

C4TALENT

Quarterly Network Report 1

January - March 2024

URBACT



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Editorial

Welcome to the very first issue of the Quarterly Network Report (QNR) of C4TALENT URBACT Action Planning Network! If you want to know more about how small- and medium sized towns across Europe can deal with brain-drain by building a great entrepreneurial ecosystem - you are definitely at the right place.

This is the first QNR of our network - a regular (quarterly) information bulletin - that gives an insider view of how our network - and our 10 partner cities - make progress on their URBACT journey and tackle the common policy challenge in an integrated way, using a participative approach.

While you follow our journey through the various issues of this publication, you will learn about methods, tools we use, pilots we experiment with, difficulties we face, failures - and hopefully plenty of successes of our partners as well.

All our partners are convinced that smaller towns offer optimal conditions for good life and good work - and all that in a more compact and more liveable - human - environment than the big metropolises they are competing with for talent.

Starting from this very first issue, our QNRs will follow the same general structure:

- ➔ Overview of project progress: in this chapter we present a one page overview of our overall progress, using the updated version of our

Network Roadmap.

- ➔ Highlights from our transnational activities
- ➔ Local activities and progress - in each report, we will dedicate a separate section to present the activities implemented in / progress made by each C4TALENT city partner.
- ➔ Knowledge and inspiration - this is the section where we share knowledge - including methodologies and good practices - linked to our policy challenge.
- ➔ People and insights - eventually, it is always about the people - so in every issue we will introduce interesting people (in this one members of our great project team) and their insights.
- ➔ Upcoming activities - at the end of each publication we provide a teaser of what's ahead of us as a network in the next quarter.

We have designed this first issue in a way that it also provides a bit of a context for those who encounter C4TALENT for the first time.

Enjoy reading and make sure to return from time to time to see our progress!

Béla Kézy, Lead Expert



More than a decade ago Nyíregyháza embarked on an exciting journey. The city decided to join transnational projects, with the purpose of learning and drawing inspiration from other European cities.

I've been part of this journey from the start. It all began with an URBACT project: Nyíregyháza joined the URBACT TechTown action planning network. We were inexperienced then, both as a city and myself as a project manager, but eager to learn from these projects to improve our city. Unlike traditional infrastructure projects, though, transnational projects don't come with big funding.

Through trial and error, we discovered how to use the lessons and methods from these projects to benefit Nyíregyháza. TechTown, followed by TechRevolution, played a crucial role in putting economic development and enterprise support on our local agenda. We also learned how to use participatory and integrated approaches in planning. These projects helped us develop a model for using transnational projects to drive significant local changes.

Whenever we face challenges in our city now, our first instinct is to tap into our European network for solutions. As we often say:

Successful cities steal - ideas from each other.

So, when more than 10 years, numerous successful transnational projects (even a Regiostars Public Choice Award) later, we realized that we need to do something to stop brain-drain, we turned to URBACT again. Unfortunately, there has been no network in the making that focused on this challenge - so we decided to create one. We invited cities from the TechTown - TechRevolution family - as well as some new cities that struggle with similar problems - and C4TALENT was born.

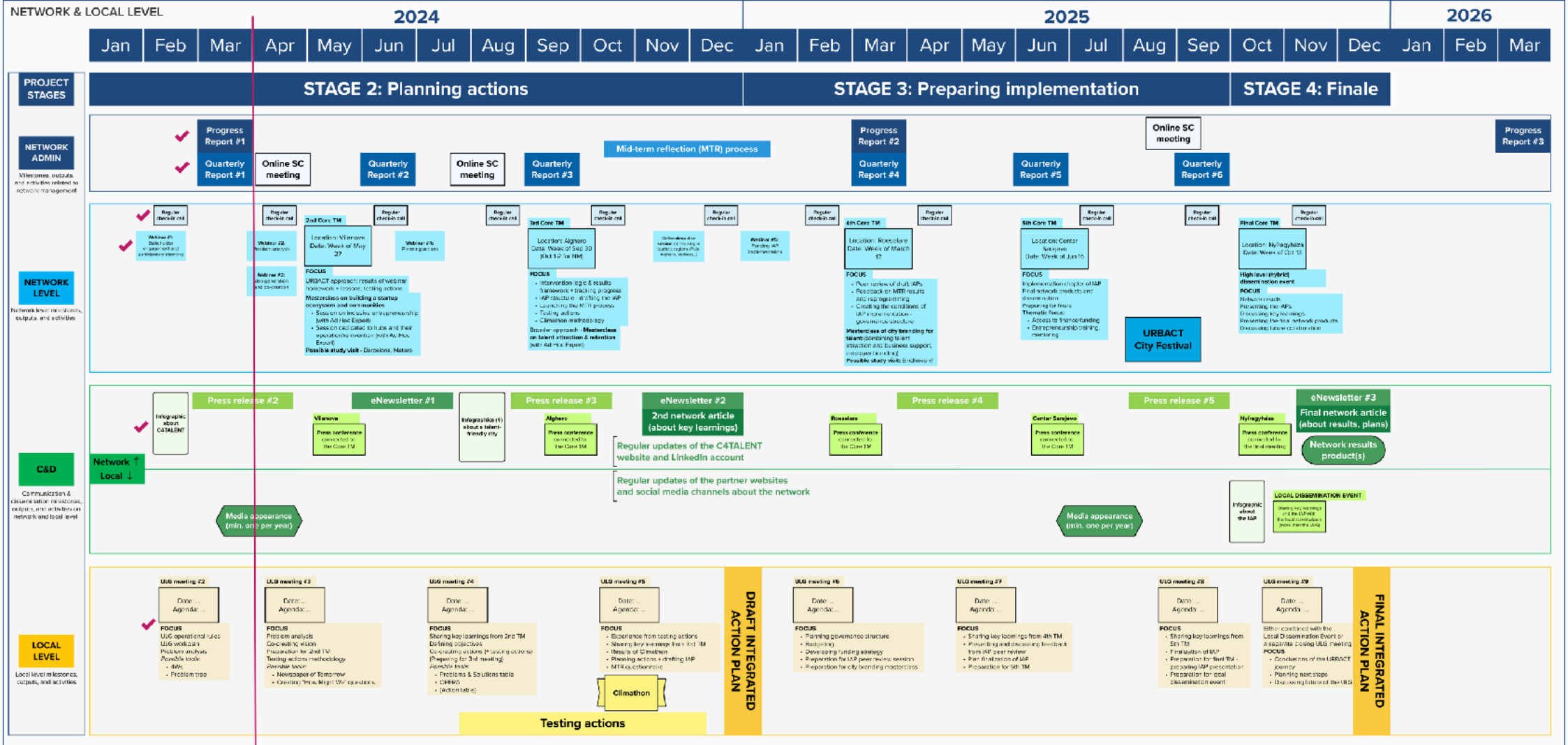
Our common journey with this great partnership began last year, and now we're proud to present our initial results in this first Quarterly Network Report. I'm confident that, as we progress, our subsequent reports will offer valuable information and lessons for cities across Europe facing similar challenges. So, I can only echo our Lead Expert, Béla's words:

Enjoy this issue and stay tuned for more in the coming months!

Dávid Bartók, Project Coordinator



Project Progress

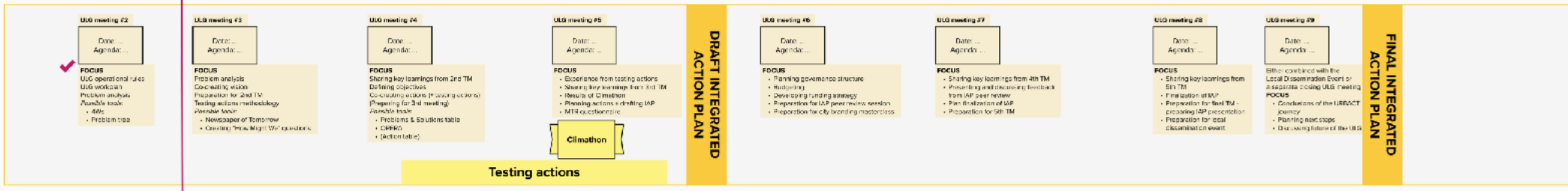
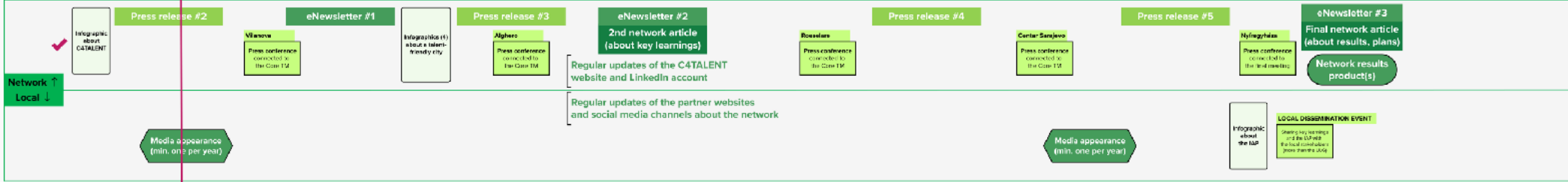
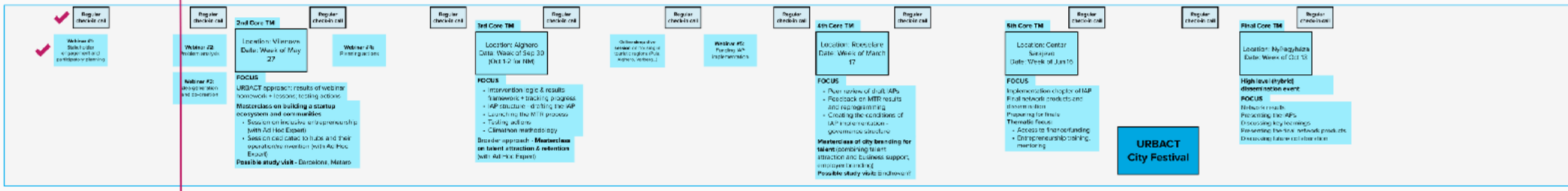
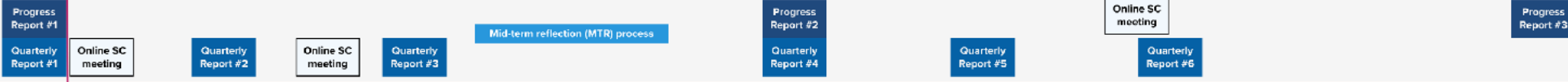


Milestones, outputs, and activities related to network management

Network-level milestones, outputs, and activities

Communication & dissemination milestones, outputs, and activities on network and local level

Local level milestones, outputs, and activities



Highlights from transnational activities

Memories from the Alytus Core Network Meeting

In the first quarter of 2024 we have not had an in-person network meeting. However, we still have fond memories of our **meeting held in Alytus** last year.

On 22-23 November, 2023 C4TALENT partners convened for their very first in-person network meeting in Alytus, Lithuania. The main purpose of the meeting was to set the scene for the successful implementation of the Phase 2 of our project.



Key elements of the meeting were as follows:

- ➔ **Presenting the host city:** a session dedicated to familiarising with Alytus and its main challenges related to talent attraction and retention, as well as enterprise support.
- ➔ **Discovering the policy challenge:** presentation and interactive workshop to create common understanding

among partners regarding the policy challenge our network set out to tackle.

- ➔ **Partners' corner:** each partner presented their city, focusing on the wider context, the policy challenge, as well as insights and highlights from the city visit.
- ➔ **Results of the Training Needs Analysis:** one section in the partner questionnaire has been dedicated to asking partners about their specific training needs related to the main themes of the project. In this session the results have been presented and discussed, providing valuable inputs to designing the network journey.
- ➔ **“Roadmapping”:** next, a joint planning exercise has been delivered, based on a skeleton roadmap that was gradually populated with specifics, including



Memories from the Alytus Core Network Meeting

dates and locations for TN meetings, topics for learning events, etc.

→ **IAP focus session:** cities worked in peer groups to jointly explore their IAP focus (as well as first ideas for possible testing actions).



As we have progressed through the sessions, partner gradually filled their city posters with specific content categorised into Insights, Training Needs, Good Practices and IAP focus.



Webinar - Engaging Stakeholders (26/03/2024)

We have quickly realised that the learning content exceeds the capacity of relatively short in-person transnational meetings. Therefore, webinars are organised in-between TN meetings. Webinars are relatively short online learning events dedicated to specific topics either linked to the network themes (subthemes) or to the building blocks of the URBACT method.

The very first C4TALENT webinar addressed a topic that partners found most challenging at the very beginning of their IAP journey - **Engaging Stakeholders**. Based on the TNA and



discussions at the Alytus meeting, the training session (designed and delivered by Mary Dellenbaugh-Losse, ad-hoc expert) focused on the following sub-topics:

- ➔ Understanding different groups of stakeholders
- ➔ Managing expectations and conflicting interests
- ➔ Creating and maintaining engagement
- ➔ Going beyond the usual suspects

The presentation of the topic and various practical tips, approaches and tools was followed by an interactive session, involving partners working in groups and reflecting on various aspects of the topic.

At the end of the webinar partners were asked to implement at least one tool or tip from the training. At our next TN meeting at the end of May, a follow-up session will be organised to share and discuss partners' experience.

Local Activities and Progress

Alghero

Over the past three months, our focus has been on engaging stakeholders and ULG members to introduce them to the URBACT project, its methodology, and the goals of our city within it. We've also worked on building our territorial network to gather valuable insights about the state of the art inside the community.

In January, our first ULG meeting sparked a captivating debate, highlighting key territorial challenges. Discussion on addressing talent drain expanded our stakeholder base, leading to invitations for the upcoming ULG meeting in April.

Meanwhile - as Fondazione Alghero - we joined the Job Day of the district of Sassari (north Sardinia - February 8th) - an occasion for job seekers and job providers to meet, to get to know each other and start a valid collaboration, but also a great opportunity



for us to observe active trends throughout the island, useful tools for job search and retraining, and expanding our network with organisations and institutions in relation to the project main themes.

Another relevant networking moment has been the event “Once Upon a Place” (Sorgono, south Sardinia - February 22nd - 25th), a storytelling and destination marketing festival that explores how to tell and promote a territory by bringing together writers, journalists, marketers and scriptwriters. Each one of them contributed by telling their attempts and experiences of work in different branches of a given territory with similar issues related to the C4TALENT project.

This quarter, we've identified relevant individuals and institutions related to our project goals, and we started to work towards developing a shared vision and actionable strategies.



Alytus

During the first quarter of 2024, politicians and employees of Alytus City Municipality worked intensively to develop the concept and procurement documents for the engineering



design of Alytus' Enterprise Hub and co-working space. There were numerous discussions (sometimes even heated debates within the municipality, as well as meetings with various designers.

However, In order for the space to be actively and efficiently used, it just makes sense to design and equip it in such a way as to meet specific needs of the target groups - (potential) entrepreneurs. For this reason, on 28 February our ULG

members met and discussed extensively the functions of the future building and the technical documentation prepared by the local authority. They have made various useful comments, made suggestions that were all discussed and taken into account. After all, it is very important that the building is attractive to



Centar Sarajevo

During the period from January to March, the Municipality of Centar Sarajevo operated, unfortunately, without an adopted budget due to political disagreements. This significantly slowed down certain planned activities, especially those related to organizing the second ULG meeting, which was postponed until the conditions for selecting a ULG coordinator and preparing for the next meeting were met. Such a turn of events was somewhat problematic, considering that the inaugural ULG meeting took place in November, resulting in too large of a gap until the second meeting.

Upon the adoption of the budget and the establishment of conditions for normal operation, the Municipality of Centar Sarajevo selected a ULG coordinator and arranged the next ULG team meeting for April 16, 2024. ULG Coordinator for Centar Sarajevo will be Mr. Aleksandar Dodik. Due to the aforementioned



delays in meeting realization, it was agreed with the coordinator to expedite the scheduling of future meetings to avoid delays in implementing planned activities.

This period was utilized to prepare a new subsection on the Municipality's website dedicated to reporting activities within the C4TALENT project and sharing information with entrepreneurs. Additionally, the Municipality of Centar Sarajevo facilitated the establishment of an association of start-up alumni of the Municipality of Centar Sarajevo, which will operate within

the premises of the Center for Excellence in Entrepreneurship and the Municipality's HUB space. Representatives of this association will actively participate in the further work of the ULG team.

The respected news agency FENA has [published a news article about the URBACT program in Bosnia and Herzegovina](#), also promoting our C4TALENT project.

Nyíregyháza

Due to pressure and increased interest from the Mayor, the local team has come up with the draft basic concept of the city's IAP (i.e., main challenges, possible solutions) as early as at the beginning of 2024. To validate the draft concept, 3 ULG meetings have been delivered in a span of less than a month.

February 22 - As the last meeting was in last December, the ULG members were reminded of key information about the network and then asked to discuss in groups the city's main challenges in (1) supporting existing businesses, (2) creating new businesses, and (3) encouraging the development of future entrepreneur generations. The results were recorded offline and online (in MURAL).

Participants wanted to keep the momentum, so the ULG convened again on February 29 to brainstorm solutions to the challenges identified. At this occasion, the participants also worked in groups - three teams addressed the challenges identified for the three categories above. After explaining their solutions, they voted to select one flagship solution in every category - the one with the most promise and possible impact. Then, the ULG members were given homework: every group had to describe the winning solution

within their designated category in approx. 2 pages until the next meeting.

At the third meeting on March 19 group representatives presented their solution in more detail, with the other participants asking questions and making comments.

Now, the project team is combining the original concept with the new solutions and working on a pre-draft version of the IAP which can be circulated among the ULG members and presented to the Mayor. This version will serve as a strong foundation for the IAP, to be refined and detailed.

A core group of ULG members also suggested to create a LinkedIn group to stay in touch. Managing their expectations and keeping their interest might become challenging later due to the different working speeds of the public and private sector (they are mostly part of the latter), but for now there's ample local support which will be harnessed to create a truly relevant strategy that addresses real needs and concerns.

Nyíregyháza - highlights from ULC meetings

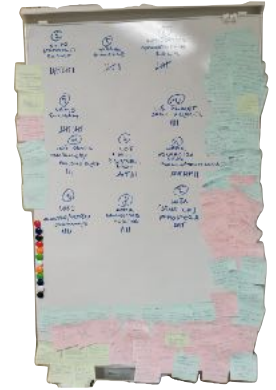


Pula

Following our first ULG meeting held at the end of December 2023, we continued our work in January, with reflecting on the key insights and conclusions drawn from the meeting. With our ULG boasting a diverse array of stakeholders, each contributing their unique perspectives, we underscored the importance of presenting the most important existing strategic documents pertaining to Vallelunga's redevelopment. These documents provide a broader context and strategic direction while fostering innovative thinking within the ULG group.



In February and March we worked hard on procurement documentation, since we will have an external expert to facilitate ULG meetings and coordinate the preparation of the Integrated Action Plan. The procurement process finished at the end of March after choosing a prestigious Croatian company with significant urban development, design, as well as URBACT experience.



Simultaneously, our attention turned to the architectural conceptualization of Vallelunga, closely tied to the Urbact project. In the initial draft, Vallelunga emerges as the city's third major center, covering approximately 250,000 square meters. This transformative initiative promises to enrich urban life and foster innovation. Collaborating closely with Urbact project coordinators, we ensure strategic alignment with the Integrated Action Plan, envisioning an inclusive and sustainable transformation for Vallelunga.

Roeselare

December 12, 2023: Workshop with the core project team members working on the problem tree. It was a good session offering diverse perspectives from colleagues representing various departments (economics, HR, city marketing, strategy). We recognised the need for more granular data concerning the issue of brain drain in Roeselare and agreed to work on mapping ongoing actions by the stakeholders.



January 9, 2024: Presentation of the project to the principals of the middle- and high schools in Roeselare. Following this presentation, one principal expressed interest in joining the ULG.

February 1, 2024: 2nd ULG meeting with 10 attendees. An introductory presentation about the project was delivered, to bring new members up to speed. It was followed by a brainstorming session focusing on the push and pull factors affecting the decisions of students, entrepreneurs, residents, and employees.

February 20, 2024: Attending the seminar "How to finance my local development plan?" organised by the Belgian National URBACT. The seminar featured presentations from various local governments of Belgium and France, sharing their experiences

in developing funding strategies for local development plans. This information can be useful for the implementation stage of the APN. It was also a good opportunity for networking with other (URBACT) cities in Belgium.



During Q1 of 2024, we assessed the current and planned actions, both short

and medium-term, aimed at enhancing talent attraction and retention. This overview encompasses not only initiatives by the City but also those undertaken by stakeholders within the ULG. In the following months our focus will revolve around identifying potential testing actions within C4Talent.

Rzeszów

In late March, we held our second ULG meeting. Our Local ULG Coordinator sent out invitations to individuals whose jobs or businesses relate to the "C4TALENT" project. It was great to see that the majority confirmed their attendance and came to the meeting with enthusiasm and a willingness to collaborate.

After a brief introduction about the project and its partners, attendees gathered in the conference room and began discussing the root causes of the problem and brainstorming ideas to address the challenges outlined in the project. One idea that emerged was to conduct focused surveys to understand why young people choose to stay or leave Rzeszów. Based on this, we identified target groups and decided to collaborate on a document proposing questions to be posed to the youth.



During the meeting, we also agreed that our organizations should enhance cooperation in supporting businesses and startups. We brainstormed the idea of creating a roadmap or an app to assist entrepreneurs and startups seeking support for their initiatives.

Overall, it was a productive and inspiring meeting. This sentiment was echoed by one of our members, Ewa Kubejko-Polańska, who shared her positive experience on her personal Facebook profile, highlighting the discussions on youth and youth entrepreneurship in Rzeszów. We're grateful to Weronika Kasza and Krzysztof Stańko for organizing another engaging meeting.



Varberg

Hackathon - the Energy Challenge

On November 22-24, Campus Varberg organized a hackathon together with the company Varberg Energi. Varberg Energi has provided all customers with smart meters allowing the customer to easily follow energy use; but what does the data show and how can it be used? The challenge presented to students at Campus Varberg to examine the data and make suggestions on how both Varberg Energi and consumers can make more sustainable choices. For two days, students from the educational programs IT project manager and system developer co-created ideas and coded new sustainable solutions. The event has been a great opportunity for students to test their knowledge, challenge their creativity and create value in a real case. On the other hand, Varberg Energi received new inputs, perspectives and suggestions for creating more value for customers, upgrading their products and services and continuing to lead the way in energy transition.

The event started on November 22 at Campus Varberg and ended with pitch presentations and prize giving to the winning team on Friday morning,



Make Varberg the number one choice for young talents

On the 11th of March, students in their second year of the Event Management bachelor programme at Campus Varberg presented ideas to the ULAG on how to make Varberg the number one choice for young talent! Six groups shared innovative ideas ranging from apps and career fairs to festivals. Several representatives from the public and private sector joined the session to give their feedback, thoughts, and input on the students' work. There is no doubt that talent attraction is a hot subject - the room was buzzing! Most of the discussions touched upon the complexity of the subject. There are factors other than just career opportunities: the students highlighted the importance of social activities and communities to make Varberg feel like home.



Vilanova i la Geltrú



During the first quarter of the year, our project focused on four key activities:

Establishment of a facilitator's team: Recognizing the need for a cohesive approach in executing project activities involving interactions with various stakeholders such as the ULG and city agents, we

conducted training in "Facilitation Principles" within Neàpolis and with select collaborators to ensure a unified methodology.

Stakeholder and new ULG member interviews: Following the first ULG meeting, the identification of additional city agents necessitated the recruitment of new ULG members. Interviews were conducted - among others - with a high school and university to further expand the ULG.

Testing action: Building on discussions from the initial ULG meeting, efforts were directed towards mapping research projects

of high school students to understand their interests and integrate them into the Neàpolis ecosystem. A preliminary testing action - involving 50 high school students - was conducted to assess their research interests and orientations.

Entrepreneurship networking: A networking session was organized within Neàpolis to foster connections among entrepreneurs, facilitating opportunities for co-creation and collaboration within the ecosystem.



Vilanova i la Geltrú - testing action moments



Knowledge and Inspirations

The Policy Challenge

C4TALENT partners are small- and medium-sized towns from different parts of Europe that intend to significantly improve the local entrepreneurship ecosystem, build a thriving startup community – with the overall goal to address the brain drain phenomenon – and attract and retain talent.

The overarching network theme is talent attraction and retention – but with a strong focus on entrepreneurship ecosystems and startup communities.

Brain-drain

Labour migration – both in-country and across borders – is prominently present in the EU. While labour migration has a range of potential benefits, it also leads to “brain drain” in the sending regions.

“The brain drain phenomenon refers to a region’s permanent loss of skilled workers and students.”

Considering the main direction of migration processes, most European small- and medium-sized towns (including our C4TALENT partners) experience the brain drain process

– they steadily lose highly skilled and talented people to nearby bigger cities and the capital cities, as well as to cities in other countries.

Negative consequences of brain-drain:

- ✓ Labour and talent shortage
- ✓ Limited innovation capacity
- ✓ Lower average salaries
- ✓ Limited consumption of local products and services
- ✓ Accelerating the aging process, increasing old-age dependency ratio.

The combined effect is the slow but steady decline of the local economy.

There are, however, certain benefits for the sending regions, including remittances, and, more importantly, the potential of return migration (or “brain regain”). However, cities that want to benefit from brain regain need active measures and policies to stimulate such decisions.

The Policy Challenge

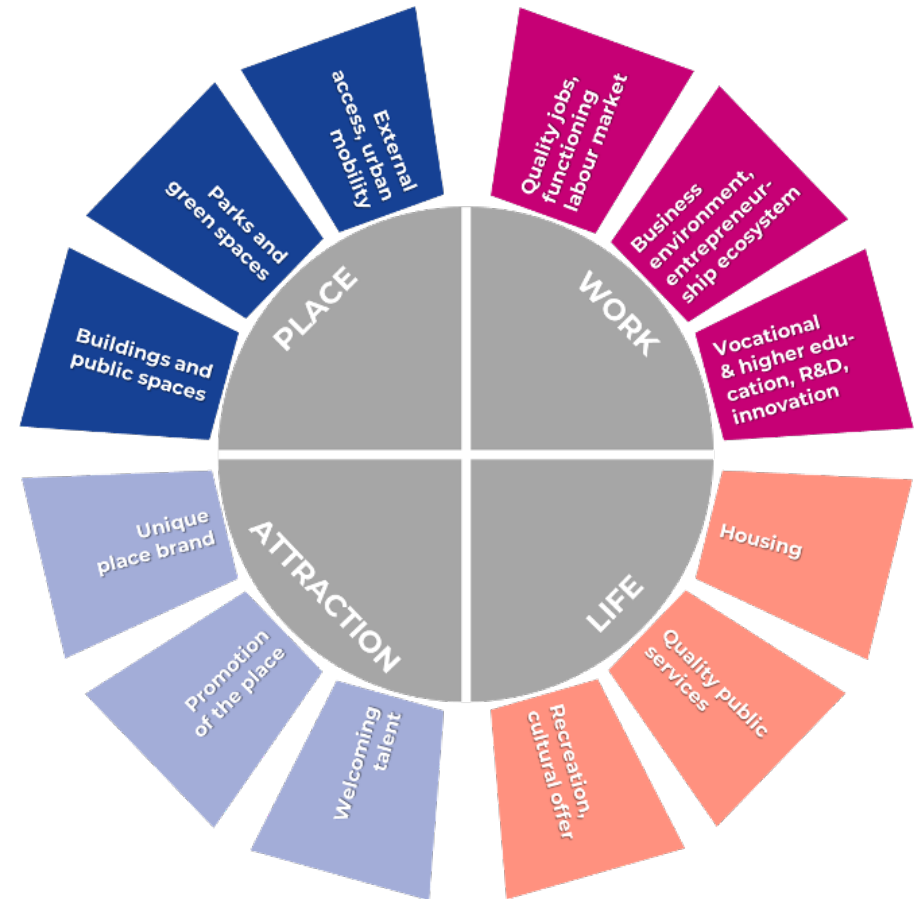
Why do people move?

To attract and retain talent, it is also important to understand what are the most important factors that motivate people's choice of place.

Typically, relocation decisions are complex choices, affected by a multitude of motivations (often very different for different individuals), but eventually **work- and lifestyle-related factors** are both essential.

It is also important to note that relocation decisions could be influenced by both **push and pull factors**: "the reason why someone leaves a location is a push factor" (for instance, someone with children is not satisfied with the quality of schools); "the reason why someone moves to a specific new location is a pull factor" (for instance, someone with a business idea may seek places where there are favourable conditions for starting a new enterprise).

In the model developed as part of the TalentMagnet project, co-financed by the EU's Interreg Danube Programme there are 4 main categories and 12 subcategories - talent attraction factors.



The Policy Challenge

Business support as a talent attraction factor

Work is still one of the most important (if not the most important) talent attraction and retention factor: any place that wants to be successful in the competition for talent needs to offer excellent work opportunities. And it's not about quantity, either: talents – especially from the younger generation – are attracted by vibrant local labour markets that offer **a wide variety of quality jobs**.

In order to have a healthy labour market, a city needs to offer an environment where businesses can thrive and grow. Many ambitious, talented people reach a moment in their career when they would like to try themselves as entrepreneurs – launch and grow their own startup enterprise. Therefore, a well-functioning business support structure (as also presented in the frame of reference before) is a direct talent attraction and retention factor. Unfortunately, most smaller towns lag behind capital cities and big economic centres when it comes to offering optimal conditions for starting and growing a business.

What makes an enabling business support structure?

Increasingly, the term “ecosystem” is used by experts and scientists to describe the landscape or environment in which businesses operate. David Isenberg, adjunct professor at Columbia Business School and Babson, defines entrepreneurship ecosystem as *“a network of individuals, institutions, and organizations that work together to create an environment that fosters entrepreneurship”*



The Policy Challenge



The crucial success factor is not having the right organisations (which is of course important), but having the right people with the right mindset.

People and insights - Meet the Team

Project coordinator (LP)



Name	Dávid
Position	Project Coordinator, LP
Professional background	For more than a decade I have been working with various transnational cooperation projects in several European programs, such as INTERREG EUROPE, INTERREG DANUBE, Cross-border Cooperation programs and of course URBACT. In TechTown and Techrevolution URBACT projects Nyíregyháza participated as project partner, and I was responsible for local project management tasks. Since 2019 I have been working as Managing Director of Nyíregyháza Industrial Park, coordinating economic development activities of Nyíregyháza - especially investment promotion and supporting local SME's.
Personal motivation to participate in the project	In 2019 we started an investment promotion program - by today we have made incredible progress: one of the largest Industrial Park developments of Hungary now takes place in Nyíregyháza, and various new multinational companies chose our city to build their new factories. We are proud of our results, but we don't want to sit back and relax: Nyíregyháza as a city (as well as myself, as the person) is committed to support our SMEs and startups to become more competitive - and contribute to attracting and retaining talent. To do this, C4Talent is an excellent opportunity to learn from other partner cities and I am convinced that it will make a significant contribution also to our results, as Lead Partner.
Main expectations	Our investment promotion journey started with an investment promotion strategy and action plan. So my expectation here is that by the end of the project we have a clear and feasible Action Plan on building a successful entrepreneurial and startup ecosystem in Nyíregyháza to strengthen the local business community and help them grow in the future.
Highlight of the project so far	The Alytus core network meeting, where we had the possibility to meet our partners, know them better and start to build our community.

Communication Officer (LP)



Name	Zoltán
Position	Communication Officer in C4TALENT External relations officer at the Municipality of Nyíregyháza
Professional background	Social worker, translator
Personal motivation to participate in the project	Growing up in Nyíregyháza (and loving my hometown), I'm all in for making it an even better place. It hurts to watch talented people leave (especially because most of them never return), so jumping into a team that is committed to improving conditions for them was a no brainer, really.
Main expectations	I expect the city to formulate a clear roadmap to become startup-friendly place where more young people decide to try themselves and launch their own business - instead of trying their luck elsewhere.
Highlight of the project so far	Alytus. Meeting a bunch of smart people ready to act was great. (The beer tasting wasn't bad either.)

Nyíregyháza



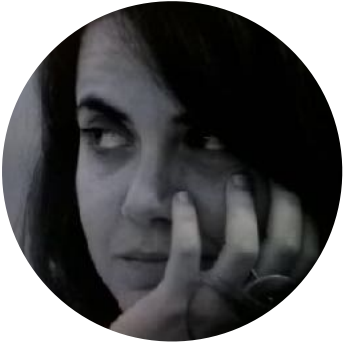
Name	Niki
Position	ULG coordinator
Professional background	Project manager and consultant, involved in the project as an external expert, mainly working on the implementation of transnational projects in varying urban development topics
Personal motivation to participate in the project	I have always loved learning – just for its own sake (in a l'art pour l'art style), but it's a bonus if something good can come of it. URBACT projects are the best for “deep diving” into issues, learning the practices of other cities in Europe, and networking. The tight budget forces the partners to be creative and make the most of the limited resources they have.
Main expectations	I don't expect anything, I rather hope that instead of focusing on mostly large investors and infrastructural developments, Nyíregyháza can rethink its approach to support smaller, but inspiring businesses (and people) to build a stronger community.
Highlight of the project so far	The URBACT Summer University was a tiring but interesting event – a perfect way to meet with the other partners for the first time, and kick-off the project activities. It was also well-organized: lots of practical learnings about the logistics of an event like this could be observed throughout the programme (with my favourites being the badges with seeds and the menu selection).

Nyíregyháza



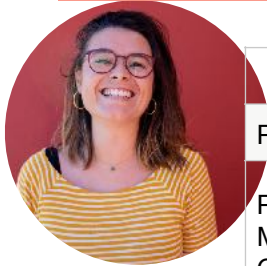
Name	Tibor
Position	Project Assistant
Professional background	<p>Currently I am a project assistant at the Economic Development Agency of the City of Nyíregyháza, mainly providing administrative and management support to the implementation of transnational projects.</p> <p>Previously I was part of the financial office at a local authority, where I was responsible for the financial administration of various EU-funded infrastructure projects.</p>
Personal motivation to participate in the project	<p>I'm involved in this project due to my personal connection to the brain drain issue affecting both my hometown and Nyíregyháza, where I work. The migration of young talent away from these areas is noticeable and threatens our community's vitality. After studying and working in France, I returned because of my strong ties to my family, upbringing, and roots. I aim to inspire young talents to return and contribute to our community, driven by a sense of belonging and a desire to make a difference.</p>
Main expectations	<p>My expectation is to transform the perceptions of not just talent, but also all stakeholders, including government officials and businesses. It is important to not just retain or entice young people with promises but to genuinely inspire them and instil a sense of pride in their origins encouraging their active contribution to improving their community.</p>
Highlight of the project so far	<p>Working in our ULG with diverse stakeholders - including representatives of NGOs, businesses and public bodies. Instead of formal meetings, these ULG meetings have involved lively discussions and ideation sessions - resulting in plenty of great ideas that need to be explored further.</p>

Alghero



Name	Maria Giovanna
Position	Project Coordinator and ULG coordinator
Professional background	Programming and Projects Area Functionary at Fondazione Alghero, with ten years of experience in planning and managing projects for the enhancement and promotion of cultural heritage financed by European and national funds. Within the framework of the project she plays the role of coordinator and ULG coordinator in charge.
Personal motivation to participate in the project	Due to my role within Fondazione Alghero, my personal motivation aligns with the foundation mission, that is shaping an organised and unified circuit in terms of strategies for the cultural and social development of the territory, from which every citizen – included myself - can benefit from.
Main expectations	Working in synergy with political, academic and educational institutions and the major entrepreneurial entities in the territory to ensure that the project takes tangible shape in the city in order to provide concrete answers to the needs of our community.
Highlight of the project so far	Sharing experiences with one another, learning from each other and discovering similar realities while having fun in the process!

Alghero



Francesca	Name	Giulia
Project Assistant	Position	ULG Meeting Assistant
Programming and Projects Area Fondazione Alghero - MA in Arts Administration and Cultural Policies from Goldsmiths University in London, expert in events planning, live performances and project coordination of projects enhancing the cultural heritage.	Professional background	Programming and Projects Area Fondazione Alghero - Master's degree in educational services for the artistic and cultural heritage at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan, specialised in design and management of educational pathways for different types of targets and in public engagement techniques.
I studied outside Sardinia and abroad, coming back to the island has been a great challenge for many reasons, many of them are exactly the ones this project aims to address. My active participation means doing something valuable and tangible for the future of my community as well as my own.	Personal motivation to participate in the project	As a thirty-year old woman with a life project in Alghero that includes my working life and my social network, my personal motivation is related the personal well-being.
The creation of both an informal and an institutional group that would draw constant attention and debate on the challenge of the community – related to the project – in order to transform words into action.	Main expectations	Increased awareness of the available human and local resources. Addressing brain-drain is very important and timely - a crucial step towards a better future for Alghero.
The meetings with our network colleagues, their realities and their experiences are of great value and a huge contribution to my work experience within Urbact. Priceless occasions to learn from each other, share doubts and ideas and hang out!	Highlight of the project so far	The debate on the project theme, the territory mapping and the creation of a network have been the best parts so far for me.

Alytus

Neringa	Name	Asta
Project Coordinator	Position	ULG Coordinator
<p>Education - masters of economics and law. Over 20 years of experience in the preparation and administration of EU-funded projects - and still in love with the domain. More than seven years ago, I added to this experience my work in the field of strategic planning and budget preparation and administration of the municipality. So I am currently head of the Finance, Strategic Planning and Project Administration Department.</p>	Professional background	<p>Experience in Information and communication technology project management, one-stop-shop service of individuals</p>
<p>I am an Alytus “local patriot”, so it is very important for me that the city develops, grows economically and is attractive both for residents and businesses. The experience gained during the URBACT project Techrevolution2 provided new approaches to improving the city's business ecosystem. This is how the idea of Alytus Enterprise HUB was born - and endorsed by both politicians and business representatives alike. I am one of the owners of this idea, I believe in its success, so I want to be part of its implementation, too. As an added benefit, we have unrealistically cool, friendly, creative partners in the project and especially warm relations between us all.</p>	Personal motivation to participate in the project	<p>The goal of creating a startup ecosystem in Alytus would encourage the creation of high value-added jobs.</p>
<p>Effective Alytus HUB, which has business consulting and acceleration programs, which is a space for meetings and cooperation of business, science, political representatives - a centre for the local business ecosystem. We are committed to prepare the integrated action plan for all this.</p>	Main expectations	<p>Find ways and means to retain and attract talents in Alytus</p>
<p>EU funds have been secured for the construction of Alytus HUB. The ULG group was created and the requirements of Alytus Hub were co-designed. Public procurement has been announced for the preparation of a technical project for the reconstruction of the building.</p>	Highlight of the project so far	<p>Successfully setting up an URBACT Local Group of committed stakeholders.</p>



Centar Sarajevo

Name	Haris
Position	Project Coordinator
Professional background	A lawyer by profession, working at the Municipality of Centar Sarajevo since 2013, with prior work experience in a law firm. Currently Assistant Chief in the Department for Local Economic Development and Community Governance, which comprises 30 employees. During my tenure, this Department initiated activities for project preparation and implementation; to date, I have worked in various projects funded by the EU and domestic donors.
Personal motivation to participate in the project	I have always carried out projects related to entrepreneurship with the greatest motivation and success. Over the past 3-4 years, significant impact has been achieved on the entrepreneurial ecosystem in the Municipality of Centar Sarajevo through the implementation of good practices. By elevating the exchange of experiences and good practices to a transnational level with the aim of changing the entrepreneurial ecosystem, opportunities have opened up for me to truly make an impact that will bring about clear changes in the most crucial area for societal prosperity, for which I will feel responsible. This legacy is my motivation for work.
Main expectations	As the name of my Municipality is Centar (Center), my main expectation is for my municipality to be recognized as the center of entrepreneurship. My goal is to elevate the Center for Excellence to a level of capacity where entrepreneurial support and activities constantly occur at this location.
Highlight of the project so far	URBACT network – absolutely new feeling in project implementation. Workshops, people, partners.



Piraeus

Name	Giannis
Position	ULG Coordinator
Professional background	An economist by profession, currently supports PIREAUS Plus Development Organisation of the municipality of Piraeus as an expert in various topics, including environment and climate change, entrepreneurship programmes, smart city solutions, culture, sports and education.
Personal motivation to participate in the project	I consider participating in C4TALENT (and other transnational projects) a unique learning opportunity. Also, it gives me the chance to cooperate with experts in the field from various countries and to better understand their perspectives and way of thinking. Successfully contributing to the project and witnessing the positive impact it has on individuals in Piraeus (and the city as a whole) can instil a sense of achievement and pride.
Main expectations	I expect the Development Organization of Piraeus to make a meaningful contribution through the actions of C4TALENT. This marks our organization's debut in the URBACT Programme, aiming to inspire new entrepreneurs with ambition for their ventures. With this project, we aim to nurture a new generation of leaders dedicated to the well-being and prosperity of our Municipality, ensuring its sustained growth and vitality for years ahead.
Highlight of the project so far	We joined the project late, thus we have had no in-person meeting with the partnership so far. The highlight of the project so far has been the face-to-face meeting in Greece with Bela (LE) and Tibor (LP representative). Also, it was great attending the online sessions with other partners, to discuss and share perspectives, learnings and ideas. I am looking forward to the TN meeting in Vilanova at the end of May - which will be the first occasion for me to meet the entire partnership.

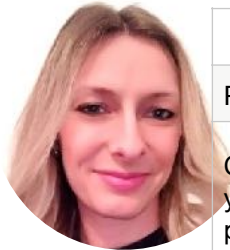


Piraeus

Name	Dimitris
Position	Administrator
Professional background	With over 20 years of experience, I'm currently a Business Consultant at Piraeus Municipality Development Organization PIRAEUS PLUS, managing European-funded projects. Previously, I worked at Eurobank S.A., specializing in corporate banking, training and relationship management. I hold a Master's degree in Finance, an MBA, and a Bachelor's degree in Financial Services, along with relevant certifications.
Personal motivation to participate in the project	My goal in this project is to expand my knowledge by collaborating with other partner cities in the network. The exchange of knowledge also helps me generate new ideas to address local challenges.. I also hope that this project will benefit part of the population.
Main expectations	Our top priority is to approach the labour market and create collaborative relationships with businesses, a multi-level approach that aims to leverage all methods of preparing and promoting young people and connecting them to work, providing information to develop work skills .
Highlight of the project so far	So far it has been the city visit by the LE and LP - the meeting and exchange of views. Also, though I could not attend in-person meetings so far, it was very helpful to meet remotely with all the other partner cities sharing insights and ideas and even learning a bit about other country's culture.



Pula



Marina	Name	Luka
Project Coordinator	Position	ULG coordinator
Coming from the private sector and tourism, but also with years of experience in the implementation of different EU projects in small municipality and currently working in the City of Pula as a Consultant for development projects and EU funds in the Urban Planning and Development Department.	Professional background	Coming from the private sector, with experience in architectural design and urban planning as well as taking part in realisation of such projects. Currently working in the City of Pula as a Senior consultant for urban planning and development projects in the Department of Strategic Planning with focus on crafting sustainable and functional urban environments, innovation and community engagement.
Cooperation with partners from other countries, their thoughts and possibilities for solving problems in the community that we can apply to our project. Motivated by new knowledge and experiences that we can gain by working in this network. Participating in project gives me a meaningful role in shaping resilient, inclusive, and vibrant urban environments for present and future generations and in general to enhance community well-being.	Personal motivation to participate in the project	As a participant in the Urbact network my personal motivation is collaboration with diverse stakeholders, sharing expertise, and co-creation innovative solutions to address complex urban challenges. Dedicated to driving positive change and fostering sustainable urban development practices that benefit communities now and in the future.
New practical knowledge and innovative ideas that can contribute to developing a unique hub in Vallelunga.	Main expectations	An integrated action plan that provides a strong foundation for creating a new world-class neighbourhood in Vallelunga.
Network team & transnational meetings – a lot of fun and useful learnings.	Highlight of the project so far	Network building opportunities and learning from both local stakeholders and fellow participants in the URBACT network - exchange of knowledge and experiences.

Roeselare

Name	Jasmien
Position	Project Manager
Professional background	I studied public administration and management.
Personal motivation to participate in the project	It is clear that URBACT does not only focus on connecting cities but also on bringing together people and creating a network of professionals. This project gives me the chance to meet new people all over Europe, people I can learn from, exchange knowledge and experience with.
Main expectations	C4Talent provides a unique opportunity for Roeselare to develop an action plan, to test some actions, while learning from the challenges, possible solutions, successes (and failures) from the other cities in the network. Ultimately, I expect that this project can help us becoming a more attractive city for talented entrepreneurs.
Highlight of the project so far	The URBACT Summer University in Malmö where we met our network partners for the first time. It gave a lot of motivation to start with this project.



Rzeszów



Weronika	Name	Krzysztof
Project Coordinator	Position	ULG coordinator
City clerk, former journalist	Professional background	Plenipotentiary of the Mayor of the City of Rzeszow for Innovation and Development, Manager, Project Manager, Innovation specialist and coach, MBA
My personal motivation is to challenge myself to do something new and learn new things - and to meet great people from all the Europe who want to do something good to their cities and their residents, who also have positive attitude and great energy to face the challenges.	Personal motivation to participate in the project	I want to do something valuable and concrete for the local community, especially for the youth and students. To show them a good perspective for living in Rzeszów, how they can live a good life in this great city. How? That's exactly we need to plan in this project.
The first main expectation is to carry out this project successfully from the beginning to the end with inspirational, high-quality Integrated Action Plan as the finish. The second main expectation or dream rather, to create or leave something tangible and positive behind. Such as? I do not know yet 😊.	Main expectations	I expect that C4TALENT will be an important catalyst in the process of collaboration between local stakeholders - e.g institutions, universities, high schools and businesses. Together we need to define common goals, design (and, most importantly), implement an action plan to retain talent in our city. I imagine it like a web of complex activities within each of this institutions that together meet our common goals.
I still remember one presentation, from TechRevolution 2.0 the meeting organised in Rzeszow, where the main conclusion was: <i>it's all about people</i> . I agree: if you have the right people, you can do (almost) everything 😊. If that is true, we are lucky of having such great people collaborating in "C4TALENT" project.	Highlight of the project so far	Gathering around one table with all the significant local stakeholders for our mission :-)

Vilanova i la Geltrú

Name	Xavi
Position	Project Coordinator, Digital Transformation officer in Neàpolis
Professional background	Master in Gamification and Transmedia and Degree in Tourism and Events Entrepreneur and CEO of Cheap Films - Event production CEO and Founder of Quimera Entertainment Co. Coordinator of ENICBCMED project MEDGAIMS
Personal motivation to participate in the project	I was born in Vilanova i la Geltrú, I've been lucky and I've traveled and lived abroad. I really think that our town has a huge potential for it's quality of life, proximity to Barcelona and the active cultural life that the city offers. In the 19th century the city lived its golden age that shaped Vilanova into what it is today. Now, in the 21st century - with the remote work, good communication network and the worldwide globalization - we're in the position again to become "a great place to live" and improve city life, services and economy through creating our own unique tech ecosystem.
Main expectations	In Vilanova we have Neapolis, the Innovation Agency for the city. The building was built in 2006 and now, close to 20 years after we need to rethink its mission and use. With the Integrated Action Plan we want to create the guidelines for the attraction and retaining talent - while showcasing Neàpolis as the spotlight of all this innovation process.
Highlight of the project so far	Definitely the Testing Action we delivered with high-school students. Nearly 50 students have been involved and shared their motivations and research projects... and the best of all, the chat that we had at the end of the activity with a small group of young people that wanted more... I was clearly feeling the energy of the new generations.



Vilanova i la Geltrú

Name	Jordi
Position	Director, Neàpolis
Professional background	I have a Master's Degree in Philosophy for Contemporary Challenges (specialty: philosophy of technology), a Degree in Environmental Science, and different postgraduate degrees in social innovation, marketing and urbanism. I have worked in the private sector in the fields of strategic consulting, environmental consulting, and social participation. I have also worked in the startup industry, and in recent years, I have been working at Neàpolis, the public agency for social and digital innovation of Vilanova i la Geltrú. Currently I am the Director of Neàpolis.
Personal motivation to participate in the project	Participating in an transnational project with different cities, that are at various stages of the same journey and face very similar challenges is a great opportunity to gain valuable insights. These insights can help me fulfill my responsibilities as the director of Neàpolis. Additionally, we can exchange ideas and learn together.
Main expectations	The project is crucial for Neàpolis as the city's social and digital innovation agency. We want C4TALENT to become an opportunity to mobilize key stakeholders in Vilanova i la Geltrú. In this sense, given that Neàpolis is becoming a city and citizen laboratory, it is crucial for the project to be aligned with the strategy that governs Neàpolis projects. As the managing director, I consider participation to be key.
Highlight of the project so far	Understanding the situation of other cities and how they tackle the challenges of talent promotion is crucial. Additionally, it has helped us assess our own situation and identify the actions we need to take.



Varberg

Name	Elisabet
Position	Project Coordinator
Professional background	Short professional background: I have been at the Alexanderson Institute since 2019. Her main responsibilities include project development related to entrepreneurship, employability, and life-long learning.
Personal motivation to participate in the project	I want to help students understand that they don't have to choose between a fulfilling career or a fulfilling personal life - they can have both! Especially if they choose to live in Varberg.
Main expectations	I hope to increase my knowledge from this network and create an integrated action plan that can help us navigate this topic going forward.
Highlight of the project so far	Highlight of the project for you so far? Ah, so much to choose from! I loved the hackathon – we had a blast! I am also very happy to be a part of such an amazing network that is so generous in sharing good thoughts, ideas, and experiences!



Upcoming Activities

Upcoming Activities (2024 Q2)

In Q2 of 2024, the activities of C4TALENT APN intensify significantly. In this section we provide an overview of activities planned until the end of June.

Webinar 2

Date: 23 April, 10:00 - 11:30 CET

Theme: Problem analysis

Webinar 3

Date: 07 May, 09:00 - 11:00 CET

Theme: Developing shared vision, generating and co-creating ideas

Webinar 4

Date: June, exact date TBC

Theme: Planning actions

When organising Webinar 2, 3 and 4, we use a hybrid approach, combining individual preparation with a collaborative and interactive online session. Partners are required to watch the recording the relevant session from the URBACT eUniversity prior to the webinar, take notes and collect questions (this process is supported by a simple online survey they need to fill in).

At the webinar, there will be:

- A moderated discussion of the key learnings
- An interactive session linking the learnings, methods to the policy challenge and the partners's local context
- A Q&A session related to the topic

One2One calls

In this quarter we will deliver the first set of one2one calls, when the LP and LE have separate virtual meeting with each partner progress, results and potential problems.

Dates: 26 April, 29 April, 7 May

Upcoming Activities (2024 Q2)

2nd Core Transnational Meeting

Date: 28 - 30 May, 2024

Hosting partner: Vilanova i la Geltrú

Focus:

- Learning about the host city - context and challenge; collaborative session to provide inputs to Villanova's IAP process
- Discussing homework from webinars
- Peer session to review progress, results and problems
- Deep-dive session dedicated to the IAP process
- Administration and communication - progress, next tasks, troubleshooting

The TN meeting will be combined with other dedicated learning events:

- A half-day practical masterclass on “Building a functional entrepreneurial ecosystem” delivered by ad-hoc experts.
- Study visits (to Tecnocampus Mataró - a University-based Enterprise and Innovation Hub, and to Norrsken Barcelona House - “Europe’s biggest Hub for Tech and Impact”)

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