activities that cater for different levels of expertise and maturity within the Network. Invitations to meetings will be extended to all members, allowing them the flexibility to participate according to their individual needs and interests. **Members are only required to participate in 1 activity/year to ensure engagement, higher levels of engagement are voluntary.**

### Preliminary planned activities

#### 2024:

- **May to December 2024** (depending on Governance WP final timeline): Interviews (and possibly workshops if needed) with members focusing on governance and legal issues (led by POLIS).
- **Summer 2024:** Onboarding on the Factual Academy platform for the deployEMDS training programme. Introductory online webinar and training for cities to understand what the common European mobility data space (EMDS) vision is and why it is important for the future of mobility in Europe.
- **Autumn 2024:** Online training on the technical building blocks of a mobility data space and the current state of the art (organised by FACTUAL), followed by an in-person workshop in Stockholm to learn about and provide feedback on the technical building blocks of data spaces and the EMDS in particular (organised by FACTUAL).

#### 2025:

- **Early 2025:** Peer-learning online workshop with deployEMDS cities on use case implementation (organised by POLIS).
- **Spring 2025:** An in-person training session to learn about the European legal frameworks and how legal mechanisms are integrated into a data space's building blocks (organised by ERTICO).
- **Summer 2025:** An online training to understand the governance levels: use case, data space and EMDS level (organised by ERTICO/FACTUAL).
- **Autumn 2025:** online training on the financial resources involved to ensure a minimum viable data space and co-creation of sustainable business models for data space and use cases (organised by FACTUAL/ERTICO).



- **Autumn 2025:** one in-person workshop together with the Innovation and Scaling Group on co-creation of future use cases (organised by RISE/ERTICO).

## 2026:

- **Spring 2026:** A workshop to navigate public-private governance challenges and gain insights into best practices gained from the deployEMDS project (organised by FACTUAL).
- **Summer 2026:** An in-person workshop where cities can develop detailed data space and use case implementation plans (interoperable with EMDS) following learnings of deployEMDS (organised by FACTUAL).
- **Autumn 2026:** deployEMDS final conference (organised by ERTICO).

Additional meetings and workshops will be organised as needed, with a preference for online platforms to maximise the participation of Network members.

Network members will be invited to join the project's social media channels as well as to subscribe to the general newsletter. Further, POLIS will send out regular mailings to inform about deployEMDS updates and future activities and events.

## 6. Management and member selection

The Network of Follower Cities and Regions will be managed by POLIS and supported by acatech.

Interested public entities can apply through an open call, which will be extensively promoted through all deployEMDS channels and disseminated by the project partners, with a special focus on POLIS and EMTA. The call will offer comprehensive details about the network, its objectives, as well as eligible stakeholders, and will include a short questionnaire to ensure broad representation based on factors such as population, geographic location, and previous experience in data spaces and governance. Applications will be reviewed by POLIS and acatech, and all eligible stakeholders who meet the Network's criteria will be accepted.

### Application timeline:

- April 3rd: Launch of the open call for public entities to express interest in joining
- April 22nd: Short webinar introducing deployEMDS, highlighting the benefits of participation for public authorities and allowing them to ask questions
- April 28th: Deadline for applications to join the Network
- April 29th: Review of applications
- Initial list of Network of Follower Cities ready by April 30th, with onboarding instructions sent to selected cities in May

Hamburg and Munich, associated partners in the deployEMDS project, will be invited to formally join the Network.

The goal is to establish a group of at least 15 members. If this number isn't reached following the open call, efforts will be made to directly engage potential participants. Cities and regions involved in the development of local use cases will be automatically included in the group and invited to participate in its activities (beyond the development of local use case).



Participation in the Network is voluntary and without remuneration. Any associated travel or subsistence costs must be covered by participants or their organisations. This information will be clearly communicated in the open call to all prospective participants.

To ensure the active participation of the group, POLIS, acatech, and all deployEMDS members will continuously identify potential Network members who will be invited to join, as the Network will remain open throughout the project's duration.

## 7. Data Protection

The Network of Followers Cities shall respect the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) rights of individuals and entities involved in its activities.

## 8. Duration

The Network of Followers Cities shall operate for the duration of the deployEMDS project until 31 October 2026, with the possibility of extension based on mutual agreement among members. The official launch of the Network of Followers Cities is expected to take place in May 2024.