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ECOCORE QUARTERLY REPORT



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Introduction

Welcome to the final quarterly report of the URBACT funded EcoCore network!

The focus of work for these nine small European cities, all located in strategic transport corridors is to learn together and from each other, how best to accelerate the green transition in the industrial areas of their cities.

Led by Fingal County Council, Dublin the consortium also includes Dubrovnik, Ormož, Alba Iulia, Kekava, Santo Tirso, Pärnu Linnavalitsus, Villena and Tuusula.

EcoCore aims to build the capacity of small cities to address the major challenge of climate change by pursuing a green economy agenda, helping local stakeholders, particularly enterprises to transition to low-carbon economic activities, especially in their choices of energy sources for transportation, heating and electricity.

Network activities will create significant momentum for a green energy transition, especially in the work environments of the industrial areas of the partner cities



Thematic Focus

The network has identified five main transition drivers or areas where the network partners can facilitate, enable and promote the green transition in their cities, namely:

- 1** Planning & Development for Green Industrial Transition
- 2** Developing and nurturing the Innovation Ecosystem in support of the Green Transition
- 3** The Municipality as Green Transition leader
- 4** Supporting the Green Transition skills pipeline
- 5** Branding and Marketing

Thematic Focus

The following diagram showcases some transition driver practical examples that were identified in the partner cities. A more extensive list or 'menu' of transition drivers in each partner city is included in the appendix.

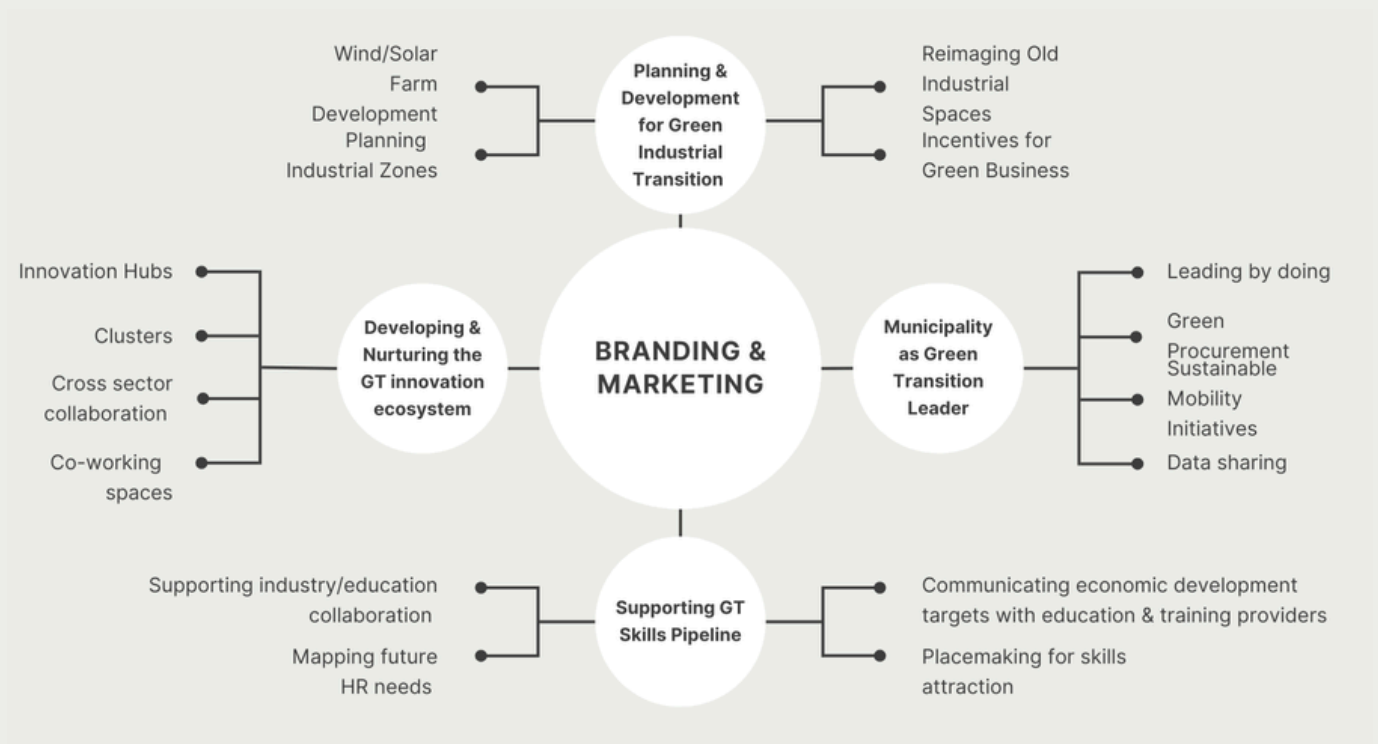


Figure 1: EcoCore Green Industrial Transition Drivers Locally

These five transition drivers represent the key themes of our network. A Core Network meeting will be held in each of the partner cities. These meetings will provide an opportunity to reflect on these topics and showcase inspiring local initiatives within these overarching themes.

EcoCore Network Highlights



Key Insights from Dubrovnik

For its final Core Network Meeting from 24 - 27 September, the EcoCore partnership travelled to Dubrovnik, a city globally recognised for its cultural heritage, thriving tourism economy, and bold sustainability agenda. Here, participants learned how one of Europe's busiest heritage destinations is charting a path towards environmental stewardship and smarter urban growth.

1 Dubrovnik Rethinking Tourism - From Pressure to Purpose

Dubrovnik has long been a symbol of over-tourism, yet it is now fast becoming a case study in sustainable destination management. Vlaho Margaretić, Senior Advisor for Tourism, presented the city's strategic shift, grounded in a holistic programme titled "Respect the City" enabling its transformation to sustainability leader, through integrated governance and long-term planning

Key achievements include:

- Research-led strategy, developed with the University of Dubrovnik, includes visitor flow analysis, cruise impact studies, and carrying capacity metrics.
- Smart pressure management through visitor dispersal, cruise limits, and digital trend monitoring.
- Croatia's first Management Plan for a protected monument site, balancing heritage preservation with urban life.
- GSTC sustainability index improved from 69.8% (2019) to 86.04% (2023) - with no risk-zone indicators.
- Public perception shift: tourism is now widely seen as a driver of heritage protection, quality services, and tolerance.

Dubrovnik's experience proves that even in high-pressure contexts, data, dialogue, and design can turn crisis into leadership.

CASE STUDY GREENING TOURISM IN DUBROVNIK

From over-tourism to sustainable
destination management



Background

Dubrovnik, a UNESCO World Heritage city with 41,562 residents, is one of Croatia's most visited destinations. In 2024, it recorded 4.55 million overnight stays and 1.39 million arrivals, ranking as Europe's Leading Cruise Destination (WTA 2024) with over 500,000 cruise passengers.

Tourism generates around 70% of the city's total revenue, yet also places pressure on infrastructure, the environment, and residents' quality of life. To address these challenges, the city launched "Respect the City", a comprehensive strategy to shift from over tourism toward sustainable and inclusive destination management.

Strategy

"Respect the City" integrates urban planning, technology, and policy innovation to balance heritage preservation with everyday urban life. Key actions include:

- Visitor management through digital monitoring, timed entry, and dispersal beyond the Old Town.
- Research partnerships with the University of Dubrovnik on visitor trends, carrying capacity, and cruise tourism impacts.
- The first Management Plan and carrying capacity strategy for a UNESCO site in Croatia.
- Resident engagement and diversification of the tourism offer toward cultural, creative, and green activities.

These measures have repositioned Dubrovnik as a leader in responsible and forward-looking tourism.

More Info : Mr. Vlaho Margaretić

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PROTECTING HERITAGE MEANS PROTECTING COMMUNITY – DUBROVNIK'S FUTURE DEPENDS ON BALANCE BETWEEN CULTURE, PEOPLE, AND THE PLANET



Results to Date

- Visitor dispersion and crowd reduction in the Old Town.
- Higher quality of life for residents through better tourism flow management.
- Sustainability performance improved from 69.8% (2019) to 86.04% (2023) in the GSTC assessment, with zero risk indicators.
- Residents increasingly view tourism as a driver of heritage protection and social benefits.

Future Ambition

Dubrovnik aims to consolidate its leadership as a model of green and resilient tourism in Europe. Upcoming priorities include:

- Further integration of eco-mobility, circular economy, and smart tourism solutions.
- Strengthening local supply chains and low-impact tourism products.
- Scaling collaboration with the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) to align with international standards.
- Expanding green infrastructure and climate-adaptive urban design within the tourism sector.
- Promoting year-round, community-based tourism that supports cultural life and local livelihoods beyond the peak season.

By linking sustainability, innovation, and heritage, Dubrovnik aims to remain both a world-class destination and a thriving place to live.



2

Strategic Urban Development in Dubrovnik: Integrated Investments for a Greener City

Thanks to Mr. Mario Galić and Ms. Kristina Bilić from the EU Funds Department at the City of Dubrovnik, EcoCore partners had the opportunity to explore how Dubrovnik has leveraged the EU's Integrated Territorial Investments (ITU) mechanism to advance green infrastructure, improve mobility, and enhance liveability.

Green Urban Development Through ITU Mechanism

Mr. Galić outlined how Dubrovnik has secured €22 million in non-repayable EU funding through the ITU mechanism, supporting an ambitious portfolio of urban development projects. Key objectives include:

- Promoting sustainable mobility and green infrastructure
- Strengthening the city's leadership in regional development
- Addressing climate and congestion challenges holistically

Flagship ITU Projects:

- Park'n'Ride System (€5.97M) – 572-space smart mobility hub with solar-powered infrastructure, direct bus lines to the Old Town, and real-time digital systems.
- Public Transport Modernisation (€3.36M) – New electric buses and digital ticketing integration.
- Gradac, Pile & Platana Parks Revitalisation (€5.56M) – Large-scale replanting, restored fountains, themed playgrounds, and rainwater-fed irrigation systems.



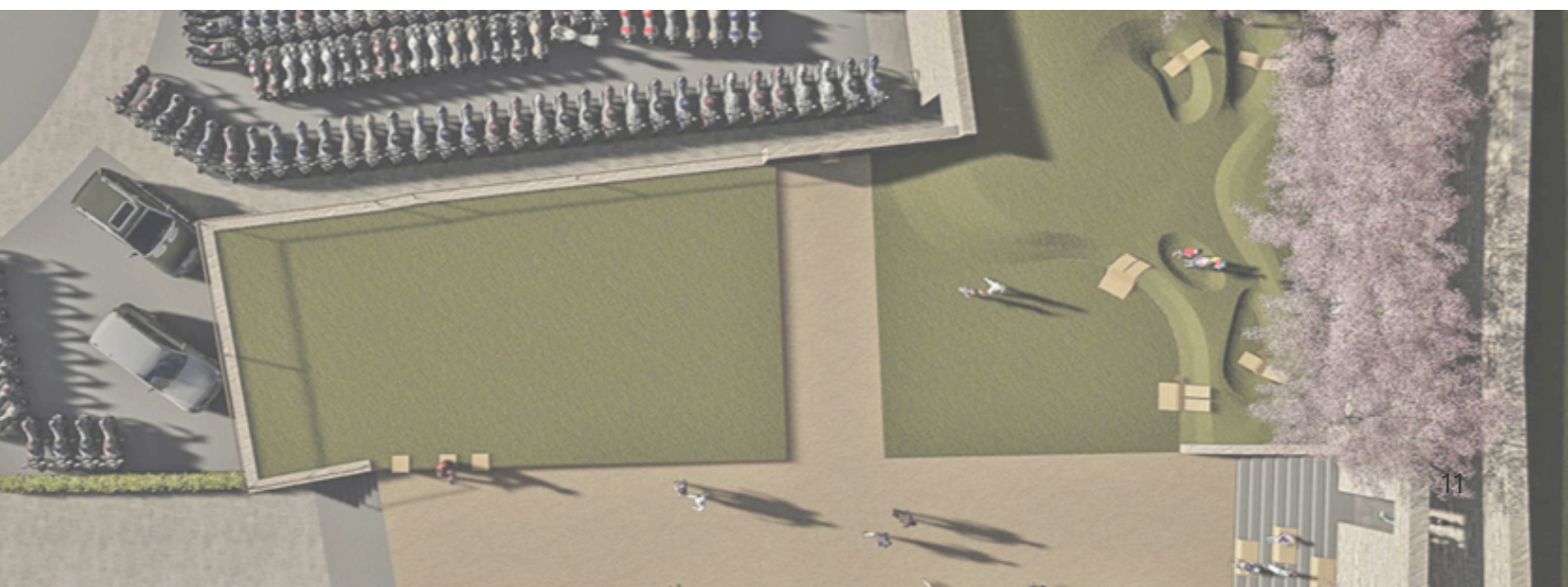
2 Green Infrastructure: A Historic Transformation

Ms. Bilić presented the extensive revitalisation of three historic parks, contributing to climate resilience, air quality improvement, and enhanced public space.

Highlights include:

- 738 new trees and over 13,000 plants across 100+ species
- Park Gradac: First full renovation in 127 years; includes 388 new trees, rainwater irrigation, and restored viewpoints
- Pile Park: Amphitheatre entrance, city-themed children's playground, and shade tree planting
- Park Platana: Rewilding of a heritage area with native flora and improved infrastructure

These efforts collectively reduce emissions, manage stormwater, and mitigate the urban heat island effect, while improving access to high-quality public space. This session demonstrated how a small heritage city can mobilise strategic EU funding to deliver integrated, climate-smart, and community-oriented urban development.





3

Modernising Urban Mobility: The Libertas Dubrovnik Transformation

In a session led by Mr. Nikša Grljević, Information Officer at Libertas Dubrovnik, EcoCore partners were introduced to the company's strategic evolution into a greener, more user-focused urban mobility provider

In terms of fleet renewal & electrification, from 2021 to 2025, Libertas has added 29 new buses, many co-financed through EU funds, including:

- Croatia's first fully electric bus and multiple low-emission Euro 6 buses, improving air quality and reducing carbon impact.
- A growing fleet of accessible vehicles, with ramps, visual/auditory announcements, and dedicated transport for passengers with reduced mobility.

Embracing Digital & User-Centred Services, the Libertas mobile app provides real-time bus tracking with 32,300+ downloads and over 2,000 daily users. Card payments (accepted on all lines), make up 25% of onboard transactions.

Libertas is certified under several environmental and quality standards including ISO 9001 – Quality Management; ISO 14001 – Environmental Management; and ISO 45001 – Occupational Health & Safety

Making strategic use of EU funds, Libertas has already secured over €6 million in EU grants and is applying for a further €12 million for continued electrification and digital innovation through mechanisms like NPOO and ITU.

Mr. Grljević's presentation showcased Libertas as a strong example of how public transport providers in small cities can lead the green transition, integrating sustainability, digital tools, and inclusive design into everyday mobility.



4 Connecting the World - Sustainably: Dubrovnik Airport

As a crucial enabler of the local economy, partners had a presentation about Ruđer Bošković Airport during the visit by Mr. Hrvoje Spremić. With more than 3 million passengers forecast in 2025, the airport is both a success story and a sustainability challenge.

As Dubrovnik's primary gateway, Ruđer Bošković Airport handles 65% of all visitors to the region. It connects the city to more than 70 destinations served by 45 airlines. As Croatia's only airport equipped for wide-body aircraft, it also serves as a home port for Marella Cruises under the innovative Fly & Cruise model, reinforcing its role as a vital link between Dubrovnik and the wider world.

Green Infrastructure:

- €225M investment (2019) upgraded runway and facilities.
- 140 kW solar power plant and new waste management systems.
- Energy improvements via EU projects like DAD and REDU-CE-D.

Smart Waste & Accessibility

- Smart bins and forecasting tools reduce waste.
- [DANOVA portal](#) improves accessibility for passengers with reduced mobility

Future Plans

- ISO 14001 & 50001 certifications underway, with a Net-zero target by 2042.
- Planned green innovation and commercial zone near the airport.

The visit highlighted how transport hubs can lead the way in climate-smart infrastructure and inclusive design.



5

Maritimo Recycling: Turning Marine Waste into Local Innovation

In a powerful presentation by Mr. Marjan Žitnik, founder of Maritimo Fishing and Maritimo Recycling, EcoCore partners were introduced to a local initiative that blends environmental action, community engagement, and circular innovation.

Maritimo began as a traditional fishing experience - "Fish like locals do" and evolved into a pioneering NGO focused on marine waste recovery and transformation. Their model follows a closed-loop process:

1. Sea Cleanups – community-led collection of marine litter
2. Sorting & Shredding – materials are separated and prepped
3. Melting & Modelling – waste is processed into 100% recycled products

Impact & Community Involvement

- 500+ volunteers engaged
- 200+ partners mobilised
- 10 full-time staff and a growing ecosystem of collaborators

Innovation in Practice

- Development of a desktop shredder/injector, capable of transforming plastic waste into usable objects 100x faster than a 3D printer
- Expansion into commercial recycling, while staying rooted in educational and social impact

Mr. Žitnik's work demonstrates how small-scale, grassroots initiatives can lead in the fight against pollution while fostering local entrepreneurship, environmental literacy, and new green skills.

Key Insights from Dubrovnik

6

Site Visits: Local Solutions with Global Relevance

After an intensive day of presentations and workshops, partners explored a series of inspiring local sites that brought Dubrovnik's green transition to life.

One standout visit was to TUP – a former industrial factory now being reimagined as a creative, community-driven hub. Thanks to Ms. Nikolina Farčić, partners learned about its evolving role as a space for innovation, circular economy initiatives, and cultural activities. The visit included a demonstration of on-site plastic recycling processes, connecting directly to EcoCore themes of industrial regeneration and sustainability.

Other highlights included a guided tour of neighbouring municipalities Župa Dubrovačka and Konavle, where partners heard about local EcoCore actions and explored opportunities for green business development.

As always, the site visits helped anchor the network's policy discussions in real-world practice, sparking ideas and exchanges that carried over into evening conversations and future plans.



CASE STUDY TUP DUBROVNIK

Reimagining industrial heritage for a greener, more resilient Dubrovnik



Background

The former carbon graphite factory, TUP Dubrovnik, founded in the mid-20th century, is being transformed into a multifunctional cultural and creative hub, breathing new life into one of the city's most significant industrial landmarks. Once central to the industrial development of Dubrovnik, the factory is now at the heart of a broader regeneration initiative aimed at fostering creativity, innovation, and sustainable growth.

Although production activities have ceased, the factory remains deeply woven into the city's social and economic memory. Its redevelopment represents a new vision for industrial heritage—one that values cultural and creative industries as drivers of inclusive growth, environmental responsibility, and community engagement.

The site is emerging as a multifunctional urban hub, hosting a dynamic mix of workspaces, cultural activities, and social initiatives, including:

- Creative studios and co-working spaces
- Exhibition and performance venues
- Innovation and business incubation programmes
- Training and skills development initiatives
- Community-focused cultural events
- Public green and social spaces

This phased redevelopment reflects the municipality's and partners' commitment to heritage-led urban regeneration, sustainable development, and cultural innovation in Dubrovnik.

More Info : Ms Nikolina Farčić

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FROM FACTORY TO FUTURE – TUP CONNECTS CULTURE, COMMUNITY, AND THE GREEN TRANSITION THROUGH CREATIVITY AND COLLABORATION



Timeline

- 1950s–2000s – Factory operates as a major graphite producer in Dubrovnik.
- 2022 – City Council acquires the site to preserve heritage and repurpose it for cultural and creative industries. It is awarded NEB incubation technical support (architectural & business modelling).
- 2023–ongoing – Progressive activation of the space through events, associations, co-working, and creative industries.
- Future – Rehabilitation of remaining spaces, with new training facilities, green economy incubators, and expanded cultural programming

Results to Date

- 5 art exhibitions hosted since activation.
- Diverse associations established on site: puppetry, STEM education, music, and digital media.
- Planned events: Christmas fair, book festival, and expanded community programming.
- Growing innovation ecosystem: co-working and creative enterprises active on-site

What's next for TUP?

TUP is evolving into a social and creative incubator, bringing local and international communities together to share knowledge, co-create, and stage cultural and media productions. Combining public spaces, pop-ups, and affordable facilities with unique assets like the Red History Museum and a new Public Library, it will stand at the crossroads of heritage, creativity, and sustainability. TUP's focus on art, innovation, and quality of life positions it as a catalyst for a more resilient Dubrovnik.

Website: <https://tup.hr>

Key Insights from Dubrovnik

7

Challenge-Based Workshop: Collaborative Solutions for a Greener Dubrovnik

In a World Café format, partners explored three key challenges proposed by the City of Dubrovnik:

Rethinking mobility in business zones

Ideas included circular bus lines, bike-sharing schemes, carpooling platforms, and using the sea as a transport route—supported by real-time data integration and behavioural change campaigns.

Greening existing industrial areas

Suggestions focused on vertical gardens, sustainable heating and cooling systems, free public transport incentives, and partnerships with universities for green skills development.

Attracting talent and creating vibrant multifunctional spaces

Proposals ranged from co-working hubs and stakeholder workshops to developing skills strategies and feedback loops between businesses and education providers.

The workshop demonstrated the power of collaborative thinking and peer learning, generating actionable ideas that Dubrovnik—and other EcoCore cities—can adapt to support the sustainable transformation of industrial areas.



Start, Stop, Continue

Dubrovnik

Before departing the group participated in a "Start, Stop, Continue" exercise. This exercise encouraged partners to reflect on what they saw and learned over the past two days and to share with their peers in Dubrovnik, advice and feedback under the headings of things they should 'start' doing, 'stop' doing and 'continue' doing.

STOP

- Creating barriers to sustainable energy.
- Facilitating cars as primary transport mode
- Over reliance on tourism
- Having High prices
- Encouraging people to take taxi from airport, public transport instead
- Reliant on cars

START

- Build industry clusters
- Twinning with Villena
- Promote off-season packages
- Develop business zones
- Engage in the EU partnership for cultural cities
- Public area QR Codes
- Regulation of holiday apartments
- Alternative road to airport
- Circular bus routes
- Build collaborative relationships between businesses and municipality and universities
- Digital twin
- Control the tourism and preserve the nature
- Digitalization in public services
- Organize traffic more efficiently
- Bike lanes
- Planning best road to airport to city. Diversity the economy sectors.
- Charging stations for EVs

CONTINUE

- Using and implementing the New European Bauhaus
- Collaboration with stakeholders
- Maintain the brand
- Extend the travel season
- Investing in digital visitor tools
- Planting urban trees
- Electrifying public transport
- Integrating all services
- Build on tourism. Industrial Development is very difficult due to logistics risks
- Investing in electric buses
- Regenerating green spaces
- Smart measures
- Boosting sustainable tourism
- 2.50 bus tickets
- Protect their natural built environment
- Smart traffic measures in old town
- Free travel for young people and older people
- URBACT projects

The EcoCore Project
Green Transition in Small Cities along Transport Corridors

URBACT



Co-funded by
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Interreg





In the autumn EcoCore partners recorded a five -part series of podcasts. The series shares real stories from our partner cities who are transforming their industrial areas into spaces of opportunity, innovation, and resilience.

Each episode dives into a key theme of the green transition - from building green skills to redesigning public services, from test actions to cross-border partnerships.

With voices from local leaders and changemakers, the podcast highlights not just the what, but the how - the practical steps, challenges, and breakthroughs shaping Europe's greener future from the ground up.

Episode 1 – Why Small Cities, Why Now?

Reflects on why small cities are stepping up to lead the green transition and why early action matters.

Episode 2 – Skills for the Future

Looks at how cities are preparing their people and economies for green jobs and inclusive growth.

[Listen to the podcast here!](#)

Episode 3 – Leading the Green Transition

Talks about how small cities are using planning, innovation, and public leadership to drive sustainability.

Episode 4 – Beyond Borders

Looks at the power of collaboration across sectors and regions to build critical mass and lasting impact.

Episode 5 – The Future of Small Cities

Partner reflections, takeaways, and a bold look at what's next for small cities as green transition leaders.

Facilitator's Toolbox

8

Tools for Impact: Supporting Partners to Communicate, Plan, and Inspire

Throughout the final months of the network, partners received tailored support to communicate their Integrated Action Plans (IAPs) with clarity and confidence. In Dubrovnik, a suite of hands-on tools was introduced to help cities shape powerful narratives and engaging events:

- The Event Canvas: A framework for designing local IAP launch events with purpose, ensuring alignment between audience, objectives, format, and follow-up.
- Value Proposition Canvas: A tool to distil the IAP's unique value into a compelling one-liner -ideal for pitching to funders, decision-makers, or stakeholders.
- The Story Spine: Adapted from Pixar's storytelling model, this narrative tool helped partners craft emotionally resonant stories of their city's transformation- perfect for speeches, pitches, videos, and podcasts.

These tools (available on request) aren't just about communications - they're about building confidence, amplifying impact, and preparing partners to lead their IAPs into the next chapter.

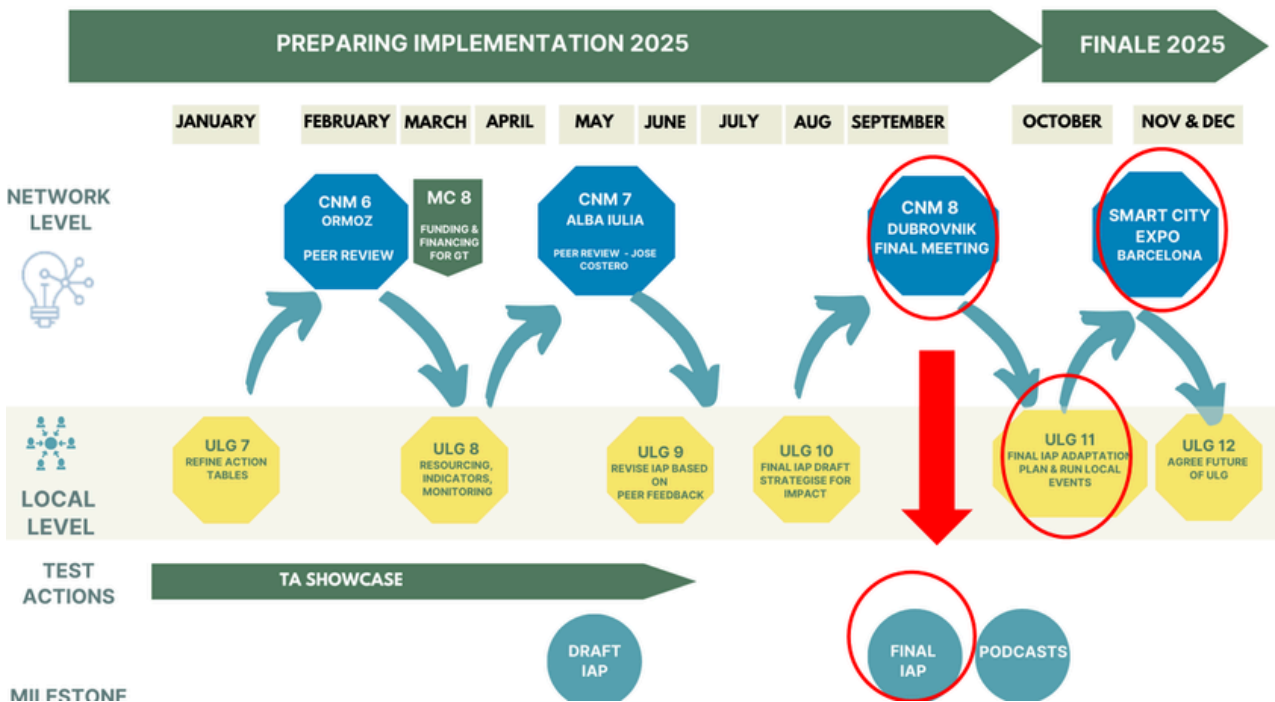


Next Steps

Coming up in quarter four of 2025, EcoCore will share some key learnings during a webinar on Greening Urban Economies organised jointly with In4Green, GreenPlace, Let's Go Circular and COPE. We will also be presenting our network in a workshop at the Smart City Expo in Barcelona.

Partners will share their final IAPs with the network on our online Basecamp space by the end of October. The remainder of 2025 will see partners busy planning local launch events and preparing for implementation.

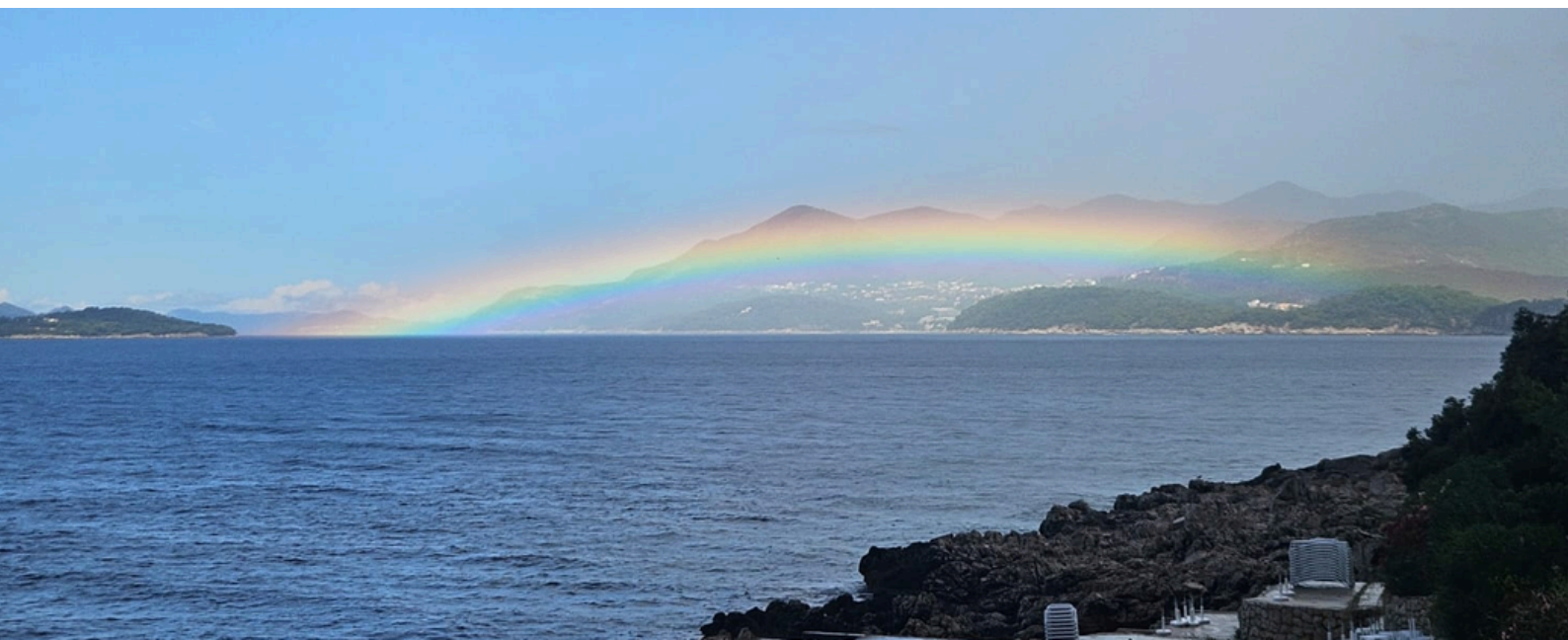
We look forward to coming together once again in March 2026 in Nicosia for the URBACT City Festival!



A Word that Captures the EcoCore Journey

To close the final Core Network Meeting in Dubrovnik, partners were asked to share one word that best captured their EcoCore journey. The resulting word cloud spoke volumes: words like inspiring, collaborative, transformative, challenging, and hopeful emerged - offering a powerful snapshot of the shared experience.

It was a visual reminder of the diverse perspectives, ambitions, and energy that shaped this journey. Together, these words now form part of the legacy of EcoCore, reminding us that at the heart of every action plan is a community of people committed to doing better- for their cities, their industries, and their planet.



Appendix 1: Menu of Transition Drivers

	1: Planning & Development For Green Industrial Transition	2: Developing & Nurturing the innovation ecosystem in support of GT	3: Municipality as GT Leader	4: Supporting the GT skills pipeline	5: Branding & Marketing
Balbriggan	- Economic Corridor Strategy (Governance Model) - Digital solutions driving green transition	- Women in business network - Creative Innovation Hub	- Our Balbriggan Rejuvenation Strategy - Public engagement and community led local development - Reducing car dependency, promoting behavioural change for sustainable transport measures	- Enterprise & Training Centre - Skills strategy - Facilitating engagement between industry and education providers	
Pärnu	- Metsa Plywood Manufacturing – digital transition supporting efficiency - Biofuel and Hydrogenvalley - Pärnu city general planning - Off-shore wind farm development	- E-residency, entrepreneurship supports - Local infrastructure round table - Developing an innovation ecosystem (incl. clubs, tubes & biobooster hackathons) - Co-working & incubator spaces - Women's business network	Green urban development (car dependency reduction measures, housing construction policy, cycle way/roads policy, parks, biogas buses, methane extraction from landfill etc).	Facilitating engagement between industry and education providers,	- Local DMO (Destination Management Organisation) - Green Destination - Visit Estonia - Green Key

Tuusula

1: Planning & Development For Green Industrial Transition

- Scoping study: What businesses to target for the Circular industrial area
- Regulations & incentives to enhance circular economy activities
- Involving other strategic groups not directly involved in ULG
- Logistics company seeking to become net zero
- Facilitating heated discussions (campfire) in the planning of industrial spaces

2: Developing & Nurturing the innovation ecosystem in support of GT

- Citizen & stakeholder participation methods: Participatory budgeting, hackathons
- Logistics industry of 100 companies, business network with 440 companies
- Several nationally significant logistics companies

3: Municipality as GT Leader

- Calculating carbon emissions of municipality purchases; adopting new procurement criteria, with incentives for tenderers to lower emissions.
- How to plan for district heating from the outset, example of redistribution of datacentre heat to local houses selling excess heat to network
- Investing in education, playgrounds, housing fair, quality of life

4: Supporting the GT skills pipeline

- Education possibilities locally about responsible leadership, circular economy, and green transition
- Using organic and locally sourced food

5: Branding & Marketing

- Supporting tourism businesses to become carbon neutral & achieve Sustainable Travel Finland certification.
- Joint commercial marketing campaign with 10 municipalities: Helsinki Ring of Industry
- Co-operation with airport network and airport logistics
- Taking care of well-being and nature brand despite strong industrial development

Kekava

1: Planning & Development For Green Industrial Transition

- Green Renaissance of old Industrial Spaces - museum railway on a former peat extraction bog
- Showcasing progress towards more sustainable business using the case study: Kekava Poultry Plant

2: Developing & Nurturing the innovation ecosystem in support of GT

- Showcasing Riga Tech Girls (Encouraging women's participation in STEAM)

3: Municipality as GT Leader

- Kekava – A cycle friendly city
- Lessons from URBACT APN Agents of Co-Existence (social innovation & inclusion in local government)
- Culture & creativity as economic drivers (forest gallery)
- Public utility company using more sustainable energy sources for heat (e.g. wood chips, solar.)

4: Supporting the GT skills pipeline

5: Branding & Marketing

	1: Planning & Development For Green Industrial Transition	2: Developing & Nurturing the innovation ecosystem in support of GT	3: Municipality as GT Leader	4: Supporting the GT skills pipeline	5: Branding & Marketing
Santo Tirso	- Fast tracking and incentivising industrial development - Fábrica Santo Thyrsó - Support for mobility plans in industrial zones	- Incubation and matchmaking programme in Fábrica ST - Presence and operation of textile cluster - Culture of efficient collaboration between public, private and academic sectors	- Municipality walking the talk (local food sourced for canteen, local market promotion etc) - Sustainable mobility initiatives (intermodal ticketing, e-bikes, cycleways, collaboration with rail company and other municipalities)	Invest Santo Tirso employee allocation and reallocation programme)	International marketing of the city to industry

	1: Planning & Development For Green Industrial Transition	2: Developing & Nurturing the innovation ecosystem in support of GT	3: Municipality as GT Leader	4: Supporting the GT skills pipeline	5: Branding & Marketing
Alba Iulia	- Solar PV powering industrial zone 40% of industrial land must be constructed (not e.g. car park)	Student Climathon	- Energy poverty mapping - Sustainable and additional mobility initiatives - Renewable Energy solutions for the swimming pool - Digitisation of the planning system	- Mapping HR needs & machinery needs of companies for next 5 years - Dual Education campus project	City branding

	1: Planning & Development For Green Industrial Transition	2: Developing & Nurturing the innovation ecosystem in support of GT	3: Municipality as GT Leader	4: Supporting the GT skills pipeline	5: Branding & Marketing
Villena	- Planning of the logistics dry port through multi-level governance collaboration - Solar farm development & biodiversity side by side		- Car dependency reduction measures - Cycle lane network - EU projects supporting local policy objectives	Skills forward planning & integration of logistics in local educational offering	

Ormož

1: Planning & Development For Green Industrial Transition

- Green Renaissance of old Industrial Spaces - creating space for nature, citizen awareness & ecological tourism
- Green infrastructure development in new business zone
- Planning the transformation of a disused claypit to new green industrial zone
- Managing industrial development near Natura 2000 sites

2: Developing & Nurturing the innovation ecosystem in support of GT

- Business incubator - multi-level support for young entrepreneurs, both in terms of know how and the possibility of using offices for business development.
- Municipal funding calls for tenders to help start-ups, sole traders, employment and various investments in equipment
- Municipal scholarships for students

3: Municipality as GT Leader

- Circular Repair Café & employment of people far from the labour market
- Slovenia's most bee friendly municipality
- Migrant Integration Programmes (Ormož People's University)

4: Supporting the GT skills pipeline

- Mapping the needs of entrepreneurs, companies and future entrepreneurs to support the green transition skills

5: Branding & Marketing

- Sustainable Tourism Certification

Dubrovnik

1: Planning & Development For Green Industrial Transition

- Green Port infrastructure (LEDs & remote app., e-cars & bikes, recycling, e-infrastructure installation)
- Green Renaissance of old Industrial Spaces - creating space for citizen participation: TUP
- Park'n' Ride & Multi-Modal Integration as tools to relieve traffic
- Green Infrastructure: Parks development & upgrade contribute to the city's green vision

2: Developing & Nurturing the innovation ecosystem in support of GT

- Port collaboration with university, air quality dashboard, seabed impacts etc.
- City grants to support women entrepreneurs
- RemoteIT APN

3: Municipality as GT Leader

- Digital mobility solutions e.g., parking app
- Respect the City
- Plastic Smart Cities - Action plan: The City of Dubrovnik as the first Croatian Plastic Smart City (from 2020) ; Action Plan to reduce plastic pollution in the city of Dubrovnik

4: Supporting the GT skills pipeline

- Plastic Smart City Dubrovnik: Green hospitality workshop - focused on ways of environmentally responsible action in the hospitality sector, with an emphasis on composting and reduction of single-use plastics; Aimed at catering and hospitality students

5: Branding & Marketing

- Plastic Smart City

Acknowledgements

As the EcoCore journey comes to a close, we want to express our sincere thanks to all the partners across the network. Your dedication, openness, and generosity have shaped this project into something far greater than the sum of its parts. Over these past months, we've not only shared challenges and ideas - we've built friendships, found inspiration, and created a space where learning could happen freely and honestly.

A heartfelt thank you to the Lead Partner team from Fingal County Council, in particular Aoife Sheridan, whose leadership, coordination, and unwavering support made every step of this process possible.

We also extend our deep appreciation to Irina Rotaru, our Project Officer from the URBACT Secretariat, for her guidance, encouragement, and thoughtful stewardship throughout.

To each city, stakeholder, and individual who contributed their time, insight, and energy—thank you. EcoCore has been a shared endeavour, and it's your commitment that will carry its legacy forward.



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