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Healthy Placemaking, Climate Action, Economic Opportunity

Showcasing Digitalisation in the Midlands, Ireland

On 26 May 2021, [Next2Met](#) partners and stakeholders came together for their fourth Policy Learning Event during an online meeting hosted by the [Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly](#) (EMRA). This open event aimed to showcase digitalisation good practices from the Midlands and foster interregional exchange.

EMRA and the local stakeholders presented a variety of projects developed across EMRA's three key principles - healthy placemaking, climate action and economic opportunity – including 'e-denderry', developed by [Offaly County Council](#) & [Cellnex Ireland](#); the work of the [Irish Manufacturing Research](#) in the field of advanced manufacturing and sustainability; the strategy for developing rural working hubs of the Longford County Council, and; digitalisation services for SMEs developed by the [Cantec Group](#) and [SmartOffice](#).

These [good practices](#) demonstrated the great potential of technology and innovative services to improve people's lives, support businesses and enhance opportunities in the region, ultimately increasing the attractiveness of the territory.

After the first session, which focused on the local context and the challenges and opportunities in the Midlands, participants further explored the topics of 'rural working hubs' and 'clusters' in breakout rooms. These topics are particularly relevant in the context of Covid-19 and in line with current European policies. The discussion addressed the questions of how we can build capacity or detect where the need is for remote working hubs and how do we identify clusters or define them.

The second session, presented by Eugènia Lleal Fontàs, Policy Analyst at [CPMR](#), concerned an overview of the EU Recovery Plan and the presentation of [key messages](#) from a regional perspective.

In Autumn 2021, a fifth Policy Learning Event will be organised by Next2Met partners from Podlaskie Voivodship (Poland), which will focus on our Regional Action Plans and on how the Next2Met interregional and regional learning events have led to the proposals for improvements to selected Policy Instruments.

For further information or to request an interview, please contact:
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Next2Met is an innovative European cooperation project co-founded by the European Regional Development Fund through the Interreg Europe Programme. For further information about Next2Met, visit the project's online media

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