

URBACT PROJECT – AVILÉS – GREENER INDUSTRIAL CITIES

The URBACT programme facilitates the exchange of knowledge and good practice between cities and other levels of government with the aim of promoting integrated sustainable urban development and improving the effectiveness of cohesion policy in cities.

Since 2002, URBACT has funded 161 networks that have addressed major challenges for cities such as social inclusion, physical planning and urban renewal, competitiveness of SMEs, employment, and labour mobility, etc. Besides, it has also tackled other emerging issues such as housing, migration, digitalisation, environmental protection, etc.

The new URBACT IV city-to-city cooperation and transfer programme for the period 2021-2027 is endowed with a total of €85M. The first call for proposals for this period was launched in January 2023.

It should be noted that URBACT will be integrated within the new European Urban Initiative (EUI - European Urban Initiative, Art. 12 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1058), which will mean greater complementarity and coordination with other actions such as UIA - Urban Innovative Actions.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This first URBACT call will fund **Action Planning Networks**. These networks should consist of 8–10 cities of all sizes (municipalities, local authorities, specialised development agencies and metropolitan or regional institutions) located in different EU countries and regions.

Network members will collaborate on the design and implementation of **Integrated Action Plans** linked to common sustainable urban development challenges. This process should also involve a Local Group including all stakeholders (different city departments, various levels of government, relevant policy sectors and target groups). The partnership will be led by a city administration (in this case, Avilés City Council), that will play the role of Lead Partner together with a validated URBACT Expert, leading the way towards change for the betterment of the cities.

The project will have a duration of 31 months from June 2023 to December 2025. According to the URBACT methodology, at least the following activities must be organised:

- Transnational exchanges for mutual learning.
- Creation of a working group with local actors (ULG - Urbact Local Group).
- Design of a plan (strategic, action, improvement of an existing plan, etc.) in each participating city.
- Dissemination, training, awareness raising actions.

The project timeline will be divided into 4 stages: Activation, Planning Actions, Preparing Implementation and Finale.



- Stage 1 (June 2023 – December 2023). Actions to be carried out: Network Roadmap (based on the Baseline Study process), 1st Core network meeting (in-person) URBACT Local Groups set up (one per network), Network’s communication plan and first Network article presenting network challenges and ambition.
- Stage 2 (January 2024 – December 2024). Actions to be carried out: 1 Core network meeting focusing on Integrated approach (in-person), 1 Core network meeting – focus to be defined by network (in-person), customised set of exchange and learning activities (in-person or online), 3 quarterly network reports and a Network article summarising key network activities taking place in planning.
- Stage 3 (January 2025 – September 2025). Actions to be carried out: 1 Core network meeting focusing on peer-review of draft IAPs (in-person), 1 Core network meeting – focus to be defined by the network (in-person) and 3 quarterly network reports and Customised set of exchange and learning activities (in-person or online).
- Stage 4 (October 2025 – December 2025). Actions to be carried out: Final Core network meeting (in-person) back to back with optional final event (hybrid), Network results products, Final network article, An Integrated Action Plan (1 per partner) and a Network article reflecting network results, impact at local level, as well as future prospects.

Regarding the work structure, the activities will be split into 3 different Work Packages.

- Work Package 1: Network Management. General coordination and management of the network, reporting and attendance to URBACT events. The main activities of this WP are: signing all contractual documents, regular coordination meetings, appointment and coordination with Lead and Ad hoc experts, official reporting every 12 months, attending training sessions organised by URBACT (Network launch online meeting: 20 June for LP, 22 June 2023 for all network partners and URBACT Summer University 2023: 28 – 31 August 2023, in-person).

- Work Package 2: Network level Activities, which include tasks that engage the Network as a whole. The main activities of this WP are: Network Roadmap, 6 in-person transnational network meetings, customised set of Exchange and learning activities (both in-person and online, to be defined during activation stage), 6 quarterly network reports and Network communication plan, at least 3 articles published.
- Work Package 3: Local level activities. These include the activities carried out by the URBACT Local groups in each city. An URBACT Local Group (ULG) is an active working group that will be at the heart of the action planning process in each city. It may be a group designed especially for the URBACT project, or be a relevant group that is already in place. Each ULG will be different, reflecting local structures, priorities and actors. It is expected that they meet on a regular basis. Each ULG will take care of producing an Integrated Action Plan (IAP) by the end of the project, which will aim to offer a concrete response to the city's policy challenge and to follow an intervention logic in order to design and implement actions based on testing.

The following transnational exchanges included in Work Package 2 are proposed. These will be organised in-person.

Meeting	Hosts	Approximate date
Kick-off meeting	Avilés	September – November 2023
Second network meeting focusing on Integrated approach	Schiedam and Solingen	First semester of 2024
Third network meeting – focus to be defined by network	Famalicao	Second semester of 2024
Fourth network meeting focusing on peer-review of draft IAPs	Larissa	January – February 2025
Fifth network meeting – focus to be defined by network	Jastrzębie-Zdrój	May – June 2025
Final network meeting and final closing event (hybrid)	Salerno	October – November 2025

The partnership will rely on the support of URBACT experts who will be entirely financed by the programme. 3 URBACT experts will be appointed once the project is approved. They will mainly contribute through:

- The production of the Baseline Study process
- The delivery of transnational exchange and learning activities with effective facilitation techniques
- Coaching and supporting the use of effective methods and tools for the design and delivery of integrated and participatory processes in partner cities.
- The knowledge of EU policy frameworks and the specific thematic fields tackled by the network

TOPICS	<p>In the current context, industrial cities face many challenges linked to the green and digital transition and the new objectives recently proposed by the European Union. In accordance with the new EU Industrial Strategy and the EU goal of achieving a zero-emission Europe by 2050, innovation and the development of a sustainable and environmentally friendly industry have become fundamental pillars in the modernisation and conversion of the economic and business fabric.</p> <p>The Action Planning Network led by Avilés will be composed by cities with a strong industrial background with a common aim: to achieve a balance between their industrial activities, which entail a great source of wealth and prosperity in their regions, and their commitment to convert their cities in modern, sustainable and technological communities where citizens’ quality of life is preserved.</p> <p>Through local and transnational actions, the cities of the network will work on the modernisation of their areas and an Integrated Action Plan will be developed to overcome the main obstacles to achieving sustainable industrial cities. Several topics will be tackled in these activities, such as energy saving, the use of more sustainable energies and green hydrogen, good practices in digitalisation, industrial and technological innovation and the attraction of new investments. In the long-term, cities are expected to test and implement brand-new policies that comply with the strategic objectives of the EU in terms of digitalisation and green practices.</p>
REMINDER	<p>The maximum total eligible budget for an Action Planning Network shall be EUR 850,000 (including ERDF, IPA funds and local co-financing), plus URBACT experts' costs paid directly by the Secretariat.</p> <p>Partners from “more developed regions” are co-financed up to 65% by ERDF. Partners from “transition regions” are co-financed up to 70% by ERDF. And partners from “less developed regions” are co-financed up to 80% by ERDF.</p> <p>The first budget proposal upon approval of all partner is as follows.</p>

	REGION	ERDF	STAFF	OFFICE	TRAVEL	EXTERNAL	TOTAL	Contribution
Avilés (ES)	TRANSITION	70%	52.000 €	2.600 €	16.500 €	58.900 €	130.000 €	39.000 €
Famalicao (PT)	LESS DEVELOPED	80%	32.000 €	1.600 €	16.500 €	29.900 €	80.000 €	16.000 €
Sabadell (ES)	DEVELOPED	65%	34.000 €	1.700 €	19.800 €	29.500 €	85.000 €	29.750 €
Schiedam (NET)	DEVELOPED	65%	38.000 €	1.900 €	16.500 €	38.600 €	95.000 €	33.250 €
Jastrzębie-Zdrój (PL)	LESS DEVELOPED	80%	28.000 €	1.400 €	16.500 €	24.100 €	70.000 €	14.000 €
Bijelo Polje (MONT)	IPA	95%	24.000 €	1.200 €	19.800 €	15.000 €	60.000 €	3.000 €
Solingen (GER)	DEVELOPED	65%	38.000 €	1.900 €	16.500 €	38.600 €	95.000 €	33.250 €
Larissa (GR)	LESS DEVELOPED	80%	32.000 €	1.600 €	16.500 €	29.900 €	80.000 €	16.000 €
Szombathely (HU)	LESS DEVELOPED	80%	28.000 €	1.400 €	19.800 €	20.800 €	70.000 €	14.000 €
Salerno (IT)	TRANSITION	70%	34.000 €	1.700 €	16.500 €	32.800 €	85.000 €	25.500 €
TOTAL			340.000 €	17.000 €	174.900 €	318.100 €	850.000 €	223.750 €

External services could be distributed as follows.

	Meeting Organisation	Expert and other non-staff Travel	Expertise First Level Control	Other external services	Total
Avilés (ES)	3.000 €	12.100 €	3.300 €	40.500 €	58.900 €
Famalicao (PT)	3.000 €	12.100 €	3.000 €	11.800 €	29.900 €
Sabadell (ES)	- €	13.200 €	3.300 €	13.000 €	29.500 €
Schiedam (NET)	3.000 €	11.550 €	3.900 €	20.150 €	38.600 €
Jastrzębie-Zdrój (PL)	3.000 €	12.100 €	- €	9.000 €	24.100 €
Bijelo Polje (MONT)	- €	13.200 €	1.800 €	- €	15.000 €
Solingen (GER)	3.000 €	11.550 €	3.900 €	20.150 €	38.600 €
Larissa (GR)	3.000 €	12.100 €	- €	14.800 €	29.900 €
Szombathely (HU)	- €	13.200 €	- €	7.600 €	20.800 €
Salerno (IT)	5.000 €	12.100 €	3.300 €	12.400 €	32.800 €
Total	23.000 €	123.200 €	22.500 €	149.400 €	318.100 €

The first call for proposals will be open from 9th January to 31st March 2023. Projects will start in June 2023 and end in December 2025.

PARTNERS

The partnership is composed by the following cities: Avilés (Spain), Vila Nova de Famalicão (Portugal), Jastrzębie-Zdrój (Poland), Schiedam (Netherlands), Sabadell (Spain), Bilejo Polje (Montenegro), Solingen (Germany), Larissa (Greece), Szombathely (Hungary) and Salerno (Italy).

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