

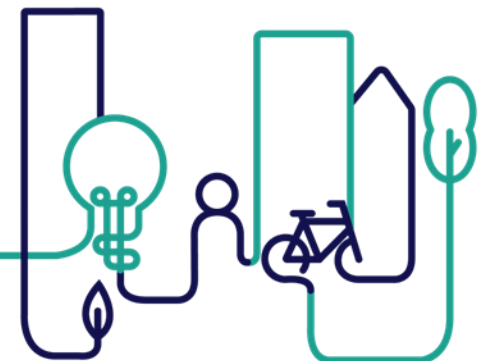
Presentation of Intermunicipal Community of Coimbra Region

Plenary Session

EUI peer review - Coimbra, 28-29 November 2023

Intermunicipal Community of Coimbra Region (CIM-RC)

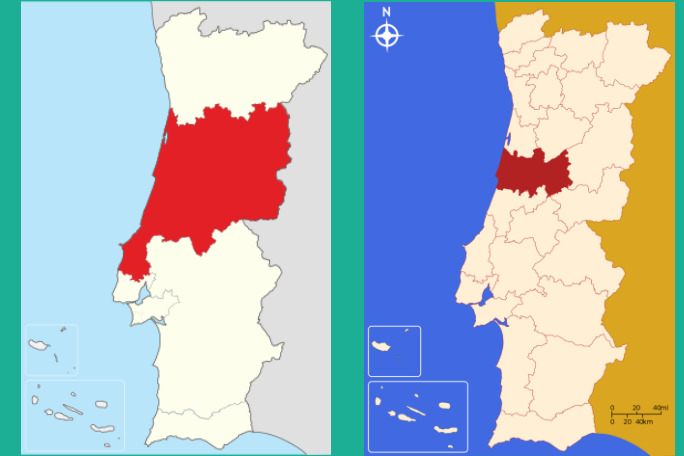
Jorge Brito, Executive Secretary of CIM-RC



Strategy of CIM-Coimbra Region

- **Title of the strategy:** Integrated Territorial Investment of Coimbra Region (*in Portuguese, Contrato Desenvolvimento e Coesão Territorial da CIM-RC*)
- **Country:** Portugal
- **Territorial focus:** Coimbra Region (*Functional Urban Area*)
- **Targeted population:** 19 Municipalities of CIM-RC (436.862 inhabitants)
- **Funding type:** ERDF/ESF
- **Amount:** 152 M€ (*under negotiation*)
- **Policy objectives:**
 - P.O. 1. CIM Coimbra Region smarter
 - P.O. 2. CIM Coimbra Region "greener" and low-carbon
 - P.O. 3. CIM Coimbra Region more connected
 - P.O. 4. CIM Coimbra Region more social
 - P.O. 5. CIM Coimbra Region closer to citizens

National map



Centro Region (NUT II), Portugal

Coimbra Region (NUT III), Portugal

Strategy map



Intermunicipal Community of Coimbra Region

Strategy of CIM-Coimbra Region

- **Territorial delivery mechanism:** ITI – Integrated Territorial Investments
- **Main theme of the strategy:** CIM-RC's ITI aims to promote the integrated development and territorial cohesion of the Coimbra Region in 2030 horizon. It is structured upon 3 strategic axes:
 - functional dimension in the provision of general interest services;
 - urban system strengthening;
 - promotion of territorial assets.
- **Strategic context:** Less developed region, per capita GDP of 18.917,10€, urban vs. rural, depopulation, climate change and mobility challenge

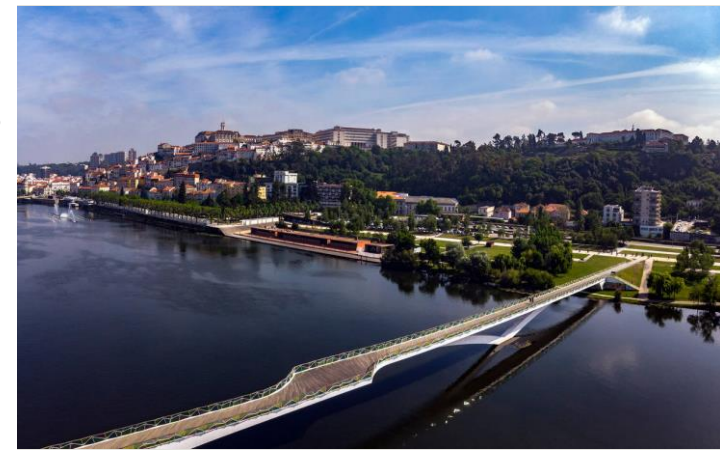
Metro Mondego System, Coimbra Region



Abadias Park, Figueira da Foz



Pedro e Inês Pedestrian Bridge, Coimbra





Strategy of CIM-Coimbra Region

➤ **How we think we can benefit from the workshop:**

- Exchange experiences/ideas/perspectives
- Learn from good practices
- Retain information
- Collect inputs
- Share/give feedback

➤ **Broad areas we would like to receive advice on:**

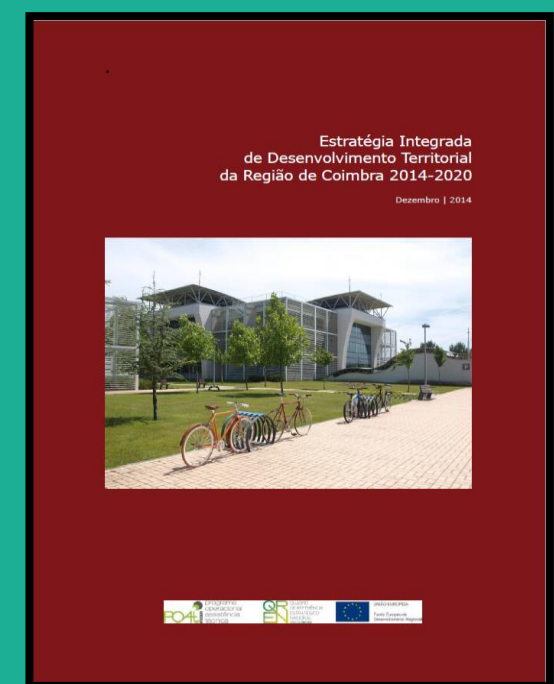
- Demography
- Digitalization
- Finance and funding opportunities
- Stakeholder engagement and participation

➤ **How we think the other peers can learn from our experience:**

- Explore a common topic/problem/subject
- Share of knowledge about real problems
- Creation of new knowledge based on others experience
- Activate synergies
- Learn from site visits

Strategy of CIM-Coimbra Region

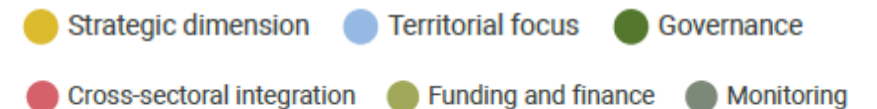
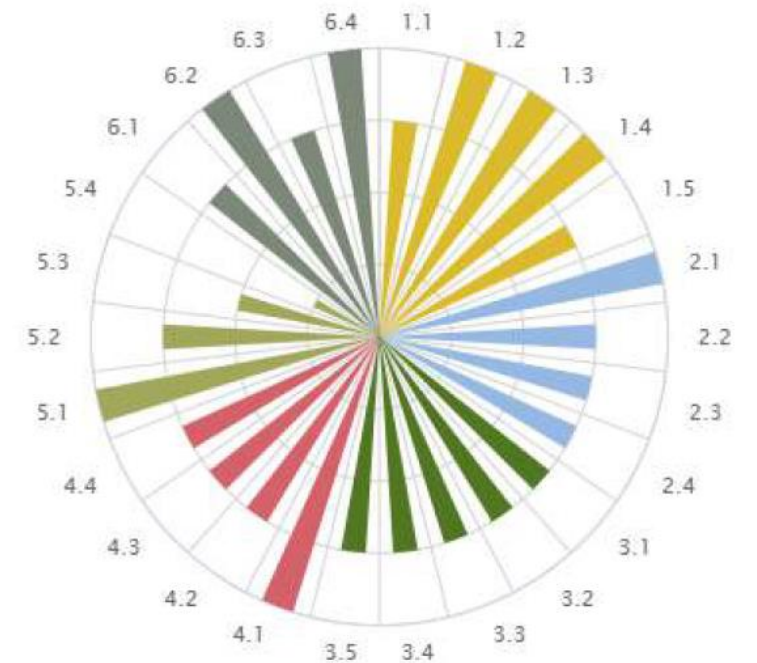
- **Our previous experience(s) in SUD**
- The current 2021-2027 SUD strategy of CIM-RC was developed on the bases of its Integrated Territorial Development Strategy.
- Is aligned with the Portugal 2030 Strategy, the Centro 2030 Strategic Vision, RIS3 Centro, the Cohesion Policy, the National Spatial Planning Policy, the Territorial Plan for a Just Transition and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



Strategy of CIM-Coimbra Region

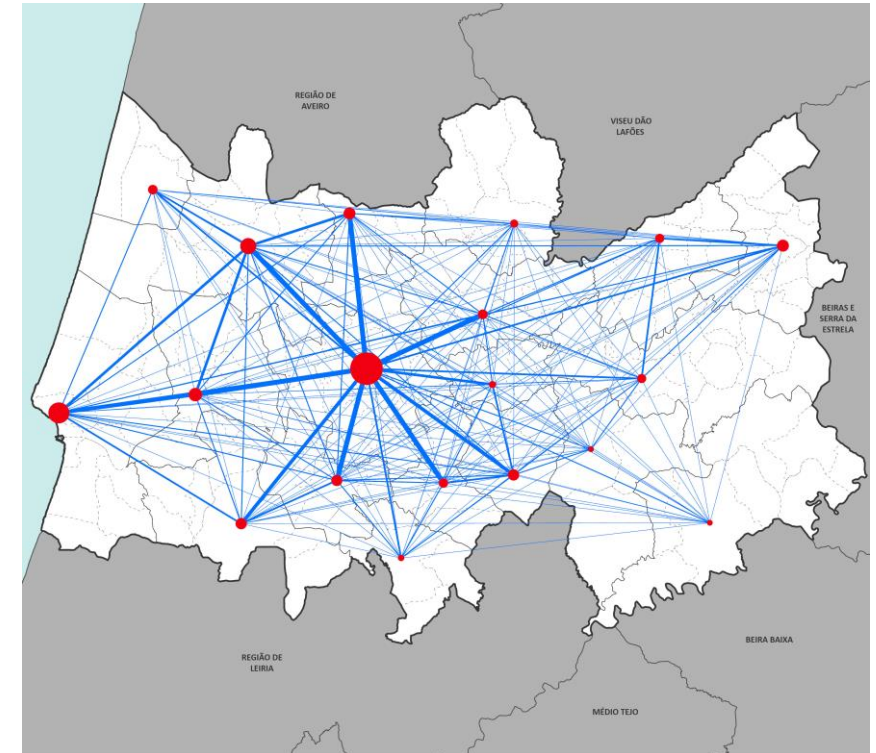
SAT4SUD Results

- **High scores:** Strategic dimension; Governance; Monitoring
 - How the objectives of the action plan translates into action
 - CIM as the Intermediate body of the Managing Authority and responsible for the management of the ITI
- **Low scores:** Territorial Focus; Cross-sectoral integration; Funding and finance
 - Less focus on less developed territories
 - Difficulty in blending different funding sources
 - Low involvement of private investors



Block 2 – Territorial Focus

- There are flaws in the way urban-rural links are established in the Region
- Asymmetrical population distribution
- Strong attraction of Coimbra as the main destination of intra-CIM commuting movements
- Fragility for the inland territories that cannot attract and retain population, especially the low-density territories, which are devoid of a network of actors and innovation infrastructures



Commuting movements (2021) at NUTS III Coimbra Region

Block 4 – Cross Sectoral Integration

- CIM-RC has already achieved some key aspects of cross-sectoral integration in its Strategy in alignment with the SDGs, e.g.,:
 - a) Intermunicipal Climate Change Plan
 - b) Sustainable Urban Mobility Action Plan
 - 3) Mobility and Transport Plan
- Across the Region is under construction the Mondego Mobility System which will constitute an efficient and sustainable mobility alternative for the Coimbra Region, reinforcing intermobility and the economic and social integration of the territory.
- According to its Integrated Territorial Development Strategy, CIM-RC aspires to assert itself as a Metropolitan Region



Metro Mondego

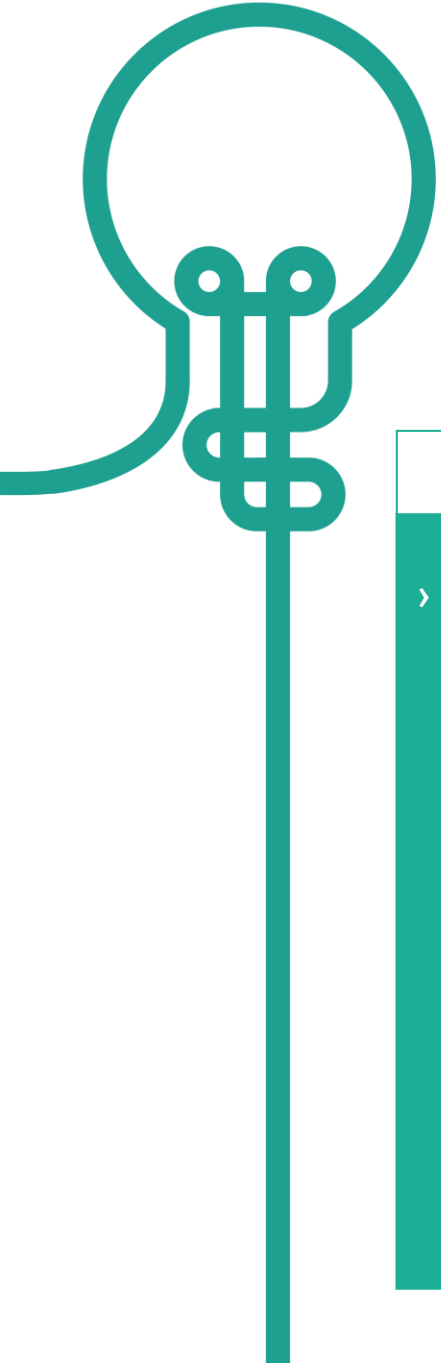


Block 5 – Funding and Finance

- Lack of financial capacity to respond to the needs of the territory
- Delays in the implementation of projects due to procedural and administrative obstacles, the high bureaucratic burden and seasonality
- Difficulty in ensuring the continuity of financial support to successfully tested projects
- Difficulty in replicating and scaling a project considered an example of "good practice", due to the lack of funding and the absence of mechanisms that anticipate the possibility / potential of innovative projects to scale, and be successfully implemented



*ClimAgir Project, financed by POSEUR, Portugal 2020 and Cohesion Fund
Example of "Good Practice" by Interreg Europe*



Strategy of CIM-Coimbra Region

The three questions we would like to discuss

Question 1

- › How to ensure sustainability of services within development of the SUD in a shrinking population context?

Question 2

- › How to engage the stakeholders in order to boost the implementation of the SUD strategy?

Question 3

- › How to be more effective in the long-term planning and continuity of the measures of SUD?

QUESTION 1



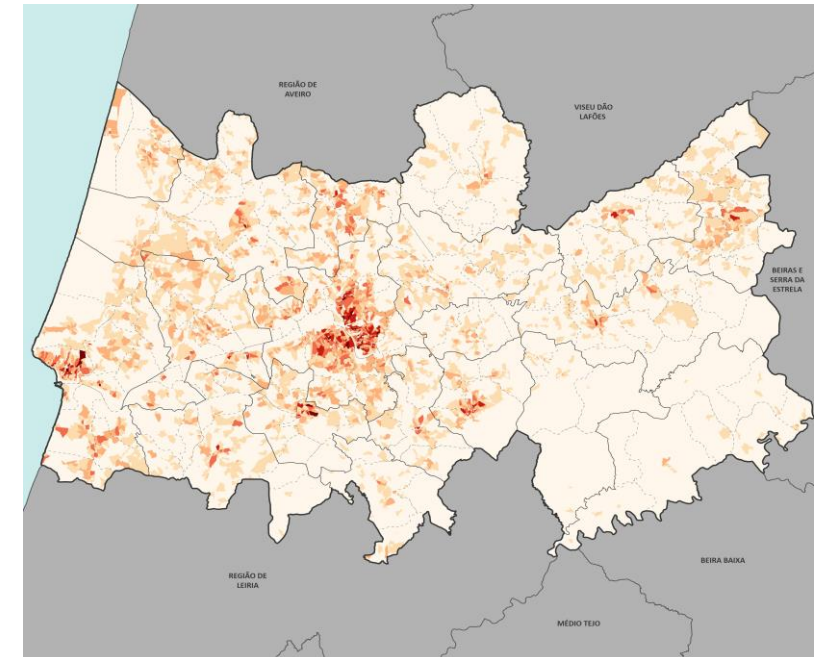
How to ensure sustainability of services within development of the SUD in a shrinking population context?

In the past decade, Coimbra Region has been losing population. It registered a decrease of 5,3% from 460,139 (2011) to 436,862 inhabitants (2021), which represents 19,6% of the population of the Centre Region and 4,2% of the population of the country. The highest number of people in the region was 472,334 in 2001.

Coimbra Region has two Regional Urban Centres

- 1. **Coimbra:** greater concentration of economic activities and supralocal services and public facilities that determine greater attractiveness and demand (higher education, health services and a technology-based business fabric, largely linked to the services identified).*
- 2. **Figueira da Foz:** specialisation in tourism and port services*

Stakeholders involved in the issue: population; municipalities; essential services; transport and mobility system;



Resident population in Coimbra Region (2021)



Why is this an important question?

- *Due to the demographic loss in the territory of Coimbra Region, services of general interest in low population density territories become more costly due to the decrease in demand, which in turn jeopardises the challenge of territorial cohesion.*
- *Thus, it becomes urgent to understand how low-density territories can develop mechanisms to face what will be the costliness of services of general interest resulting from depopulation.*

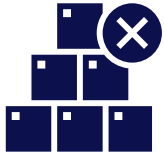
***Threats to the delivery of the SUD strategy:** demographic change affects rural and urban areas alike, with implications in the provision of infrastructure and quality services. It also has a strong impact on the economy, social protection and health systems, as well as on the region's housing and infrastructure needs, which in turn has implications for regional investments and for the future cohesion policy.*



What has been done & worked?

- *The implementation of CIM-RC's EIDT has contributed to enhancing the visibility of low-density municipalities, given that there was a greater representation of these territories, both in terms of their integration into territorial planning instruments and their access to financing through CIM-RC's ITI.*
- *CIM-RC's EIDT has been realizing its objective of promoting the competitiveness of low-density territories, by economically valuing endogenous resources at the regional level. In addition, has been undertaking actions that guarantee the promotion of territorial cohesion by seeking to respond to the needs of combating regional imbalances, particularly when it comes to urban-rural linkages.*

E.g., The partnership role that CIM-RC assumes with the Central Administration by working in a concerted and constructive way with local/regional agents in order to facilitate the implementation of policies for the socio-economic development of low-density territories.



What has been done but should be improved?

- *The development of CIM-RC's EIDT has made it possible to raise the profile of low-density territories through their inclusion in planning territorial instruments and access to funding through its Pact for Development and Territorial Cohesion in the 2014-2020 period and, currently, in through its ITI.*
- *However, there is still no adequate recognition of these territories by national and European institutions neither the benefits of stronger urban-rural cooperation/linkages in areas such health, mobility and education (increasingly deficient services that have not had the necessary follow-up).*
- *Statistical data shows that European territories are not evolving in a homogeneous way, with areas of economic growth, social cohesion and sustainability coexisting with others threatened by stagnation, depopulation and desertification.*

It is necessary to lay the foundations for a holistic approach that will allow us to move towards a more balanced territorial development in which the rural environment is not given "the" greater importance.

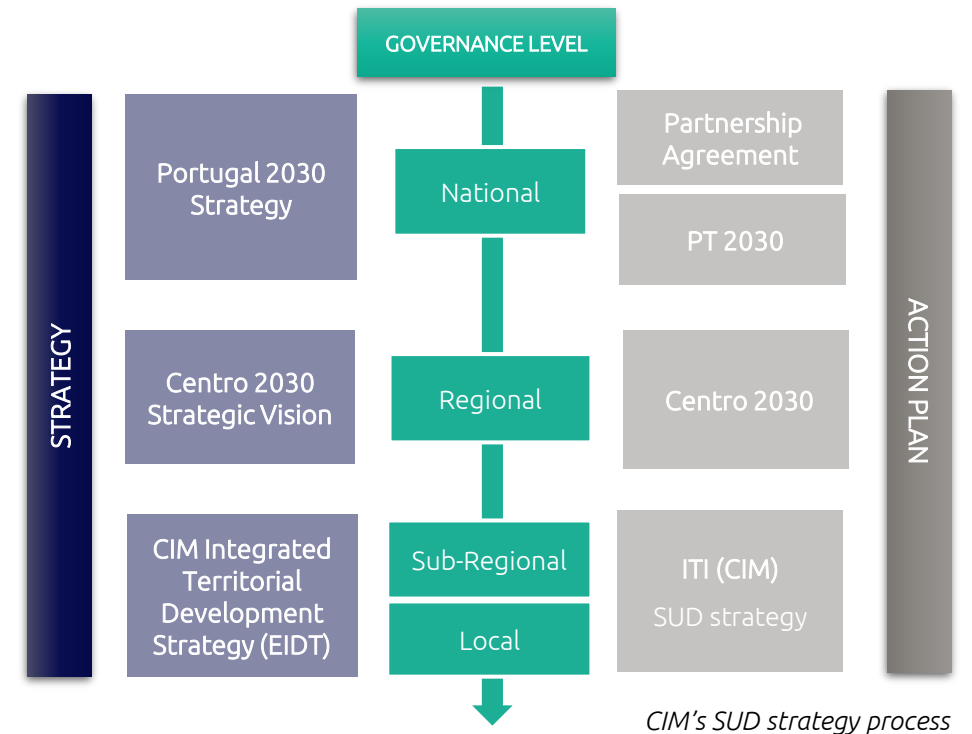
QUESTION 2



How to be more effective in the long-term planning and continuity of the measures of SUD?

CIM RC needs to be more efficient and effective in planning SUD strategy in order to guarantee predictability and reliability in the use of financing instruments over the long term and not just when programs are funded, in order to avoid periods of financial breaks and unsteadiness in the continuity of SUD measures in the years of funding.

Stakeholders involved in the issue: Managing Authority; National Government; relevant stakeholders and territorial agents;





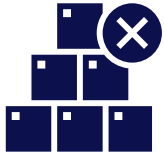
Why is this an important question?

- *The review of the CIM-RC's EIDT is a prerequisite for the utilization of CIM-RC's ITI funds. A budget of EUR 152 million is foreseen (still under negotiation) for the CIM-RC's ITI. However, although this is a significant amount, it appears that the needs registered largely exceed this amount, reflecting the lack of financial capacity to respond to the needs of the territory.*
- *In the previous Community framework, several challenges were faced that contributed to delays in the implementation of projects (e.g.; procedural and administrative obstacles, the high bureaucratic burden in the procedures related to licensing, the seasonality, etc.).*
- *On the other hand, there is the difficulty in ensuring the continuity of financial support to successfully tested projects. In other words, it becomes difficult to replicate and scale up a project considered an example of "good practice", due to the lack of funding and the absence of mechanisms that anticipate the possibility / potential of innovative projects to scale, and be successfully implemented and guarantee the continuity of the SUD measures.*



What has been done & worked?

- *Until the 2007 European framework, there were no intermunicipal management and planning in Portugal. The first implementation exercise of the SUD strategy through CIMs took place with the National Strategic Reference Framework (QREN) in the period of 2007-2013. This exercise was subsequently deepened with the PT2020 framework through the development and implementation of the PDCTs.*
- *Nowadays , this concept is being expanded with the PT2030 community framework where CIMs are now responsible for the implementation and management of all ITI that will gather all municipal investments.*
- *CIM RC's ITI for the 2021-2027 period is still under development and will adopt a multidimensional approach adapted to the specific characteristics and results at local level (municipalities), allowing investments from various priority axes and operational programs to be combined for intersectoral intervention.*



What has been done but should be improved?

- *The gradual involvement of CIMs in the management of EU funds allows for greater efficiency in the implementation of SUD measures, amplifying its results/outcomes. However, there is still great difficulty in planning long term SUD measures.*
- *This difficulty is reflected in both the previous and current European frameworks (e.g., we are at the end of 2023 and we still haven't closed the investments planned for 2021-2027).*
- *This means that the measures are not being implemented so effectively and efficiently as desired.*



Thank you!



CIM|RC

COMUNIDADE INTERMUNICIPAL
REGIÃO DE COIMBRA

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Coimbra, 28-29 November 2023**

**Intermunicipal Community of
Coimbra Region**

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