



# In4Green

ACTION PLANNING NETWORK

URBACT



Co-funded by  
the European Union  
Interreg



**FINAL QUARTERLY  
NETWORK REPORT**  
April – June 2025



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In4Green aims to foster green transition in small and medium-size European industrial cities. It is an URBACT project, running from June 2023 to December 2025, co-financed by the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). In4Green is a network of 10 European cities who will develop integrated action plans to promote their local green transition. This Quarterly Network Report reflects the performance of partners at transnational and local level in the development of exchange and learning activities.

September 2025.

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- Solingen: Anna Mader.
- Vila Nova de Famalicao: Catarina Alves.
- Zďar nad Sazavou: Tomáš Pleva.

Pictures by: Sara Malicka.

## VI QUARTERLY NETWORK REPORT IN4GREEN PARTNERS ARE:

AVILÉS (SPAIN)

BIJELO POLJE (MONTENEGRO)

DĄBROWA GÓRNICZA (POLAND)

LARISSA (GREECE)

NAVAN (IRELAND)

SABADELL (SPAIN)

SALERNO (ITALY)

SOLINGEN (GERMANY)

VILA NOVA DE FAMALICÃO (PORTUGAL)

ŽĎÁR NAD SÁZAVOU (CZECH REPUBLIC)







# QUARTER BALANCE

## THE LEAD EXPERT'S POINT OF VIEW.

### From Challenges to Impact: Cities Ready for the Green Transition

The second quarter of 2025 has been another decisive step forward for In4Green. With only two milestones left before the end of the project, our partner cities are now shaping their Integrated Action Plans into clear, implementable strategies. What once were draft sections and exploratory testing activities are now becoming full documents, enriched with indicators, governance models and financing strategies.

The 5th Transnational Meeting in Dąbrowa Górnicza was more than just a technical exercise. It demonstrated the maturity of the network: cities came with concrete actions, exchanged ideas with confidence, and returned home with renewed determination. The “speed dating” on IAP challenges and the PechaKucha presentations of emerging actions showed how much our partners have grown – not only in developing plans, but also in communicating them with clarity and enthusiasm.

***“In4Green has built a stronger community of cities ready to lead Europe’s industrial green transition.”***

***Jose Costero, In4Green Lead Expert.***

At this point, the potential impact of In4Green is evident. Locally, Integrated Action Plans will help cities anchor their green transition in solid partnerships and realistic roadmaps. Across Europe, they will showcase how small and medium-sized industrial cities can reinvent themselves as laboratories of innovation, circular economy and climate action.

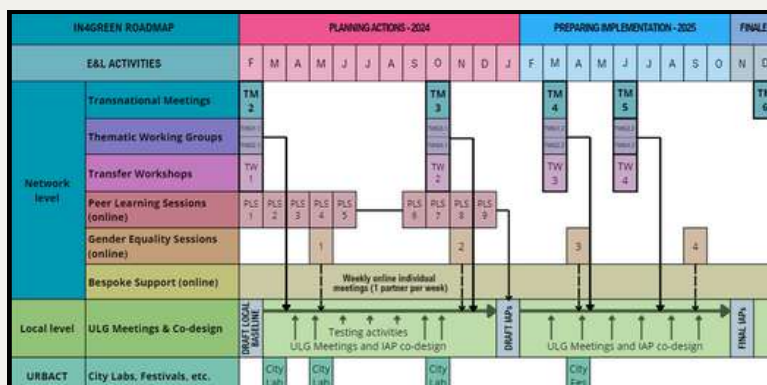
The final months ahead will focus on refining and presenting these plans, but the essence of the journey is already clear: In4Green has built a stronger community of cities ready to lead Europe’s industrial green transition.

*By Jose Costero, In4Green Lead Expert.*

# QUARTER BALANCE

## WHERE ARE WE NOW IN THE APN JOURNEY?

### In4Green Roadmap

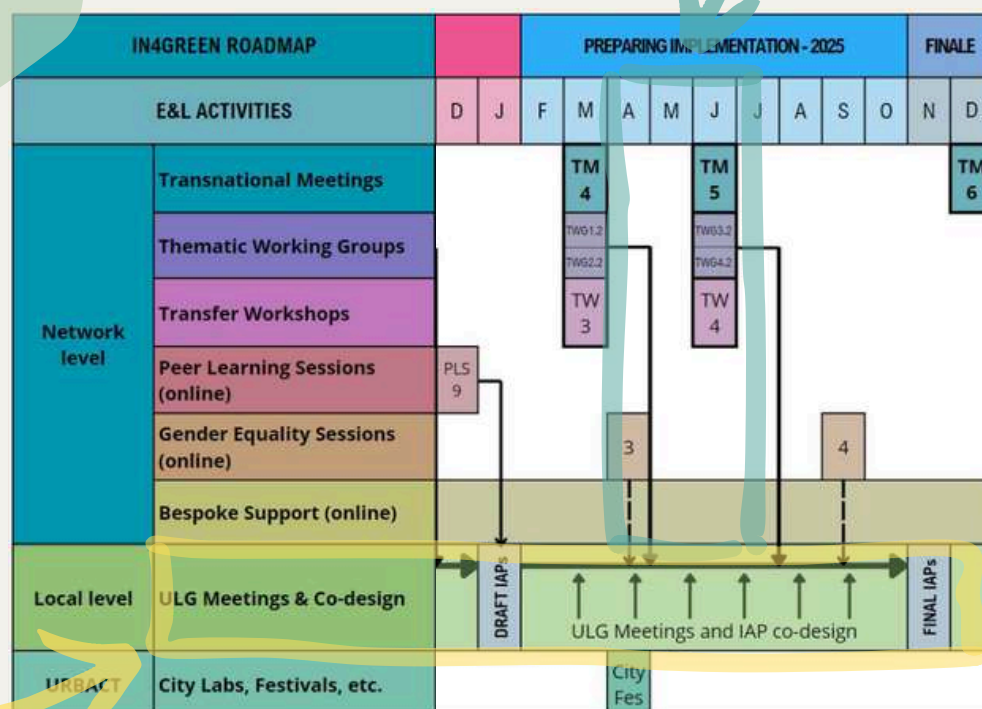


#### ACHIEVED:

- 1 Gender Equality Session.
- 12 Bespoke Support meetings.
- 3 Monthly coordination meetings.
- 1 Transnational Meeting.
- 2 Thematic Working Groups.
- 1 Transfer Workshop.

#### WORK IN PROGRESS:

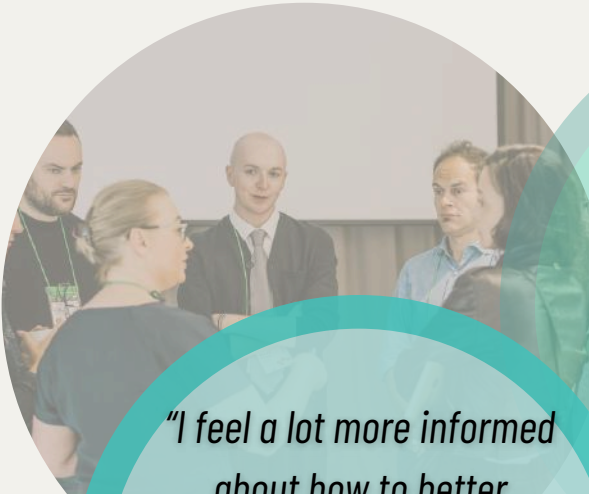
- ULG meetings.
- IAPs drafting.
- Testing activities planning and organisation.





# TWO YEARS IN REVIEW

## HOW DO PARTERS FEEL AFTER TWO YEARS?



*"I feel a lot more informed about how to better integrate stakeholders, and energised as our ULG moves from planning to implementation."* Navan.

*"We feel satisfied with the progress made and with the strong partnerships built along the way."*  
Avilés.

*"I feel proud of the progress we've made together, and In4Green has given us a stronger strategic direction for industrial transformation."*  
Solingen.

*"Although it is just one year for me, I already feel I have a clearer understanding of the project and its main goals."* Salerno.

*"I feel proud of the path we have built together – a demanding but rewarding journey that connected our local ambitions to European priorities."* Famalicão.

*"After two years of involvement, I feel a strong sense of accomplishment and optimism, with stronger commitment to sustainability."* Dąbrowa Górnicza.

*"We feel empowered, with a clearer vision and stronger alliances to shape a sustainable and resilient industrial ecosystem."*  
Larissa.

*"Ready to push for the finish line – though a bit tired, for sure!"* Zd'ar nad Sazavou.

*"A very positive experience that motivated us to learn from partners and to join similar projects in the future."* Bijelo Polje.

*"With plenty of key learnings from meetings and city visits – I will miss you!"* Sabadell.





# TWO YEARS IN REVIEW

## MAIN CHALLENGES OF PARTNERS



### Avilés (Spain).

"Coordinating the timing and priorities of very different actors has been a real challenge."

### Bijelo Polje (Montenegro).

"The challenge was aligning stakeholders' needs with the project's objectives."



### Dąbrowa Górnicza (Poland).

"Balancing diverse interests while ensuring our initiatives meet local economic needs required continuous dialogue."

### Larissa (Greece).

"Keeping diverse stakeholders engaged while turning the green transition vision into viable actions required constant effort."



### Navan (Ireland).

"Maintaining community engagement and securing funding for a whole-of-society approach has been demanding."

### Sabadell (Spain).

"Aligning internal departments with key territorial stakeholders has been our greatest hurdle."



### Salerno (Italy).

"Our main difficulty has been trying to involve key stakeholders."

### Solingen (Germany).

"Engaging SMEs consistently while balancing long-term goals with short-term needs has been our main challenge."



### Vila Nova de Famalicão (Portugal).

"Balancing ambition with limited capacity and aligning diverse priorities tested our persistence and adaptability."

### Žďár nad Sázavou (Czech Republic).

"Explaining the value of a 'soft' international project to local stakeholders was not easy."







# TWO YEARS IN REVIEW

## MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS OF PARTNERS



### Avilés (Spain).

"We built a solid Local Group with all actors of the quadruple helix, generating proposals that link innovation to the green transition."

### Bijelo Polje (Montenegro).

"We created a positive local group working on project activities and preparing an IAP."



### Dąbrowa Górnicza (Poland).

"Our most significant achievement is a comprehensive sustainability plan integrating green technologies into urban planning."

### Larissa (Greece).

"Our participatory process delivered a co-created IAP with six strategic actions aligned with EU climate goals."



### Navan (Ireland).

"Our biggest achievement has been co-creating actions with stakeholders and bringing new citizens and businesses into the sustainability conversation."

### Sabadell (Spain).

"Our main achievement is the Integrated Action Plan itself."

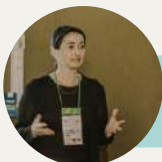


### Salerno (Italy).

"We learned how to reach stakeholders in ways that build effective partnerships."

### Solingen (Germany).

"We embedded circular economy and digital innovation as pillars of our IAP, and connected companies through expert exchange."



### Vila Nova de Famalicão (Portugal).

"We consolidated a culture of collaboration, reinforced local strategies, and created momentum for future initiatives."

### Žďár nad Sázavou (Czech Republic).

"We reached consensus across stakeholders on the need for change to overcome the industrial transition."







# TWO YEARS IN REVIEW

## MAIN CHALLENGES AND ACHIEVEMENTS AFTER TWO YEARS

### Key Challenges

- **Stakeholder engagement** has been the most common difficulty. Cities struggled to keep a wide range of actors – from SMEs to large industries, institutions, and citizens – consistently involved in the process.
- **Balancing ambition and capacity** proved demanding. Partners often had to reconcile long-term strategies with limited time, funding, and human resources.
- **Coordination and alignment** across diverse actors and departments was another recurring theme, especially in contexts with overlapping priorities or complex governance structures.
- **Cultural change** emerged as a challenge, particularly for cities engaging in international cooperation for the first time, where explaining the value of “soft” projects required persistence.

### Main Achievements

- **Co-creation of Integrated Action Plans** stands out across the network. Many cities emphasise the value of participatory processes, consensus-building, and multi-level governance in shaping their plans.
- **Strengthening local collaboration** has been a defining result. Several partners highlighted the creation or consolidation of Local Action Groups, embedding a culture of cooperation and shared vision for the green transition.
- **Concrete outputs and strategies** were also achieved: from sustainability plans integrating green technologies, to embedding circular economy and digital innovation into IAPs, to effective partnerships with stakeholders that will continue beyond the project.
- **Community impact** is evident. Bringing new citizens, businesses, and local actors into the sustainability conversation has expanded ownership and created momentum for action at city level.



# TWO YEARS IN REVIEW

## KEY LEARNINGS



**Dąbrowa Górnicza:**  
"Collaboration and stakeholder engagement are crucial for the success of any green initiative."

**Žďár nad Sázavou:**  
"URBACT methodology for integrated planning is now part of our toolbox."

**Avilés:** "The green transition of an industrial city requires cooperation and trust among all stakeholders."

**Bijelo Polje:** "Innovative solutions and environmental protection go hand in hand with cooperation."

**Famalicão:** "Collaboration and adaptability are central – sustainable change needs trust, dialogue and openness."

**Navan:** "Finding a shared vision means weaving different definitions of 'better' together."

**Sabadell:** "Territorial stakeholders are key – without them no idea can succeed."

**Solingen:**  
"Transformation works best when driven collaboratively."

**Salerno:** "Trust is built by learning how to communicate with stakeholders."

**Larissa:** "Meaningful change requires collaboration, trust-building and constant adaptation."





# TWO YEARS IN REVIEW

## ADVICE TO CITIES STARTING THE GREEN TRANSITION



### Avilés (Spain).

"Start by building strong local alliances: companies, research centres, citizens and coherent public policies."

### Bijelo Polje (Montenegro).



"Start early and ensure the city has a solid plan aligned with environmental goals."



### Dąbrowa Górnicza (Poland).

"Engage all stakeholders – businesses, residents and government – to build a shared vision."

### Larissa (Greece).



"Begin with a clear vision, build alliances early, and combine quick wins with long-term transformation."



### Navan (Ireland).

"Be open to new ideas; engagement is essential, especially with hesitant stakeholders."

### Sabadell (Spain).



"A thorough diagnosis of the current situation is essential before moving forward."



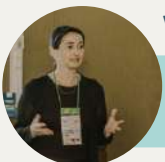
### Salerno (Italy).

"Ensure the political side is properly involved."

### Solingen (Germany).



"Start with a strong stakeholder network and a shared vision – stay flexible and enjoy the process."



### Vila Nova de Famalicão (Portugal).

"Build a culture of collaboration – involve industry, academia, citizens and policymakers from the start."

### Žďár nad Sázavou (Czech Republic).




"Equip people with the skills and knowledge needed for the transition."



# TWO YEARS IN REVIEW

## Expectations for the Final Stage of In4Green



*Solingen: "Deliver a strong IAP that embeds industrial innovation and resource efficiency into long-term policy."*

*Famalicão: "Consolidate knowledge and partnerships into tangible results, ensuring continuity beyond the project."*

*Dąbrowa Górnicza: "Solidify our achievements, inspire other cities, and provide a framework for long-term sustainability."*

*Avilés: "Conclude with a coherent and viable IAP, and continue collaborating beyond the project."*

*Bijelo Polje: "Complete our IAP and develop new ideas beyond 2025."*


*Navan: "Bring all the work together, keep the energy alive, and celebrate our shared efforts."*

*Larissa: "Share our learnings widely, consolidate governance, and prepare for IAP implementation."*

*Salerno: "Learning more."*

*Sabadell: "Keep working with In4Green cities in the future."*

*Žďár nad Sázavou: "Ready to finish up and enjoy the closure."*







# 5TH TRANSNATIONAL MEETING DĄBROWA GÓRNICZA (POLAND)

Where Industrial Heritage Meets  
Green Transition





## 5TH TRANSNATIONAL MEETING DĄBROWA GÓRNICZA (POLAND)

### Where Industrial Heritage Meets Green Transition

The fifth Transnational Meeting of the In4Green network took place in Dąbrowa Górnicza (Poland) on 28-29 May 2025, bringing together delegations from the ten partner cities. Hosted in a city with a strong industrial legacy and a clear commitment to green transformation, the event combined workshops, peer learning formats and site visits. Partners explored how strategic planning, digitalisation, industrial innovation and climate neutrality can be translated into local Integrated Action Plans. Highlights included the fourth Transfer Workshop on strategic urban planning, the second sessions of Thematic Working Groups on digitalisation and energy transition, and dynamic peer exchange formats such as speed dating and PechaKucha presentations.



Beyond the technical agenda, the meeting provided an inspiring opportunity to see change in action. Study visits to the Special Economic Zone and the “Factory Full of Life” showcased how Dąbrowa Górnicza is turning industrial assets into drivers of sustainability and urban regeneration. The atmosphere was collaborative and forward-looking: partners shared challenges openly, reflected on lessons learned, and left with renewed energy for the final stage of the project.



# 5TH TRANSNATIONAL MEETING DĄBROWA GÓRNICZA (POLAND)

A time full of activities...

## Thematic Working Groups

DIGITALISATION  
AND INDUSTRIAL  
INNOVATION

CLIMATE CHANGE  
AND ENERGY  
TRANSITION

## Good Practices

FACTORY FULL  
OF LIFE

SPECIAL  
ECONOMIC ZONE

## IAP Development

IAP SPEED  
DATING

IAP INSPIRING  
ACTIONS

## Transfer Workshop

STRATEGIC  
URBAN  
PLANNING

## Management

COORDINATION &  
COMMUNICATION

## 5TH TRANSNATIONAL MEETING DĄBROWA GÓRNICZA (POLAND)

A time for hard work and exchange activities...





## 5TH TRANSNATIONAL MEETING DĄBROWA GÓRNICZA (POLAND)

### From Industry to Innovation: Lessons from Dąbrowa Górnicza

The fifth transnational meeting of In4Green was an opportunity to experience first-hand how Dąbrowa Górnicza is rethinking its industrial legacy. Far from being only a host, the city opened its doors to show two of its flagship projects –concrete examples of how municipalities can guide the green transition with vision, determination and local partnerships.

On the first day, partners visited the Special Economic Zone, a municipally-driven initiative designed to attract firms aligned with the twin goals of digitalisation and sustainability. Unlike many zones created purely for economic competitiveness, this one has been deliberately steered towards industries that invest in green technologies. The visit to NGK Ceramics Poland, a Japanese-owned company producing emission-reduction technologies, illustrated what this strategy looks like in practice. By fostering such investment, the city positions itself not just as an industrial location, but as a facilitator of cleaner production and technological innovation.

The second day highlighted a very different but equally ambitious initiative: the Factory Full of Life. This project transforms a derelict industrial site in the city centre into a mixed-use hub of culture, housing, retail and community life. Walking through renovated buildings already hosting cafés and cultural spaces, alongside active construction sites for future housing and offices, participants saw how industrial heritage can be reused as a driver of urban regeneration. The project is not only physical renewal; it embodies a governance model that brings citizens, businesses and institutions together to co-create a new identity for the city.

Taken together, these two sites reflect a dual strategy: repositioning industry on the path of green innovation, while revitalising the urban core with inclusive regeneration. For In4Green partners, they offered concrete lessons: the importance of municipal leadership in shaping industrial ecosystems, and the potential of heritage as a resource for sustainable urban futures.

Dąbrowa Górnicza's experience proves that industrial cities can be both competitive and sustainable. By aligning long-term vision with visible projects, the city is turning challenges into opportunities –and offering inspiration for other European towns facing similar transitions.





## 5TH TRANSNATIONAL MEETING DĄBROWA GÓRNICZA (POLAND)

### FACTORY FULL OF LIFE



# 5TH TRANSNATIONAL MEETING DĄBROWA GÓRNICZA (POLAND)

## KEY LEARNINGS FROM PARTNERS

### **Collaboration and Community**

- Cooperation between cities is essential to foster sustainability.
- "A problem shared is a problem solved."
- Cities face common challenges – and share common solutions.
- Everyone has something to contribute. What's obvious to you may be new to someone else.
- Group work was valued as enriching and effective.
- Europe becomes more united through networks like In4Green.

### **Knowledge and Methods**

- PechaKucha and speed dating formats were appreciated as dynamic and useful.
- Organising anything in the public sector is not easy – but it's a learning process.
- Presenting and exchanging methods inspired new ideas and reflections.
- ULGs (URBACT Local Groups) truly matter – they're central to making real actions happen locally.

### **Action and Transformation**

- Real actions are taking place in partner cities.
- The visit to Factory Full of Life was inspiring – many participants expressed the desire to come back and see the results.

### **Atmosphere and Human Touch**

- The overall atmosphere was warm, energetic and enjoyable.
- Kinga was unanimously praised as the best host in the network!
- Even the rain couldn't dampen the spirit.

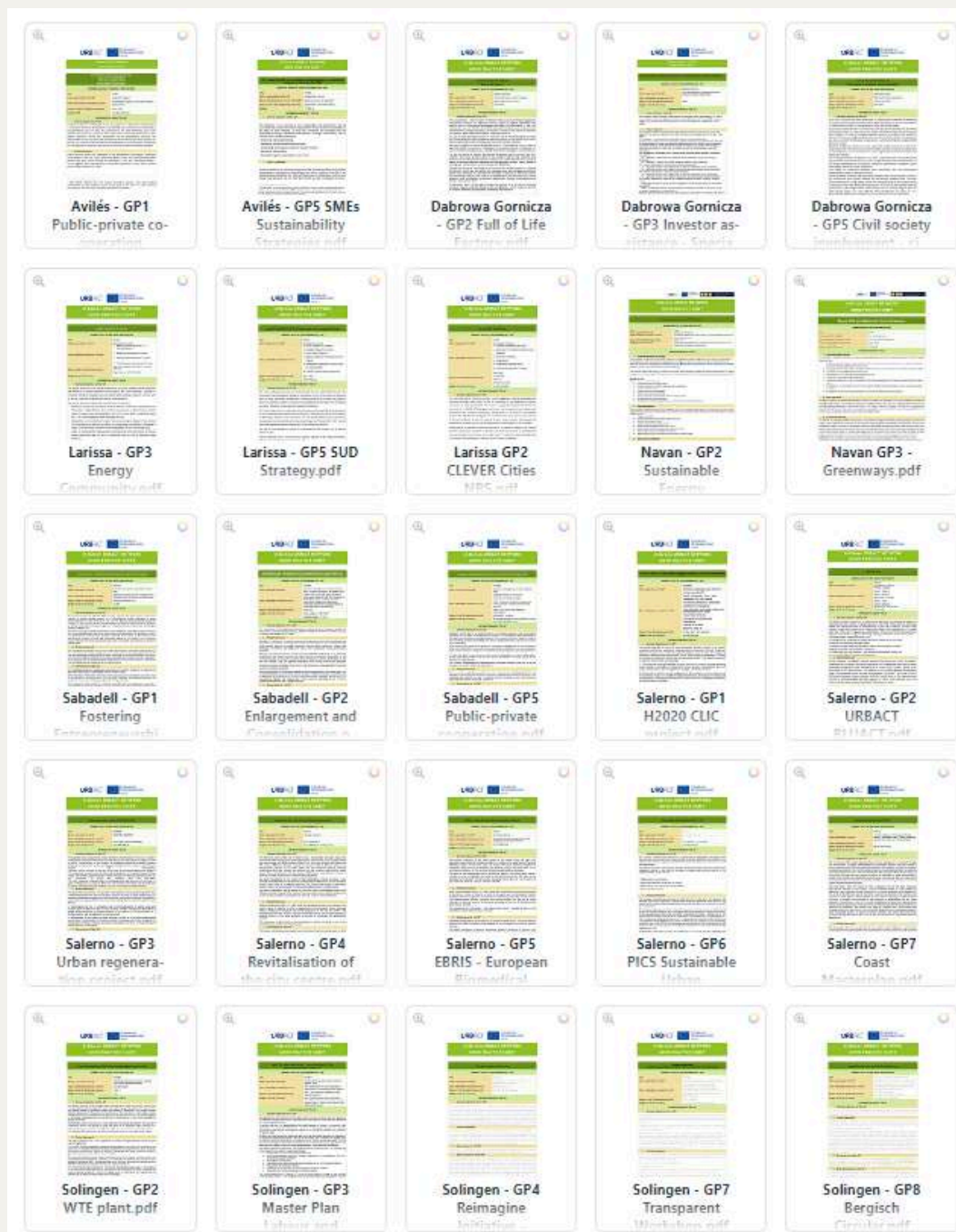


# ONLINE E&L ACTIVITIES

## EXCHANGE & LEARNING BEYOND TRANSNATIONAL MEETINGS

### GOOD PRACTICES REPOSITORY:

Up to 49 Good Practices Sheets have been already produced by partners and stored in the repository. Available for consultation.







# ONLINE E&L ACTIVITIES

## EXCHANGE & LEARNING BEYOND TRANSNATIONAL MEETINGS

### BESPOKE SUPPORT MEETINGS

Individual follow up meetings between partners and Lead Expert. 12 meetings were organised during the second quarter of 2025, finishing the fifth round of meetings with partners and starting the sixth one.

#### Participants feedback:

- “The Lead Expert has put a lot of work into the bespoke meetings with us and helped us with our ideas (particularly around for testing actions)”.
- “The meetings have been very useful since we tackled specific difficulties and challenges from each partner”.
- “The Bespoke Support has been very useful, especially for testing activities”.
- “We are interested in having more of these meetings as the process of IAP development becomes intensive”.
- “Meetings are helpful for the constant exchange on the current status and questions about the methodology”.
- “They provide an exchange of ideas and allow us to evaluate the current status of our local project”.
- “I find the Bespoke Support Meetings with the Lead Expert to be extremely valuable. These individual sessions provide tailored guidance that addresses our specific challenges and needs, making the advice highly relevant and actionable”.
- “They help to focus attention and get useful advice”.
- “Meetings allow us to summarize previous activities and outline the path for further activities as part of the implementation of the assumptions of the network”.
- “The Bespoke Support Meetings are an excellent opportunity to tackle the challenges we face in our In4Green journey at local level, with the support and guidance of our Lead Expert”.



# ONLINE E&L ACTIVITIES

## EXCHANGE & LEARNING BEYOND TRANSNATIONAL MEETINGS

### SHARING OF GOOD PRACTICES BETWEEN PARTNERS:

What kind of activity did you find the most inspiring since the beginning of the project?





# ONLINE E&L ACTIVITIES

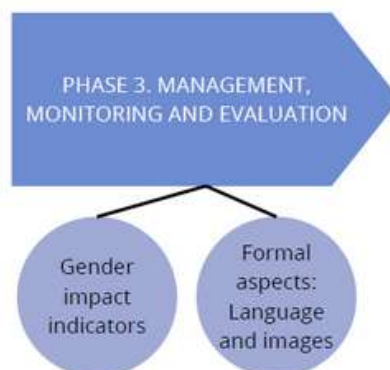
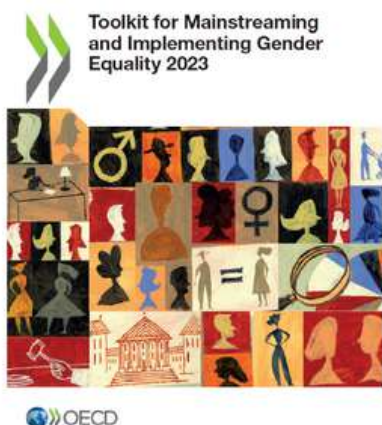
## EXCHANGE & LEARNING BEYOND TRANSNATIONAL MEETINGS

### GENDER EQUALITY SESSIONS

In order to incorporate the gender perspective in the design and implementation of the local IAPs, the organisation of online sessions on the cross-cutting theme of gender equality is planned. The third Gender Equality Session was organised during the second quarter of 2025 with the following content:

#### Content:

- Introduction
- OECD Toolkit for Mainstreaming Gender Equality
- Case Study: Integrating Gender Equality in the Strategic Urban Plan of Pamplona (Spain)
- Work in groups





# COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

## COMMUNICATION HIGHLIGHTS DURING QUARTER I OF 2025

### Published articles:



**FROM FACTORIES TO FUTURES: HOW EUROPEAN CITIES ARE GREENING THEIR INDUSTRIAL LEGACY**

The In4Green network meets in Dąbrowa Górnicza to exchange ideas, visit transformative projects, and co-design the path to a sustainable urban

 [josecostero](#) [See more](#) →



**From Concept to Impact: Hands-On Approaches to Digital and Industrial Innovation**

Digitisation and industrial innovation are profoundly **transforming our cities**, opening new avenues for economic and urban development.

 [Santamaria-Varas Mar](#) [See more](#) →



**Empowering Cities Towards Circular Economy - Highlights from the URBACT In4Green Circular Economy Workshop in Larissa**

On 11 March, 2024, the city of Larissa hosted an action packed session of the URBACT In4Green transnational meeting, bringing together urban

 [Eileen Crowley](#) [See more](#) →



**In4Green**  
Public administration  
From black to green: Driving industrial cities towards a sustainable horizon. Funded by URBACT IV (2021-2027).

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# LOOKING AHEAD

## TWO YEARS OF PROGRESS, ONE SHARED JOURNEY TOWARDS THE GREEN TRANSITION



### Closing Reflections

As In4Green moves into its final months, the network stands at a turning point. Over the past two years, partners have transformed ideas into Integrated Action Plans, tested solutions on the ground, and built strong alliances with stakeholders across their cities. The achievements are visible not only in the plans themselves, but in the new cultures of collaboration, dialogue, and innovation that have taken root.

The meeting in Dąbrowa Górnicza reminded us that industrial cities can be both places of production and places of renewal. From the Special Economic Zone to the Factory Full of Life, we saw how vision and commitment can reshape local economies and urban spaces. Just as importantly, we experienced once more the value of working together – learning from each other, challenging assumptions, and building trust across borders.

The coming months will be about consolidating this work: finalising Integrated Action Plans, preparing for implementation, and sharing lessons with the wider URBACT community. But the legacy of In4Green will go further. By connecting ten industrial cities in a common journey, the network has shown that Europe's green transition is not an abstract ambition – it is already happening, led by committed municipalities and communities.

In Salerno, we will celebrate the conclusion of this shared journey. Until then, In4Green continues with the same energy that has carried it so far: practical, collaborative, and determined to make the green transition real.

# In4Green

ACTION PLANNING NETWORK

URBACT



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## FINAL QUARTERLY NETWORK REPORT

April – June 2025

**THE REPORTS END  
HERE, BUT THE  
JOURNEY CONTINUES.**