

RE-GEN JOURNAL #6

Public space regeneration through integrated urban sports' hubs for the participation of young citizen.

The Final Stretch of the Re-Gen Journey

The journey to deliver Integrated Action Plans to regenerate public spaces for and with youngsters began in the nine Re-Gen cities in January 2024. During last period several tests have been implemented to consolidate the Re-Gen Movement and the Action Planning process.

Re-Gen scope

The Re-Gen project helped nine cities to define actions to regenerate public spaces co-creating inclusive Urban Sport Hubs with and for youngsters.

Urban Sport Hubs

An Urban Sport Hub is more than just a physical space; it's a dynamic hub within neighborhoods dedicated to sport, street sports and recreational activities. These hubs serve as vibrant community spaces that promote physical activity, social interaction, and foster an active, healthy lifestyle among adolescents and the broader community.



The period from April to November 2025 marks a decisive turning point in the Re-Gen journey. Months of testing, learning and refining ideas with young people and ULGs, the network is entering that phase, when individual experiments began to converge into coherent strategies, and when the collective intelligence of the nine cities shaped the final versions of their Integrated Action Plans.

The core network meetings created spaces of deep peer learning: cities challenged one another's assumptions, exchanged practical solutions and explored new ways of connecting sport, public spaces and youth empowerment. These discussions did more than improve local plans; they helped cities articulate a shared vision of what Urban Sport Hubs can become – inclusive social infrastructures, places of identity, and catalysts for community wellbeing. Meanwhile, in every city, young people continued to play an active role: testing ideas, redefining priorities, and co-shaping spaces through workshops, micro-events, mapping activities and community actions. Their input during this final phase enriched the IAPs and ensured that each plan remains rooted in real needs, real voices and real urban rhythms.

This Journal captures that momentum. It documents the steps taken by the cities, the stories that emerged after April 2025, and the way each place translated the Re-Gen approach into its own future model. It also reflects a broader shift: from a network focused on planning to a community preparing for implementation, collaboration and long-term impact. Re-Gen's journey is not ending here. What has been built – knowledge, relationships, youth engagement, and a new way of looking at public spaces – now points towards new challenges, new partnerships and new opportunities for cities to continue regenerating with and for their youngest citizens.

CORE NETWORK MEETING Spring 2025 | CORFU

URBAN SPORT HUB AT THE CORE OF Re-Gen INTEGRATED ACTIONS PLANS (IAP)

The 4th core network meeting, hosted in Corfu in spring 2025, marked the beginning of the final learning cycle of Re-Gen.

After months of experimentation and local testing, partners arrived on the island with a clear purpose: to **refine their Integrated Action Plans** focusing on logical coherence amid objectives, actions and expected results, through collective reflection, critical dialogue, and hands-on peer learning.

Corfu offered a good setting for this next step. Its ongoing work on transforming the Park near the Prison into a landscape-sensitive **Urban Sport Hub** created a shared reference point for the entire network. During site visits and design sessions, partners explored how natural elements, accessibility, and informal sport practices can coexist in one multifunctional space. This conversation opened new perspectives on how **sport** can support physical activation, **youths** participation, **health**, environmental stewardship and **social integration**. The meeting also focused on governance models and the evolving role of digital tools. Cities exchanged insights on how young people can contribute to the regeneration and

the long-term management of public spaces, and how lightweight platforms – from shared calendars to feedback channels – could strengthen participation and transparency in future Urban Sport Hubs.

Working groups helped cities compared **Logical Approach to the IAPs**, identify gaps, and test the transferability of specific actions. Discussions around gender-sensitive design, inclusion of vulnerable groups, and multifunctional uses of space resulted in concrete adjustments to several plans. A view also on new opportunities and EU funding for sport, youth and urban regeneration allowed partners to share future challenges and sustainable prospects.

The Corfu meeting did more than align technical work. It reaffirmed a key principle of Re-Gen: urban **regeneration** becomes stronger when cities learn from each other in real places, and together, not just through documents. The insights generated on the island travelled back to every partner city, shaping the final phase of their plans and strengthening the network's shared vision of active, **inclusive and youth-centred public spaces**.



CORE NETWORK MEETING Summer 2025 | VILA DO CONDE

IAP GOVERNANCE, **TELLING STORIES**, LEARNING COMMUNITIES ENGAGEMENT

MEETING IN A BLOOMING CITY

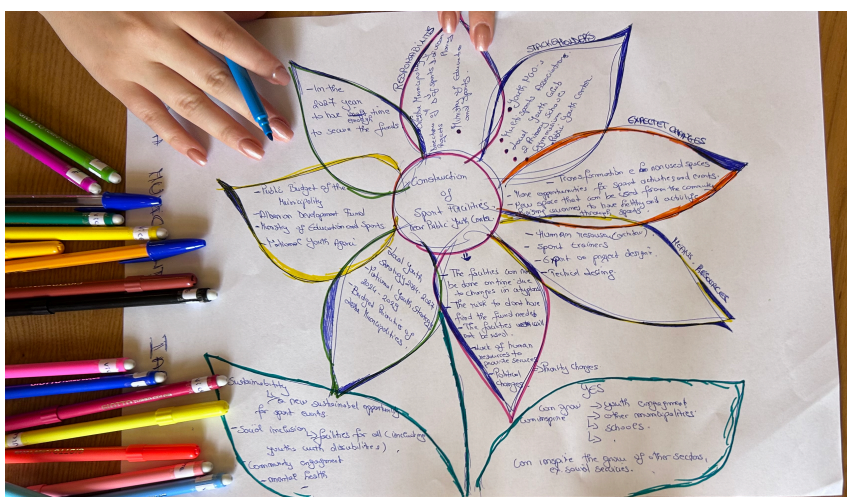
The 5th core network meeting in Vila do Conde, held in summer 2025, brought the Re-Gen partners into direct contact with neighbourhoods where social housing, long-standing communities and youth activities intersect. This context framed the central theme of the meeting: how sport-based regeneration can strengthen social cohesion across generations. The host city presented its work in Bairro das Dálías, a neighbourhood activated through participatory dinners, micro-events, community workshops and intergenerational encounters that demonstrated how simple, informal practices can rebuild trust and transform public spaces into places where different age groups share time, stories and responsibility. Field visits and tactical discussions allowed partners to analyse how micro-actions—painted surfaces, temporary equipment, shaded corners and co-created signage—can quickly enhance comfort, identity and usability while preparing the ground for longer-term regeneration strategies. Partners then reviewed each city's evolving IAP, focusing on governance, maintenance and the design of hubs that remain genuinely inclusive for all age groups, not only adolescents.

TELLING Re-Gen STORIES

During the afternoon of the first day, the meeting integrated a dedicated communication and storytelling workshop inspired by the URBACT Masterclass held in Paris (May 2025). Partners were divided into three groups and collaborated on the storyboard of the final documentary-style video of the project. They shaped the narrative structure, selected key messages and began composing the collective script that will later be enriched with voice-over contributions from all partners. The workshop also introduced the concept of a legacy video to be co-directed by the ULG coordinator of Milan and Lezha, capturing the long-term vision of Re-Gen.



THERE IS NO TRANSFORMATION WITH ACTION BASED ON IDEAS, BECAUSE THE IDEA ACQUIRES MORE IMPORTANCE, LIMITING CREATIVE ENERGY



CORE NETWORK MEETING Summer 2025 | VILA DO CONDE

IAP GOVERNANCE, TELLING STORIES, **LEARNING COMMUNITIES ENGAGEMENT**

In Vila do Conde, partners had the unique opportunity to witness the preparation of Vila do Conde's famed "Flower Carpets" (Tapetes de Flores), the extraordinary community event held every four years for the Corpus Christi celebration, during which citizens of all ages collaboratively design and create intricate carpets of petals and natural materials along the city's streets.

Witnessing families, youth groups, elders and local associations working side by side offered a vivid example of how collective creativity, cultural heritage and shared effort can activate public space and nurture a deep sense of belonging.

This experience echoed the principles emerging from the IAP discussions: just as the Flower Carpets bring life, identity and co-ownership to the streets, Urban Sport Hubs can regenerate neighbourhoods through movement, beauty, community energy and shared stewardship.



The Vila do Conde meeting ultimately reinforced a key lesson for all partners: Urban Sport Hubs become sustainable when they cultivate community before building infrastructure. Experiencing the city's traditions, youth-led practices and collaborative spirit provided valuable insights into how public spaces can bridge generations and support lasting local alliances—insights that played a decisive role in finalising the IAPs across the network.

CORE NETWORK MEETING Summer 2025 | VILA DO CONDE

The BLOOMING CITY **LEARNING COMMUNITIES ENGAGEMENT**



CORE NETWORK MEETING Summer 2025 | VILA DO CONDE

The BLOOMING CITY **LEARNING COMMUNITIES ENGAGEMENT**



CORE NETWORK MEETING Autumn 2025 | ALBACETE

FINAL REVIEW AND VALIDATION OF INTEGRATED ACTION PLANS

The first day in Albacete was dedicated to the Core Partners Transnational Meeting, a working session designed to consolidate the nearly completed Integrated Action Plans and to project the network toward the future.

During the morning, cities engaged in an intensive peer review session of their almost final IAPs. Through thematic tables and direct exchanges, partners discussed gaps, strengths and opportunities for improvement, while the Lead Expert provided tailored guidance on integration, governance models, gender-sensitive design and long-term sustainability. This final round of technical refinement allowed cities to align their plans with the common Re-Gen approach while preserving their local identities.

A dedicated session explored future scenarios and strategic opportunities beyond URBACT. Partners reflected on how their IAPs could open pathways to new EU projects, local investments, public-private

partnerships, and long-term alliances between municipalities, schools, sport clubs, youth organisations and community actors. The conversation highlighted the durability of the Re-Gen method and its potential to inspire future regeneration initiatives.

Partners met the ULG and local youth at the Albacete Youth Centre. This lively encounter allowed visitors to hear directly from the young people involved in mapping exercises, workshops and regeneration ideas. Together with the youth, partners co-created materials and recorded content for the Re-Gen Final Video Story, the network's final product.

All contributed to video voice-overs recording, sharing personal reflections and clips reflecting on how they imagine future Urban Sport Hubs in their city. This collaborative moment captured the spirit of Re-Gen: public spaces co-shaped with the energy, creativity and perspectives of adolescents, placing sport in the core of urban regenerative solutions.



CORE NETWORK MEETING Autumn 2025 | ALBACETE

Inspirational exchanges with key stakeholders LOOKING FORWARD

The second day opened with the Final Network Event, bringing together partners and a wide group of local stakeholders who have accompanied partners throughout its Re-Gen journey. Among the most inspiring contributions was the dialogue with Love.Fútbol, an international organisation advocating for community-built sport spaces, whose vision resonated strongly with the Re-Gen cities.

Their approach to shared governance and community-driven sport infrastructures provided valuable insights for the IAP and upcoming implementation phase. Participants also met the local sport team for young people with disabilities, a group born from the combination of a need and a dream. Their testimony highlighted the power of sport to generate social inclusion, health and opportunities for education,

employment and empowerment. Their journey demonstrated how accessible sport can open pathways from participation to professional growth. Another meaningful moment was the conversation with the president of the Albacete football club, who spoke about the club's social mission and the evolving relationship between community, sport culture and local identity. Reflections sparked new ideas for partnerships between municipalities, sport institutions and sport associations – a key component of many Re-Gen IAPs. The event concluded with a shared awareness: Re-Gen has produced integrated plans, and most of all has contributed to shift local mindsets, strengthen alliances and lay the foundations for sport and youth-centred policies that will continue to grow far beyond the project's timeframe.



CITIES STORIES

ALBACETE

Towards a Network of Youth Urban Sport Micro-Hubs



CITIES STORIES

CORFU

From Concept to Community: Co-Designing the Prison Park Masterplan



After April 2025, Corfu accelerated its work on transforming the neglected park near the prison into a multifunctional, landscape-sensitive Urban Sport Hub. Kapodistriaki centre launched a series of co-design workshops with students, teachers and youth groups from the surrounding districts.

These sessions explored how nature, informal sports and educational activities could coexist, with special attention to safety, accessibility and environmental preservation.

During summer, the city installed light, temporary sport structures – such as mobile baskets and balance elements – to observe patterns of use and test young people's preferences.

The feedback was immediate and constructive, guiding the fine-tuning of zoning, circulation flows and shaded social areas.

By autumn, Corfu finalised a community-informed masterplan, integrating sport, green corridors, inclusive pathways and multifunctional gathering areas.

The concept was formally incorporated into the city's IAP as a flagship action, positioning the Prison Park as a future "model sport park" for the island.

CITIES STORIES

DAUGAVPILS

Festival Energy as a Model for Social Cohesion



In 2025, Daugavpils capitalised on the success of its previous youth festivals by launching a new, expanded edition aimed at reinforcing participation across neighbourhoods.

The Youth Summer Festival 2025 introduced new disciplines – including parkour and street dance – and empowered teenagers to take active roles as event coordinators, referees and communication ambassadors.

These festivals were not isolated activities: they became living laboratories, showing how large-scale youth events can activate public spaces, build trust and reshape the perception of areas previously underused.

The municipality also used the festivals to test service organisation, accessibility, and the integration of music, sport and social spaces.

Following the events, the city worked with young participants and local NGOs to design a replicable governance model, integrating event-based activation with long-term maintenance strategies for the emerging Urban Sport Hubs.

By autumn 2025, resources, funds and youth's insights were fully embedded in the final IAP.

CITIES STORIES

DOBRICH

Apple Park, Youth Shaping a New Community Green Sport Hub



After the successful Apple Sport Festival, Dobrich spent spring-autumn 2025 deepening its collaboration with the three secondary schools surrounding the abandoned sports ground known as "The Apple."

The municipality organised a series of youth design assemblies where students analysed how they use the space, what they wish to change, and how safety, greenery and sport could be integrated.

During the summer months, Dobrich tested micro-interventions combining sport and nature based solutions with community participation: shaded areas, recycled-material seating prototypes and simple sport elements. These installations helped reveal

usage patterns at different hours of the day and highlighted the need for improved flooring, lighting and social corners.

An online youth voting process, conducted across school entrances and youth clubs, confirmed adolescents' priorities: street basketball, open fitness, a green relaxation zone, and a flexible cultural area for school concerts and community events.

By autumn 2025, Dobrich had consolidated these insights into a community-based integrated action plan, ready to guide the long-term transformation of The Apple into a vibrant, safe and shared Urban Sport Hub.

CITIES STORIES

LEZHA

From an Abandoned Gym to a Youth-Centred Sport and Creative Hub



In Lezha, the period after April 2025 focused on advancing the transformation of the former Hydajet Gymnasium into a multifunctional Youth Centre. The municipality worked closely with students, teachers, sports instructors and cultural groups to define the final uses of the building's second floor: from martial arts and dance studios to gaming and informal recreation spaces.

Throughout the summer, outdoor spaces around the building became the stage for youth-led testing activities: temporary football and volleyball courts, skate sessions, and creative workshops for reimagining the courtyard as a green and inclusive community zone. These events successfully attracted both urban and rural youth, reducing one of Lezha's most persistent participation gaps.

In autumn a series of sport workshops and experiences have been developed in remote areas to engage with youngsters with minor opportunities living in neighborhoods where sport is not a chance.

The insights gathered, combined with stakeholder consultations, enabled the municipality to finalise a concrete plan for outdoor sports fields (basketball, tennis, football) and to outline a governance model involving schools, youth NGOs and local sports associations.

By November, Lezha's IAP presented the Youth Centre and its surrounding open spaces as the city's flagship Urban Sport Hub, symbolising a strategic investment in adolescent wellbeing, participation and inclusion.

CITIES STORIES

MILAN

San Siro in Motion: Youth Co-Production and New Urban Alliances



Between April and November 2025, Milan intensified its work in the San Siro district, one of the city's most complex yet culturally vibrant neighbourhoods. Local young people were engaged through a structured programme of co-production workshops, where they designed activities, sport functions and cultural events suitable for the future Urban Sport Hub network.

The municipality and local associations coordinated a summer micro-event combining sport (street basketball, volleyball), music performances and urban art. Teenagers played a central role as organisers, animators and content creators. This event became a turning point: it demonstrated how informal sport

and culture can activate difficult public spaces and foster new community relations.

The Re-Gen Hackathon held in November 2025 and meetings with street educators, youth workers and sport clubs helped define a model that integrates education, sport, safety and social inclusion. Young people were explicitly included in future roles such as hub facilitators, community ambassadors and event coordinators.

By the end of 2025, Milan's IAP outlined a vision of San Siro as a Youth District, built on micro-hubs, co-managed spaces and continuous collaboration between institutions, schools, sport organisations and the neighbourhood's diverse communities.

CITIES STORIES

PULA



During summer and autumn 2025, Pula intensified its work around the Valica Playground and the Rojc Community Centre, transforming them into laboratories of youth-driven creativity. The municipality and local youth groups organised a new cycle of street art + sport workshops, inviting adolescents to redesign surfaces, colours and micro-spaces of the playground.

These sessions produced mural, visual elements, and discussions on how to integrate street sports, informal games and creative corners in a coherent way. Temporary markings, moveable sport elements and community-made seating

encouraged young people to test different uses of the space throughout the season.

Evening activations – from open-mic nights to friendly 3x3 basketball sessions – demonstrated the potential of Valica as a cultural and social gathering point. By autumn, the insights collected from these activities were consolidated and incorporated into the city's IAP as a long-term roadmap for a multifunctional Urban Sport Hub rooted in youth culture.

CITIES STORIES

VERONA

Sport Open Arena



Between spring and autumn 2025, Verona advanced its work in the southern districts, where underused green areas and school surroundings showed strong potential for transformation.

The city organised a series of youth-led urban walks, involving students from local secondary schools in mapping needs, identifying barriers and proposing improvements for sport-friendly public spaces.

In parallel, Verona introduced tactical prototypes in two parks: painted sport lines, modular seating and temporary parkour elements.

These tests helped assess safety, visibility and accessibility, while attracting new users who had not previously engaged with the area.

Summer workshops with teachers, youth organisations and sport associations led to the finalisation of the concept of a “System of Hubs” – a constellation of interconnected micro-arenas dedicated to basketball, urban fitness, parkour, informal gathering and cultural activities.

As a Re-Gen Legacy for the city, youngsters co-produced a song gathering their voices towards a city that could become an open sport arena for all.

CITIES STORIES

VILA DO CONDE

Neighbourhoods Re-Connected Through Micro-Actions and Community Energy



After April 2025, Vila do Conde strengthened its intergenerational approach by organising a second wave of community workshops in Bairro das Dálías and other peripheral neighbourhoods. These workshops brought together younger residents, older inhabitants, sport groups and local associations to co-design small, feasible improvements in shared open spaces.

During the summer, the city tested tactical micro-actions—painted play zones, light sport equipment, community benches and shaded edges—that immediately improved usability and comfort. These interventions proved that even modest changes can activate public spaces and stimulate dialogue between different generations.

The municipality also experimented with intergenerational sport sessions, blending low-threshold physical activity with social interaction. These gatherings created new bonds among residents, reinforcing the idea that Urban Sport Hubs must serve all age groups while prioritising the needs of adolescents.

By late 2025, Vila do Conde integrated these insights into a policentric model of neighbourhood hubs, included in the IAP as a strategy to reconnect peripheral districts, strengthen community identity and promote inclusive sport-based regeneration.

Between April and November 2025, the Re-Gen network moved from experimentation to strategy-building, transforming the lessons of two years into a coherent set of Integrated Action Plans. This final phase was shaped by the three **transnational meetings** in Corfu, Vila do Conde and Albacete, which provided the space for partners to reflect, compare progress, and refine their approaches with the support of peers and the Lead Expert. Across these encounters, several common themes emerged.

Cities deepened their understanding of **sport-based regeneration**, recognising that Urban Sport Hubs are not simply facilities but **social infrastructures** where sport, culture, education and community life intersect. The peer exchanges helped clarify how hubs can remain flexible, inclusive, multifunctional and sensitive to the needs of adolescents, while also connecting with local identities and natural landscapes.

The network also strengthened its focus on **participation and governance**. Cities compared models for involving adolescents in decision-making, explored new forms of cooperation between municipalities, schools, sport clubs and youth organisations, and reflected on how digital tools can support shared management and transparent communication. This collective thinking reinforced the idea that public spaces thrive when communities feel responsible for them.

Another key achievement was the consolidation of the **cross-cutting dimensions** of the project:

- gender equality and safety,
- environmental integration and nature-based solutions,
- digital transition and data-informed management,
- intergenerational inclusion.

Partners adjusted their IAPs to ensure these principles were not add-ons but embedded within every action.

The peer learning process encouraged cities to articulate realistic, long-term visions. Each IAP now combines **ambition and feasibility**: tactical interventions that can be implemented quickly, structural transformations requiring new investments, and governance frameworks that ensure sustainability beyond the URBACT timeframe.

By autumn 2025, all nine IAPs reflected a shared ethos: **public spaces regenerated with and for young people**, supported by stronger alliances, clearer strategies and a renewed commitment to inclusive urban development. The peer learning journey has not ended – it has simply shifted into a new phase, where knowledge becomes action and plans become places

The April-November 2025 period marked the moment when Re-Gen matured from a learning network into a community ready for implementation. The cities entered the final stretch of their journey with clarity, strengthened partnerships, and an unprecedented level of engagement from young people.

Throughout the final transnational meetings, partners refined their Integrated Action Plans through dialogue, observation and shared experience. They confirmed that sport-based regeneration is not only a tool for activating public spaces, but also a way to build trust, strengthen belonging, and improve the quality of life for adolescents. Across Europe, Re-Gen cities demonstrated that when teenagers are invited to co-design their environment, they respond with creativity, ownership and a deep understanding of what makes a place meaningful. The collaboration between municipalities, youth workers, schools, sport clubs and community groups has created a foundation for long-term change: a new culture of planning where young people are recognised as essential contributors to healthy, resilient and inclusive cities. Re-Gen's Integrated Action Plans now stand ready for the next phase. Each city has articulated a concrete, actionable pathway that reflects local priorities while staying connected to a shared European vision of public space as a common good. The work continues – but with stronger alliances, clearer strategies and a community of partners committed to supporting one another beyond the life of the project.

Through two years of co-design, testing and peer exchange, Re-Gen has confirmed that **Urban Sport Hubs are the anticipated solution capable of addressing multiple urban challenges at once**. The hubs were not imposed; they were **imagined, prototyped and validated** with the direct involvement of adolescents. Their relevance emerged from real needs, real stories and real places. What the network has proven is that Urban Sport Hubs are not a single model, but a **place-based approach** that adapts to the context:

- a natural, landscape-sensitive park in Corfu;
- micro-hubs scattered across Albacete's neighbourhoods;
- festival-driven activation in Daugavpils;
- a creative playground in Pula;
- a youth centre reborn in Lezha;
- a network of open arenas in Verona;
- a youth district emerging in Milan;
- intergenerational hubs re-connecting Vila do Conde's communities;
- a green, school-connected Apple Park in Dobrich.

Each city interpreted the concept differently, yet all confirmed the same idea: when sport becomes a civic infrastructure, cities become healthier, more active, more inclusive and more youth-friendly.

Urban Sport Hubs proved to be catalysts for:

- youth empowerment, offering spaces for autonomy, creativity and social connection;
- urban regeneration, reactivating neglected areas with colour, movement and community energy;
- public health, promoting everyday physical activity, stress reduction and mental wellbeing;
- green transition, integrating nature-based solutions, shade, biodiversity and climate adaptation;
- social cohesion, bridging generations, cultures and communities through shared use of space.

Re-Gen has therefore demonstrated that sport, when embedded in thoughtful urban design, becomes more than exercise: it becomes a language, a policy tool and a driver of collective transformation. Urban Sport Hubs represent a **new paradigm** – one where cities listen to their youngest citizens, where health and nature are integrated into public life, and where regeneration begins with the simple act of creating places where people want to be together.

The journey continues, but the message is clear: a regenerated city is one that moves, plays, breathes and grows with its youth.

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