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**WELDI**

BUILDING WELCOMING COMMUNITIES FOR MIGRANTS

# INTEGRATED ACTION PLAN

Fundão   
Terra de Acolhimento  
Embracing Place



CÂMARA MUNICIPAL

# fundão



## INTEGRATED ACTION PLAN

fundão  
365 dias à descoberta

*"In the **cherry blossom's**  
shade there's no such thing as  
a **stranger.**"*

*Kobayashi Issa*



<https://urbact.eu>

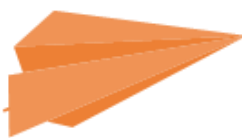
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## A WORD FROM OUR MAYOR



### Miguel Tarouca Gavinhos

Mayor of Fundão

*In Fundão, we believe that welcoming is not an act—it is a daily commitment to dignity, inclusion, and human potential. Our municipality has long been shaped by migration, and today more than ever, we see newcomers not as outsiders, but as co-creators of our shared future. This conviction is what guides our work through WELDI.*

*Participating in this European network allows us to deepen our journey towards becoming a truly inclusive community—one where rights are guaranteed, where cultures are celebrated, and where every resident, regardless of origin, can thrive and belong. Through our WELDI Action Plan, we aim to build on local experience, learn from our peers across Europe, and reinforce Fundão's role as a reference in rural integration.*

*This plan reflects our belief that the strength of a territory lies not in its size or location, but in its ability to care, to adapt, and to include. That is the promise of Fundão: to remain an embracing place—for all.*



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CENTRO PARA AS MIGRAÇÕES  
DO FUNDÃO  
**WELCOME DAY**  
MIGRATION CENTER

CENTRO DE ACOGLIMIENTO  
REFUGIADOS

**PRELIMINARY  
SECTION**



# PRELIMINARY SECTION

The *Fundão Action Plan* represents a strategic, community-centred approach to fostering inclusion and diversity in a rapidly evolving demographic landscape. Situated in the heart of Portugal, Fundão has reinvented itself as a "**embracing place**—a place where newcomers from diverse backgrounds find not only refuge but also the resources and opportunities necessary to build meaningful lives. This commitment has earned Fundão recognition as the **EU Capital of Inclusion and Diversity in 2023**, an accolade that highlights the town's efforts to set new standards in social integration and economic participation for all residents, regardless of nationality, origin, or status.

The *Fundão Action Plan* aligns with the vision of the *Fundão Acolhe* initiative, a key resource for migrants seeking essential information and support upon arrival. This plan builds on the framework established by *Fundão Acolhe* to further integrate services, improve access to housing, education, and healthcare, and foster local engagement with the migrant population. At its core, the plan seeks to mitigate integration barriers—ranging from language and legal challenges to cultural adaptation—and to promote an inclusive environment that enhances both individual and community well-being.

Collaborating within the WELDI network under the URBACT programme, Fundão joins a coalition of European cities committed to fostering migrant integration through locally tailored, human-rights-based practices. The plan leverages these transnational exchanges, recognising the pivotal role cities play as frontline actors in European migration policy. By learning from and contributing to this network, Fundão strengthens its strategy to ensure dignified, resilient, and empowering pathways for migrants.

In addition to addressing immediate needs, the *Fundão Action Plan* outlines initiatives to encourage socio-cultural exchange between newcomers and long-standing residents. This approach underscores Fundão's long-term goal of building a cohesive, inclusive, and economically robust community where all individuals have a stake in its future. Through mentorship programmes, cultural events, community spaces, and digital platforms, the plan not only facilitates migrant integration but also enriches the local social fabric, encouraging a shared sense of belonging across diverse groups.



# BACKGROUND AND POLICY CONTEXT

# BACKGROUND AND POLICY CONTEXT

## 1.1 FUNDÃO PROFILE

### Overview of the City and its Demographics

Fundão, situated on the northern slopes of Serra da Gardunha in central Portugal, spans approximately **700 km<sup>2</sup>**. This municipality is part of the Centro Region, with over half its territory lying in the fertile “Cova da Beira” valley, an area nourished by the Zêzere River. Originating in Serra da Estrela—the highest mountain range in mainland Portugal—the river contributes to the valley’s reputation as one of the country’s prime agricultural regions. The area’s elevation and latitude create a climate marked by hot, dry summers and cold, snowy winters, fostering a unique environment for agriculture, particularly fruit production. Fundão has a population of about 27,000 residents, with foreign nationals comprising roughly 4%. This diverse community includes seasonal agricultural workers, highly skilled professionals, and students, creating a multicultural atmosphere that enriches local culture and society.

Fundão’s identity has long been intertwined with migration. The town’s recorded history dates back to the late 15th century, when Jewish refugees fleeing the Spanish Inquisition found refuge in Fundão. This influx of skilled artisans and merchants played a key role in transforming the town into a centre of economic and cultural activity. This tradition of resilience and inclusivity has continued through the centuries, with migration remaining a central force in shaping the community’s evolution.

### Socioeconomic Background

Today, Fundão’s economy is supported by a diverse blend of agricultural, industrial, and technological sectors, positioning it as an economic hub in the region. The fertile lands of the Cova da Beira valley are particularly well-suited to cherry cultivation, making the “Cereja do Fundão” brand a symbol of both local and national pride. Approximately 300 cherry producers operate in the area, collectively generating annual revenues of around €2 million and employing up to 2,000 seasonal workers during harvest periods. This reliance on seasonal and migrant labour underscores the essential role of foreign workers in sustaining the region’s agricultural productivity.

In addition to agriculture, Fundão’s industrial landscape has expanded significantly in recent years, aided by public and private investments and municipal development initiatives. Key industries include precision metalworking, textile manufacturing (a tradition rooted in the region’s wool production heritage), and a growing technology and research cluster. The “Move to Fundão” programme has successfully attracted information and communication technology (ICT) companies, including over 850 software developers and engineers, 85% of whom are non-European. The establishment of industrial parks and a new business centre further underscores Fundão’s role as a regional hub for employment, drawing both local and international talent to the area.

### Fundão’s

#### natural beauty

and heritage have also fostered growth in tourism and hospitality, attracting individuals and families—particularly from other EU countries—who seek an alternative lifestyle focused on environmental sustainability and community living. The town’s commitment to welcoming newcomers is facilitated by the *Fundão Acolhe* initiative, which offers essential resources to help migrants with housing, employment, language acquisition, and social integration. This initiative reflects Fundão’s proactive stance on cultural integration, ensuring that newcomers feel supported as they settle into the community.

### A Model of Sustainable and Inclusive Growth

In every dimension—historical, economic, and cultural—Fundão embodies a model for low-density regions facing demographic and economic challenges. The municipality has managed to balance growth and modernisation with a strong commitment to social inclusivity and community cohesion. This approach has enabled Fundão to transform challenges, such as an ageing population and labour shortages, into opportunities by attracting and integrating migrants across various sectors. The town’s distinctive blend of tradition and innovation has not only reinforced its local economy but has also positioned Fundão as a leading example of sustainable community-building and integration within both Portugal and Europe.

# 1.2 TERRITORIAL DIAGNOSIS

## Fundão Municipality

Fundão municipality in Portugal occupies a geographically diverse area of 701.65 km<sup>2</sup>, encompassing 23 parishes. This creates a heterogeneous landscape, with significant variations in population density and accessibility between the urban centre and more remote areas. The map illustrates the distances between Fundão's urban centre and its parishes, revealing challenges in connectivity, especially in reaching outlying areas.



## Demographic Context:

Fundão exhibits a population density significantly below the national average (38.4% vs. 111.5%, PORDATA 2018). This low density is a longstanding issue, resulting from historical out-migration to larger urban centres (particularly Lisbon and Porto) and the continuous exodus of young people. The municipality's population displays a clear aging trend, with a declining proportion of younger people (0-14 years) and a rising proportion of older residents (65+ years). This demographic trend reflects broader European patterns, especially in less densely populated inland regions.

## Migration as a Counter-Trend:

Despite this, recent years have seen a notable increase in Fundão's migrant population. This rise is driven by several factors: a growing local economy (particularly in agriculture and industry) creating increased labour demand; successful cooperation initiatives with former Portuguese colonies facilitating access to education for international students; and Fundão's active participation in EU relocation programs and humanitarian efforts welcoming refugees and asylum seekers. Migrants come from a remarkably diverse range of countries, highlighting the multicultural nature of the community.

## Challenges and Opportunities:

This influx of migrants presents both opportunities and challenges. The aging population and low population density can place a strain on public resources and infrastructure, while the need for effective integration strategies and services is paramount. However, Fundão has successfully leveraged the arrival of migrants to address some labor shortages.

The municipality's strategic approach to integration recognizes these issues. Initiatives like the MIXin2 plan aim to foster economic development and mitigate demographic decline, creating a more inclusive, sustainable community. Data indicates the positive impact of this approach, showing progress towards integration even amid the considerable challenges of adapting to a diverse influx of residents.

Specifically, concerning employment, the economic impact of this migration is apparent. While there were labor shortages, it's notable that the average monthly number of unemployed individuals registered at job centers in Fundão dropped to 816 in 2020 — a significant 44% decrease compared to the 1,456 registered in 2009. This positive trend underscores the potential for economic growth and sustainability through successful migrant integration.



Area  
**701,65 km<sup>2</sup>**  
Population density  
**38 inhab/km<sup>2</sup>**

Nº of Parishes  
**23**



Resident population  
in 2021  
**26.509**

- 9,3%  
Variation compared to 2011



% of young population  
[0-14 years old]  
in 2021  
**10,1 %**

- 1,7 p.p.  
Variation compared to 2011



% of the populations + 65  
years old  
in 2021  
**32,5 %**

+ 1,6 p.p.  
Variation compared to 2011



% of the population  
[15-64 years old]  
in 2021  
**57,4 %**

- 3,1 p.p.  
Variation compared to 2011



Unemployed registered at  
IEFP  
(%) in 2020  
**5,1%**

5,8%  
Portugal

# 1.3 POLICY AND STRATEGIC CONTEXT

## National and EU Policy Framework for Migration

Portugal's migration policies rank among the most inclusive in Europe, guaranteeing migrants equal access to essential services such as healthcare, education, and employment. Overseen by the Portuguese Agency for Integration, Migration and Asylum (AIMA), these policies promote intercultural dialogue, social cohesion, and equal rights, while aiming to support local integration efforts. These national policies are closely aligned with the EU's Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027, which urges member states to empower local authorities to build inclusive communities and form partnerships with civil society and private sector stakeholders. This alignment has allowed Portugal to leverage EU resources effectively, enabling municipalities like Fundão to pioneer locally responsive, socially inclusive, and sustainable migration practices.

## Fundão's Integration Strategy Alignment

Fundão has taken a proactive, innovative approach to migrant integration under the guiding principle of "Fundão—Embracing Place". The municipality's strategy encompasses a suite of local initiatives under the *Fundão Acolhe* programme, which serves as a centralised integration platform that assists migrants with housing, employment, legal issues, and cultural adaptation. This comprehensive approach supports not only the immediate needs of newcomers but also fosters long-term inclusion, economic participation, and community cohesion.

Key components of Fundão's integration strategy include:

- **Migration Centre:** Established in 2016, this centre offers temporary housing, Portuguese language training, and support for finding long-term accommodation. Serving refugees, seasonal foreign workers, and students, the centre tailors services to diverse migrant backgrounds, promoting community integration through a structured support system.
- **Area for Migration and Reception (AMA):** This division of Fundão's municipal council, is responsible for enact the migration and integration strategy of the municipality. By managing the main infrastructures related to this area and design new projects and public policies adapted to the needs of the local migrant, refugee and Portuguese communities, it aims to facilitate social integration in order to ensure that migrants feel welcomed and respected, thereby reinforcing social cohesion.
- **Fundão's Local Support Centre for Migrant Integration (CLAIM Fundão):** As a service provided since 2006, CLAIM Fundão has the mission of providing free information and support throughout the entire process of welcoming and integrating foreign citizens. It is a place where migrants can find updated information on subjects such as regularization, nationality, family reunification, housing, employment, healthcare, education and professional training, social security, voluntary return or the European Union Registration Certificate (EUCR).
- **Social Support Network:** Fundão's Social Support Network integrates the efforts of public agencies, private organisations, and NGOs to provide a robust support system for migrants and vulnerable groups. Through partnerships with the Institute of Employment and Vocational Training (IEFP) and local businesses, the network offers vocational training and job placements, aligning migrants' skills with the local economy's needs. This

integrated approach enhances both economic inclusion and social stability.

## Awards and Recognition

Fundão's dedication to inclusion has earned it multiple awards and distinctions, positioning it as a benchmark for migrant integration within Portugal and Europe. Key awards include:

- **More Family-Friendly Municipality Award** (11 consecutive years), recognising Fundão's commitment to policies that support families, including migrant families.
- **Honourable Mention** in the Municipal Prize's category for *Arts, Heritage and Other Cultural Domains* for the *Citizenship School - António Guterres House of Memories*, reflecting Fundão's dedication to inclusive education and cultural heritage.
- **RegioStars Award 2018** for the *Shared Business and Services Centre*, recognising the project's impact on job creation and economic growth.
- **European Capital of Inclusion and Diversity 2023**, celebrating Fundão's inclusive, multicultural policies.
- **URBACT Good Practice Award 2024** for *Fundão Acolhe: Centre for the Empowerment of Third Country Nationals*, highlighting Fundão's leadership in urban integration.

## Strategic Alignment with National and EU Policies

Fundão's strategic integration approach aligns closely with national and EU frameworks, creating a well-coordinated structure that maximises both local and international resources. By incorporating EU best practices and national guidance, Fundão has developed a resilient, inclusive model that transforms migration challenges into community strengths. The municipality's holistic approach to integration—centred on legal assistance, employment support, housing access, and cultural exchange—illustrates how locally adapted policies can foster economic resilience, social cohesion, and mutual understanding. Fundão's success not only strengthens its own community but also serves as an inspiring example for other European municipalities striving to create inclusive, vibrant, and sustainable communities.



## 1.4 SWOT ANALYSIS

# SWOT



### STRENGTHS

Recognised as the EU Capital of Inclusion and Diversity, underscoring Fundão's role as a leader in migrant integration.

A strong support structure for migrants, including a dedicated Migration Centre, housing assistance, and language courses.

Effective partnerships with local businesses and educational institutions, providing diverse employment and training opportunities for newcomers.



### WEAKNESSES

Insufficient affordable housing options to meet the rising demand from an expanding migrant population.

Language and cultural barriers that can slow full integration and participation in the community.

Limited local resources in healthcare and education to fully accommodate the needs of an increasing population.



### OPPORTUNITIES

Potential to further enhance Fundão's reputation as a model city for migrant integration, attracting more investment and skilled migrants.

Opportunities to strengthen regional partnerships, aligning with nearby municipalities to create a coordinated approach to migration challenges.

Participation in EU networks and programmes like URBACT and WELDI, enabling access to funding, best practices, and innovative solutions for integration.



### THREATS

Potential social tensions from rapid demographic shifts and cultural changes, which require proactive community engagement.

Political mobilisation against migration/ migrants – this has emerged as a political strategy even in areas with very low diversity.

Dependence on EU and national funding, with risks associated with potential cuts to financial support.

Strain on local infrastructure and services, particularly housing, healthcare, and education, as the population continues to grow.

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# FUNDÃO & THE WELDI PROJECT

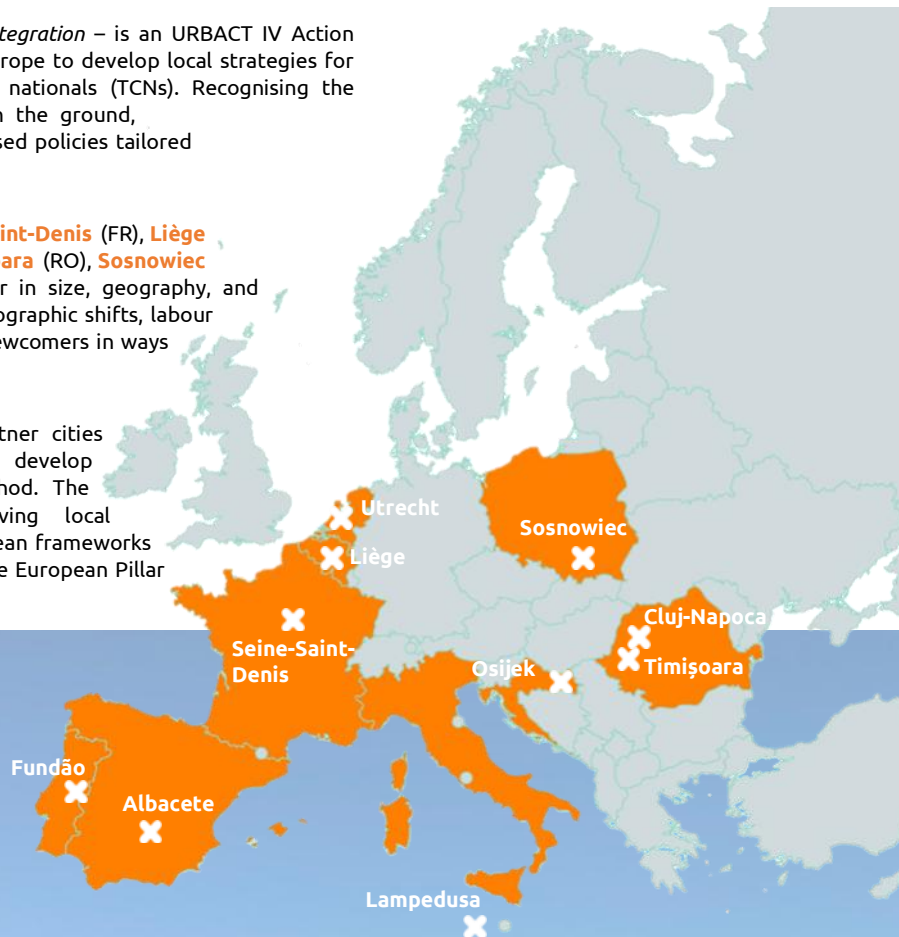
# FUNDÃO & THE WELDI PROJECT

## 2.1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

WELDI – *Welcome and Empowerment for Local Dignified Integration* – is an URBACT IV Action Planning Network that brings together ten cities across Europe to develop local strategies for the dignified reception and integration of third-country nationals (TCNs). Recognising the growing role of municipalities in managing migration on the ground, WELDI empowers cities to build inclusive, human-rights-based policies tailored to their local contexts.

The network includes **Utrecht** (NL – Lead Partner), **Seine-Saint-Denis** (FR), **Liège** (BE), **Lampedusa** (IT), **Osijek** (HR), **Cluj-Napoca and Timișoara** (RO), **Sosnowiec** (PL), **Albacete** (ES), and **Fundão** (PT). These cities differ in size, geography, and institutional capacities but share common challenges: demographic shifts, labour market needs, housing shortages, and the integration of newcomers in ways that foster social cohesion and resilience.

WELDI offers a transnational learning space where partner cities exchange experiences, co-create tools, and collectively develop Integrated Action Plans (IAPs) using the URBACT method. The network promotes joined-up governance by involving local stakeholders and linking local strategies to broader European frameworks such as the EU Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion, the European Pillar of Social Rights, and the New Leipzig Charter.



Weldi WEBSITE



#### LOCAL ACTION GROUP (LAG)

In every URBACT network, each city partner is tasked with establishing a Local Action Group (LAG) to convene all key local stakeholders involved in addressing the chosen challenge that the city aims to tackle. These stakeholders are actively encouraged to engage in the formulation and execution of urban development strategies. By fostering collaboration among partners to address a specific issue and facilitating the exchange of experiences on a transnational scale, the Local Action Group ensures a more robust and inventive outcome, culminating in the co-creation of a Local Action Plan.

#### INTEGRATED ACTION PLAN (IAP)

An Integrated or Local Action Plan (IAP) is a strategic document that addresses identified needs, analyzes problems and opportunities, and presents sustainable and viable solutions. Every partner city within the URBACT network is required to develop an IAP, which can be structured in various formats. Primarily, the Local Action Plan serves as a practical and effective tool for the city to address a local issue and/or enhance a local situation. In the URBACT framework, the Local Action Plan emerges from the participatory process of the URBACT Local Action Group.

#### BUDGET - ACTION PLANNING NETWORKS

The budgets allocated to action-planning networks are designated for learning, exchange, and planning activities, rather than investment purposes.

### TIMELINE

**30 MONTHS**

1 JUN 2023 - 31 DEC 2025

**Beneficiaries**  
**10** Cities

### WELDI network budget

**849.943,50€**

626.810,93€ supported by ERDF

### Municipality of Fundão budget

**64.450,00€**

80% co-financed by ERDF

Building on this collaborative and transnational foundation, the WELDI network embraces the understanding that integration is not a linear process nor a matter of national borders alone, but a multidimensional and place-based challenge. Cities and territories are not merely implementing actors of national migration policies; they are political and social spaces where access to rights is negotiated and where newcomers can either experience inclusion or exclusion in their daily lives. In this context, the WELDI Integrated Action Plans (IAPs) aim to translate shared principles into tangible, locally tailored strategies. Rather than adopting a one-size-fits-all approach, each city is encouraged to diagnose its own needs and opportunities, engage stakeholders through participatory methods, and design practical solutions that reflect both lived realities and long-term ambitions. This local anchoring is balanced with a strong translocal perspective: while each IAP is place-specific, it is also enriched by the collective intelligence, peer support and shared tools developed within the WELDI network.

A key premise of WELDI is that integration must be understood through a human-rights lens, where access to housing, education, health, and employment is not contingent on legal status, and where all residents are recognised as rights-holders and contributors to the urban fabric. Moreover, WELDI partners acknowledge that integration is a two-way process—requiring action not only from migrants, but also from institutions and host societies to remove barriers, address systemic discrimination, and reimagine inclusive governance models.

To guide this work, the network conducted an in-depth baseline analysis and exchange process, through which a set of thematic priorities emerged. These themes reflect areas where cities have both responsibilities and capacities to act, and where targeted interventions can make a meaningful difference in promoting dignity, participation and cohesion. They also serve as a shared compass across the network, helping to structure learning exchanges, capacity-building, and the development of local IAPs.

#### - LOCALISING HUMAN RIGHTS

Embedding human rights principles across all local policies and services—ensuring access to healthcare, education, housing, and protection regardless of legal status.

#### - HOUSING AND SHELTER

Improving access to decent, affordable, and stable housing through inclusive policies, temporary solutions, mediation, and partnerships with public and private actors.

#### - EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Supporting access to the labour market, recognition of qualifications, entrepreneurship, and training—particularly for those in precarious or informal work.

#### - ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

Ensuring migrants can access primary and preventive healthcare, with attention to cultural mediation, language support, and public health inclusion.

#### - ACCESS TO EDUCATION

Facilitating inclusive and continuous learning opportunities, from early childhood to adult education and language acquisition.

#### - COMMUNICATION AND ANTI-PREJUDICE CAMPAIGNS

Challenging stereotypes, promoting balanced narratives about migration, and fostering empathy and civic solidarity.

#### - SOCIAL COHESION AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE

Creating opportunities for interaction between migrants and host communities through culture, sport, community events and everyday encounters.

#### - PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE AND CO-CREATION

Recognising migrants as active agents in policy design and implementation through participatory processes, advisory bodies, and co-managed initiatives.

#### - COORDINATED LOCAL GOVERNANCE

Improving cross-sector coordination and collaboration among municipal departments, civil society, and external stakeholders to deliver more coherent services.

#### - ADVOCACY AND MULTILEVEL ACTION

Strengthening the voice of cities in regional, national and European debates on migration and integration, and building alliances for systemic change.

These thematic areas are intended to inspire, structure and connect the work of the WELDI cities. While each municipality will select and adapt those most relevant to its context, the overall goal remains the same: to advance a model of dignified, inclusive and sustainable local integration—one that is not only reactive but proactive, not only about service delivery but about rights, participation and belonging.

The next sections of this IAP explore how these themes have been explored and prioritised locally in Fundão, and how they will be operationalised through a concrete set of actions developed in close collaboration with local stakeholders and migrant communities.

### THEMES TO CHOOSE FOR THE 10 WELDI ACTION PLAN

Developing local strategies that ensure inclusion and strengthen community resilience.



RESULT .....

IMPROVE INCLUSION AND INTEGRATION

## 2.2 MIGRATION LANDSCAPE IN FUNDÃO

In recent years, Fundão has witnessed a transformation in its demographic and social landscape, driven by the steady arrival of migrants with diverse backgrounds, motivations, and legal statuses. While still a relatively small proportion of the total population—currently estimated at 4 to 5%—the presence of third-country nationals (TCNs) is increasingly visible in the local economy, education system, and social fabric.

The current migration landscape in Fundão reflects a complex interplay of structural needs and humanitarian responsibilities. On one hand, labour market demands—particularly in agriculture, agroindustry, food processing, construction, and the tech sector—have encouraged the recruitment of migrant workers, often through bilateral agreements and ethical recruitment channels. On the other hand, Fundão has consistently responded to international humanitarian appeals by hosting refugees, asylum seekers, and victims of trafficking—including families rescued from the Mediterranean, individuals fleeing armed conflicts (such as those from Ukraine and Afghanistan), and workers affected by exploitative conditions.

Migrants arriving in Fundão today encompass a broad variety of profiles and motives of arrival, including:

- **seasonal agricultural workers** from Nepal, India, Bangladesh, Guinea-Bissau, and Morocco;
- **ICT professionals**, largely from Brazil, Nigeria, and South Asia, recruited through the "Move to Fundão" strategy;
- **students from Portuguese-speaking countries** such as Angola, São Tomé and Príncipe, Guinea-Bissau, and Timor-Leste;
- **refugees and beneficiaries of temporary protection** from Ukraine, Afghanistan (representing one of the largest hosted communities), Syria, Iraq, Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo;
- **individuals seeking family reunification, employment opportunities, or simply a better quality of life in a peaceful, low-cost environment.**

The motivations behind their migration to Fundão are equally diverse. While some are drawn by economic opportunity or the possibility of continuing their education, others arrive in search of safety, stability, and legal protection. Many choose Fundão due to its reputation as a safe, inclusive, and proactive municipality that offers personalised support, simplified access to services, and a strong sense of local welcome. The existence of platforms such as **Fundão Acolhe**, the quality of social support, and the lower cost of living compared to large urban centres all play a role in this decision.

This diversity presents a set of specific challenges for local planning and service provision. Beyond immediate reception needs, Fundão must address long-term concerns such as housing stability, recognition of foreign qualifications, access to public healthcare, childcare for working families, and social cohesion in both urban and rural settings. The presence of unaccompanied minors and young adult migrants further demands specialised responses in education, youth work, and mental health support.



The **Migration Municipal Centre**, created in 2016 and managed by the **Area for Migration and Reception (AMA)**, is the cornerstone of Fundão's local migration system. It adopts a

phased approach covering reception, integration, and autonomisation, including language and cultural training, administrative and legal guidance, psychosocial support, and vocational skills development. Each beneficiary is supported through an individualised plan that reflects their personal goals, background, and integration potential. These efforts are complemented by the **Fundão Acolhe** platform, which acts as a digital gateway to services and information in multiple languages.

Migration flows have also begun to reach outlying rural areas and peripheral parishes, resulting in new patterns of settlement and spontaneous occupation of underused housing stock. While this trend creates challenges—particularly in terms of service access and mobility—it also opens new avenues for rural regeneration and demographic renewal. In some localities, the arrival of migrant families has helped keep schools open, revitalised social spaces, and restored economic activity.

Overall, Fundão's migration strategy is not based on temporary or reactive measures, but rather on a long-term territorial vision. The ongoing cycle of Municipal Integration Plans—**MIXin**, **MIXin2**, and now **MIXin3**—has created a platform for institutional learning, capacity-building, and innovation. From intercultural training for municipal staff to mentorship networks and informal language groups, the municipality has worked to normalise diversity and promote community ownership of inclusion.

While challenges remain—especially with respect to housing, transportation, and systemic discrimination—the current migration landscape in Fundão points towards an evolution from fragmented responses to a comprehensive and sustainable integration model. Migration is no longer viewed merely as a necessity but as an opportunity: a central pillar in building a more resilient, dynamic, and future-ready Fundão.





## 2.3 SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS

In Fundão, social integration is embraced as a continuous and dynamic two-way process, rooted in mutual respect, dignity and active participation. Rather than being viewed as a final objective, integration is understood as an evolving journey where both newcomers and host communities shape a shared sense of belonging.

### Core services and infrastructure

The Fundão Acolhe platform serves as the backbone of the municipal integration model, facilitating cooperation between the Council's Inclusion & Diversity Office (GID), NGOs, educational institutions, local employers and intercultural mediators. Within this structure, the Local Support Centre for Migrant Integration (CLAIM), based at the Migration Centre in the historic Seminary building, provides personalised, free-of-charge support encompassing documentation, family reunification, nationality processes, healthcare, education and employment. For more remote areas, the "On Wheels" mobile service takes CLAIM's services—admin, documentation, health orientation, housing and employment advice—directly into parishes via teams of trained intercultural mediators.

### Cultural inclusion & community engagement

Fundão strongly values informal, peer-to-peer cultural exchange. Initiatives like SPEAK Fundão foster language practice, cross-cultural dialogues and inclusion through shared experiences. Meanwhile, public celebrations of diversity—such as Diwali, Ramadan, International Migrants Day and local festivals—actively involve migrant communities in their design and delivery. These events reinforce intercultural bonds, challenge stereotypes, and affirm the municipality's recognition of cultural plurality.

### Education, youth & skills development

Aided by the Migration Centre and the "Welcome to School" initiative, local schools in Fundão provide tailored integration pathways for migrant children through adapted curricula, mentoring programmes, language support, and emotional wellbeing services. In parallel, adult learners benefit from vocational training and digital upskilling opportunities, as well as employability workshops aligned with regional sectors such as agriculture, ICT, and services. This comprehensive lifelong learning approach led to Fundão's inclusion in the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities as of 2024. These efforts are

further reinforced by professional integration mechanisms, notably the "Fundão Acolhe" Training Centre for Third-Country Nationals, which received recognition from the European Commission in 2024.

### Intercultural mediation

The award winning Fundão MEDEIA programme enlists intercultural mediators—many with migration backgrounds—to support newcomers in everyday tasks such as GP visits and tax procedures. Their role enhances trust, improves access to services, and fosters ownership and agency among migrants.

### Participatory governance and social network

Fundão's Social Network brings together municipal services, schools, civil society, employers and migrant representatives to co-design integration policies. Through surveys, focus groups, advisory forums and events, Fundão ensures the direct participation of migrants in strategic decision-making.

### Ongoing challenges

- **HOUSING:** demand remains high amid limited supply, necessitating creative solutions.
- **TRANSPORT:** rural mobility links are often constrained.
- **LANGUAGE & VOCATIONAL PATHWAYS:** require deeper investment for specialist sectors.
- **COMBATTING DISCRIMINATION** through anti-racism training, awareness campaigns and inclusive frameworks.

### Scaling through WELDI

Fundão's aim—through the WELDI IAP—is to consolidate this locally tailored integration system into a transferable, rights-based model. Building on successes such as CLAIM, "On Wheels", SPEAK Fundão, Fundão MEDEIA, and the migrant training centre, the WELDI Action Plan will transition good practice into policy, creating a rural integration model that is inclusive, replicable and sustainability oriented. The overarching ambition is clear: to weave migration into the future of Fundão, recognising it as a vital asset for community resilience, innovation and cohesion.

# ACTION PLAN

## DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

# ACTION PLAN

## DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

### 3.1 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The development of Fundão's Integrated Action Plan (IAP) under the WELDI project has been guided by the URBACT methodology, anchored in a collaborative, participatory and place-based process. Building on the principles of co-creation and locally anchored policy-making, the municipality designed an inclusive pathway to structure the strategic vision and actions for dignified integration.

The process was not linear. It evolved through ongoing conversations with migrants, public service staff and community members. The existing Municipal Plan (MIXin3) provided a strong foundation, while the WELDI project helped bring in more experimentation, co-creation and focus on young people.

The foundation of this methodology is the creation of a **Local Action Group (ULG)**, a multidisciplinary body composed of public institutions, NGOs, migrant associations, employers, intercultural mediators, and educational actors. This group played a decisive role not only in diagnosing challenges but also in identifying opportunities and shaping concrete solutions.

The development process was structured around five key phases:

- 1. Establishment of the Local Action Group.** The first step involved forming a committed and representative group of stakeholders, including individuals with lived migration experience, tasked with driving the IAP process and ensuring a diversity of perspectives.
- 2. Diagnosis and Problem Definition.** Through a series of workshops, interviews, and field visits, the ULG engaged in a deep territorial diagnosis, identifying systemic challenges affecting migrants' access to rights, services, and opportunities. This phase placed emphasis on disaggregated data and first-hand testimonies to expose hidden barriers, particularly in rural and remote areas.
- 3. Co-design of Vision and Objectives.** Guided by the themes of the WELDI network—such as access to housing, education, healthcare, participatory governance, and anti-discrimination—the ULG co-developed a locally tailored vision for integration in Fundão. Objectives were defined to balance short-term needs and long-term structural change, drawing from both good practices and gaps in existing provision.
- 4. Definition of Actions and Resources.** Based on the vision, the ULG elaborated a strategic framework of actions, each linked to specific outcomes, responsible actors, indicators, timeframes, and potential funding sources. Special care was taken to ensure the feasibility and sustainability of proposed actions, and to integrate them with existing local and regional policies (such as Fundão Acolhe, MIXin, and the Intercultural Strategy).
- 5. Validation and Communication** The draft IAP was shared widely with local stakeholders, including migrants and community-based organisations, through public sessions and targeted consultations. Feedback was incorporated into the final document to enhance legitimacy and accountability. The Plan will be launched in a public event, accompanied by a communication campaign to raise awareness and encourage civic ownership.

**The methodology behind Fundão's WELDI Action Plan shows that inclusive integration is possible when local actors, including migrants, co-create solutions grounded in real needs. This participatory approach has produced not just a plan, but a shared commitment to building a community where everyone belongs and contributes.**



## 3.2 COMMUNITY-LED (BOTTOM-UP) APPROACH

The URBACT Local Group (ULG) of Fundão has been a key structure in the development of the WELDI Integrated Action Plan, ensuring a truly bottom-up and inclusive process, consistent with the URBACT methodology. It brought together a diverse range of stakeholders—from public institutions and schools to migrant associations, NGOs, employers, healthcare providers, and intercultural mediators—reflecting the real dynamics of local integration.

The group was carefully structured to represent critical sectors including inclusion and diversity, education, social welfare, employment, housing, and health. Notably, the direct participation of migrants—whether as parents, workers, students, or youth—was prioritised throughout, ensuring that decisions were informed by lived experience rather than assumptions.

Between January 2024 and December 2025, the ULG held seven formal meetings, each aligned with a key phase of the URBACT Action Planning Cycle: diagnosis, visioning, co-design of actions, resource identification, and validation. These sessions combined workshops, field visits, and feedback discussions. Additional informal consultations and interviews were carried out to reach under-represented voices, particularly women and youth in rural parishes.

The ULG's contributions had tangible impacts on the Action Plan. The group helped identify critical gaps in housing access, mobility, and service delivery; raised awareness of emerging needs like digital inclusion and psychosocial support; and co-developed solutions such as a multilingual digital platform, mobile intercultural mediation services, and decentralised information access points. All proposals were developed in synergy with existing municipal strategies such as Fundão Acolhe and MIXin3.

Beyond the plan itself, the ULG also fostered a culture of cooperation and co-responsibility, reinforcing Fundão's commitment to inclusive local governance. The municipality plans to maintain the group beyond the life of the project, formalising it as a standing advisory body on migration and inclusion. This will ensure continuity, accountability, and the sustained participation of migrant communities in shaping public policy.

### Fundão Local Action Group **WELDI**

#### POLITICAL ENTITIES: MUNICIPALITY OF FUNDÃO

Area for Migration and Reception (AMA)

Division of Innovation and Investment | Housing Stock

CLAIM Fundão | Migration Centre

#### REGIONAL AUTHORITY FOR STRUCTURAL FUNDS & POLICY IMPLEMENTATION:

CCDR—Coordination Committee for Regional Development of Centro region

#### EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS:

Fundão Schools Group | Centro Qualifica +

Gardunha and Xisto Schools Group

Fundão Professional School

University of Beira Interior (UBI)

#### HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS

ULS Cova da Beira

ICAD – Integrated Response Centre of Castelo Branco (CRI Castelo Branco)

UCCF Community Care Units of Fundão

#### EMPLOYERS AND BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVES :

TWINTEX

BL Consulting

#### MIGRANT-LED ASSOCIATIONS AND COMMUNITIES :

Association for the Support of Brazucas and Friends (AABA)

Intercultural mediators



## 3.3 LEARNING FROM THE EUROPEAN CONTEXT

Fundão's participation in the URBACT WELDI network has significantly strengthened its approach to migrant integration by embedding it within a broader European framework of peer learning, shared principles and reciprocal inspiration. While Fundão brought to the network a mature and place-based strategy for welcoming newcomers, WELDI provided a unique platform to critically reflect on that model, enhance it through transnational input, and project it beyond local borders.

**Fundão's own Thematic Exchange (TEX)—on access to decent work**—was delivered fully online, in accordance with the network's initial planning and by decision of the Lead Partner. Despite the limitations of the virtual format, it enabled strong partner engagement and showcased Fundão's integrated ecosystem of responses—such as the AMIF-funded training centre, the Migration Centre, and partnerships with employers like Twintex. However, it was through active participation in other cities' in situ exchanges that Fundão gained the most significant inspiration to refine and expand its local integration strategy.

Fundão participated in person in the **TEX in Albacete (April 2024)**, which focused on **housing exclusion and labour market exploitation**, particularly in the context of seasonal agricultural workers. The visit to temporary housing initiatives managed by Cáritas, and the exchange with the Technical Inclusion Team, highlighted the interdependence of shelter, employment rights and health access. These insights **informed Fundão's ambition to reinforce temporary accommodation offers and ethical recruitment** pathways, complementing its existing measures for migrant workers

The TEX in **Lampedusa (October 2024)** was another key moment, where Fundão's delegation engaged with **trauma-informed reception, emergency healthcare coordination, and psychosocial support practices**. Interactions with frontline professionals, including the Red Cross and Palermo's health services, demonstrated how reception conditions deeply affect migrants' mental health and long-term well-being. These exchanges reinforced **Fundão's existing commitment to psychological support**, validating the integrated work already carried out at the Migration Centre and encouraging the municipality to further strengthen its approach—particularly for minors, survivors of trafficking, and others facing long-term vulnerability.

Equally important was Fundão's on-site participation in **Osijek (November 2023)**, where partners exchanged early-stage priorities and explored strategies for **coordinating local actors and setting up inclusive URBACT Local Groups**. The interaction with Osijek's refugee support system, shaped by successive waves of Ukrainian and earlier war refugees, offered Fundão an opportunity to reflect on coordination across services and on the importance of municipal leadership in times of demographic and humanitarian change.



Fundão also took part in person in the thematic **visit to Seine-Saint-Denis**, where the focus was on **multi-level governance and access to services in deprived urban areas**. The experience demonstrated how civil society alliances and political will can co-create effective models of outreach and access to health, housing and legal advice for undocumented migrants. This inspired Fundão to reinforce its collaboration with NGOs and mediators, and to adapt aspects of urban integration models to a rural context.

By contrast, the **TEX in Liège (December 2024) was held online**, focusing on **"city cards" as tools for access to rights and civic inclusion**. Even remotely, Fundão gained valuable insights from the cases of Liège, Utrecht and Sosnowiec, and began exploring how the **Fundão Acolhe platform might evolve** to offer user-friendly identification and connection to local services for all residents, regardless of legal status.

Throughout the project, Fundão benefited from the WELDI network's **well-structured learning mechanisms**: detailed agendas, field visit summaries, breakout sessions, recordings and follow-up materials allowed the municipality **to absorb and adapt a wide range of practices**. These were discussed and processed within Fundão's URBACT Local Group (ULG), ensuring that transnational inspiration was translated into locally relevant actions. New priorities have since emerged—such as expanding housing models, enhancing health and trauma care, and using digital tools to promote inclusion—which now feed directly into the city's Integrated Action Plan.

At the same time, **Fundão contributed actively to the learning of others**. Its **rural and decentralised model**, built on proximity services, flexible coordination and long-term political commitment, offered an example of **how small municipalities can create robust, rights-based integration systems**. Practices such as the mobile **"On Wheels" support service**, **Fundão MEDEIA** mediation programme and the reuse of rural buildings for housing and training were acknowledged by network partners as adaptable and innovative.

In conclusion, **WELDI has enabled Fundão to benchmark, challenge and enrich its integration model**, while contributing to a shared European knowledge base. The combined value of on-site learning, online exchanges, and structured peer feedback has positioned Fundão to deliver an Integrated Action Plan that is territorially grounded, socially inclusive and strategically ambitious—anchored in the belief that **welcoming territories are essential to the future of Europe**.





**CENTRO PARA AS MIGRAÇÕES  
DO FUNDÃO**  
MIGRATION CENTER

**STRATEGIC ACTIONS**  
**FOR FUNDÃO UNDER WELDI**

# STRATEGIC ACTIONS FOR FUNDÃO UNDER WELDI

## 4.1 TESTING ACTION

**Title:** *Conversas a Propósito – Fostering Inclusive Narration Through Community Voices*

**Period:** February – June 2025

**Lead Entity:** Municipality of Fundão

**Partners:** Rádio Cova da Beira, Fundão Music Incubator, local schools, health services, IEPF, Migration Centre, migrant associations

**Framework:** WELDI (Work Package 3)

**Budget:** 10.000,00 €

The Municipality of Fundão, within the framework of the WELDI project, designed and implemented a **Testing Action** focused on the creation and dissemination of a podcast series titled *Conversas a Propósito*.

This initiative sought to **foster inclusion and strengthen social cohesion** by bringing **migrant voices to the forefront**, alongside those of local professionals directly involved in the integration process. Grounded in the belief that personal stories are powerful tools for building empathy and public awareness, the podcast promoted a **human-centred approach** to migration and belonging.

Fundão is widely recognised for its active commitment to welcoming newcomers and promoting rural innovation. Rather than focusing solely on technical procedures or policy frameworks, this Testing Action prioritised **real-life narratives** as a means of encouraging community reflection and reinforcing inclusive values. The podcast served as a **local communication experiment** — low-cost, flexible, and emotionally resonant.



SSA PODCAST

CONVERSAS

A

PROPÓSITO

The main objectives of the action were:

- To **give visibility to the experiences of migrants** living in Fundão;
- To **highlight the role of the Portuguese language** as a tool for inclusion;
- To **engage schools, public services and civil society organisations** in the integration narrative;
- To create an **educational and communicative resource** that can be reused and adapted.

The **podcast series consists of 10 short episodes** (approximately 10 minutes each), recorded at the **Fundão Music Incubator** and edited by **Rádio Cova da Beira**. Each episode brought together **testimonies from migrants** and contributions from institutional stakeholders, covering key themes such as education, civic participation, employment, health, and cultural identity.

Content was disseminated via the **municipal website (fundaoacolhe.pt)**, local social media channels and the radio's digital platform. Without relying on large-scale public events, the action achieved strong reach and relevance through school distribution, professional networks, and community sharing platforms.

The podcast format proved highly effective in engaging the public and creating a space for respectful and authentic dialogue. Shared across multiple channels, the episodes have reached **over 10,000 listeners**, with particularly high engagement in those featuring direct migrant testimonies. The Testing Action clearly demonstrated the **power of narrative in supporting integration in a rural setting**, offering a replicable and scalable model aligned with WELDI's goals of **empowering small towns to act as inclusive and communicative territories**.

## EPISODE OVERVIEW

### 🎧 Episode 0 – International Migration Week

Guests: Alcina Cerdeira (Councillor), Dina Matos (Director of the Municipal Library), Gabriel AV (Artist), Gina Baptista (Matriz)

Content: **Introduces the podcast series and highlights Fundão's International Migration Week**

Impact: Positions the podcast as a central communication tool for the week's agenda .

Total number of views (as of September 2025): 10 900

### 🎧 Episode 1 – Education and School Integration

Guests: Shaista Momand (Afghan student), Vanessa Gil (EMAEI), Nuno Fians (President of the Student Association of the Fundão School Cluster), Sónia Martins (Parents' Association)

Content: **School as a place of welcome. The importance of language, teacher support, and inclusive practices.**

Impact: Shared with school communities; used in classrooms.

Total number of views (as of September 2025): 11 400

### 🎧 Episode 2 – Migrant Youth

Guests: Fedir Romanenko, young Ukrainian judo athlete ), Sérgio Carvalho (Judo teacher), Gibril (youth team of Clube Académico do Fundão (CAF) ), Ângelo Bernardo, coach of the youth team of Clube Académico do Fundão (CAF)

Content: **Challenges Faced by Young Migrants in the field of sports**

Impact: How sports foster inclusion and resilience among young migrants, while raising awareness of their challenges.

Total number of views (as of September 2025): 9 500

### 🎧 Episode 3 – Employment and Language

Guests: Isabel Barrau (IEFP), Jorge Bonifácio (Qualifica Centre), Yulia Ivashchenko (Ukrainian mediator), Cláudia Canatário (Gardunha and Xisto School Cluster (AEGX))

Content: **How language opens doors to the job market. Importance of mediation.**

Impact: Highest number of listens; used by job counsellors.

Total number of views (as of September 2025): 10 700

### 🎧 Episode 4 – Health and Wellbeing

Guests: Bárbara Marques (psychologist), Filomena Correia and Inês Branco (nurses)

Content: **Trauma, communication in health, trust between migrant patients and local staff.**

Impact: Shared among nurses and care professionals.

Total number of views (as of September 2025): 5 200



## Episode 5 – Cultural Mediation and Identity

Guests: Ranju Mall (mediator from India), Vanessa Yhaga and Babitida Nhamru (Mediators from Portuguese-speaking African Countries (PALOP), Khatuna Sanderson (mediator from Georgia)

Content: **The role of cultural mediators in the reception and integration of newcomers .**

Impact: How cultural mediators build trust, empower newcomers and enrich communities through intercultural dialogue.

Total number of views (as of September 2025): 5 200



## Episode 6 – Local community and associations

Guests: Tatiana Fuentes (Association for Brazuca Support and Friends (AABA), Marco Gabriel (Beira Serra), Jaspreet Singh (Migrant from northern India)

Content: **Highlights how local networks and associations support migrants through practical help and emotional connection.**

Impact: Emphasises the importance of community-led support in fostering belonging and inclusion.

Total number of views (as of September 2025): 3 400



## Episode 7 – Local Leadership and Migration Policy

Guests: Paulo Fernandes (Mayor of Fundão)

Content: **Mayor Paulo Fernandes reflects on key issues related to migration in the municipality of Fundão, including the motivation behind applying to the URBACT programme and the importance of creating inclusive policies at local level.**

Impact: The episode provides institutional perspective and political context for the podcast series, underlining the municipality's long-term commitment to inclusion and its leadership role in European cooperation on migration.

Total number of views (as of September 2025): 5 200



## Episode 8 – Culture and Interculturality

Date: September 2025

Content: **This episode explores how migrants contribute to and participate in the local cultural life of Fundão, including festivals, artistic initiatives, and intercultural dialogue spaces.**

Impact: Highlights the role of cultural participation in creating bridges between communities and promoting a shared sense of belonging.



## Episode 9 – Employment and Vocational Training

Date: October 2025

Content: **Focuses on employment opportunities, vocational training pathways, and how migrants can access and benefit from local and national qualification systems.**

Impact: Provides useful guidance to listeners while reinforcing the importance of skills development and labour market inclusion as pillars of integration.



## Episode 10 – Community Life

Date: November 2025

Content: **Discusses everyday life in Fundão and how migrants engage in community-building, neighbourly relations, local volunteering, and informal support networks.**

Impact: Emphasises the importance of social interaction and local solidarity in fostering a welcoming environment beyond institutional support.

## Episode 11 – WELDI Good Practices and Final Reflections

Date: December 2025

Guests: Filipa Batista and Micaela Gil

Content: **This final episode presents successful practices developed through the WELDI project in Fundão, including a public overview of the IAP and reflections on the project's closure.**

Impact: Serves as a synthesis of the podcast and project journey, celebrating achievements and reinforcing Fundão's role as a reference in rural inclusion at the European level.



Looking ahead, the Municipality of Fundão plans to complete the remaining four episodes of the *Conversas a Propósito* podcast by the end of 2025, addressing additional themes such as Culture and Interculturality, Employment and Vocational Training, Community Life and WELDI Good Practices and Final Reflections. The podcast content already produced will be integrated into teacher training programmes, awareness-raising initiatives, and workshops for public service professionals, ensuring its continued use and long-term value at the local level

Fundão also intends to explore **additional funding opportunities**, including national and European programmes such as **AMIF and Erasmus+**, to sustain and potentially expand the scope of the initiative.

In conclusion, *Conversas a Propósito* has proven to be **a practical, accessible, and impactful communication tool** that supports integration in small-town settings. By centring the voices of migrants and encouraging institutional participation, the SSA has helped build bridges, increase empathy, and promote a more inclusive narrative across the territory. Fundão reaffirms its role as a **proactive and welcoming municipality**, and this action stands as a **replicable model** for other rural or medium-sized towns seeking to enhance their integration strategies through human-centred storytelling.

#### Communication and Reach

**Over 10 000 plays/listens across the each episodes**

High engagement in episodes 1, 3 and 5 (where migrant voices were central)

Shared **with family and communities in the countries of origin** of participants

Widely distributed in local networks, schools, and WhatsApp groups

Positive feedback on accessibility, emotion, and relevance



The testimonies they give us are in this sense

## 4.2 INTEGRATED ACTION PLAN (IAP)

### *From shared vision to practical actions*

The IAP builds on the work of the URBACT Local Group, combining inputs from previous plans (such as MIXin3), lived experiences of migrants, and lessons from pilot actions tested during the project.

This plan is not just a collection of actions. It reflects a shared vision of inclusion shaped by Fundão's identity as a rural town committed to human rights, innovation and social cohesion. The proposed actions aim to turn that vision into reality — linking what already exists with what still needs to be done.

Actions were co-designed to reflect the voices of migrant residents, frontline workers, youth, and public officials. Special attention was given to ensure that each action is practical, realistic and tailored to Fundão's scale and territorial challenges.

The IAP is organised around five strategic themes:



Under each theme, the IAP presents a small set of well-defined actions. Some build on existing practices; others are new pilot initiatives designed to fill identified gaps.

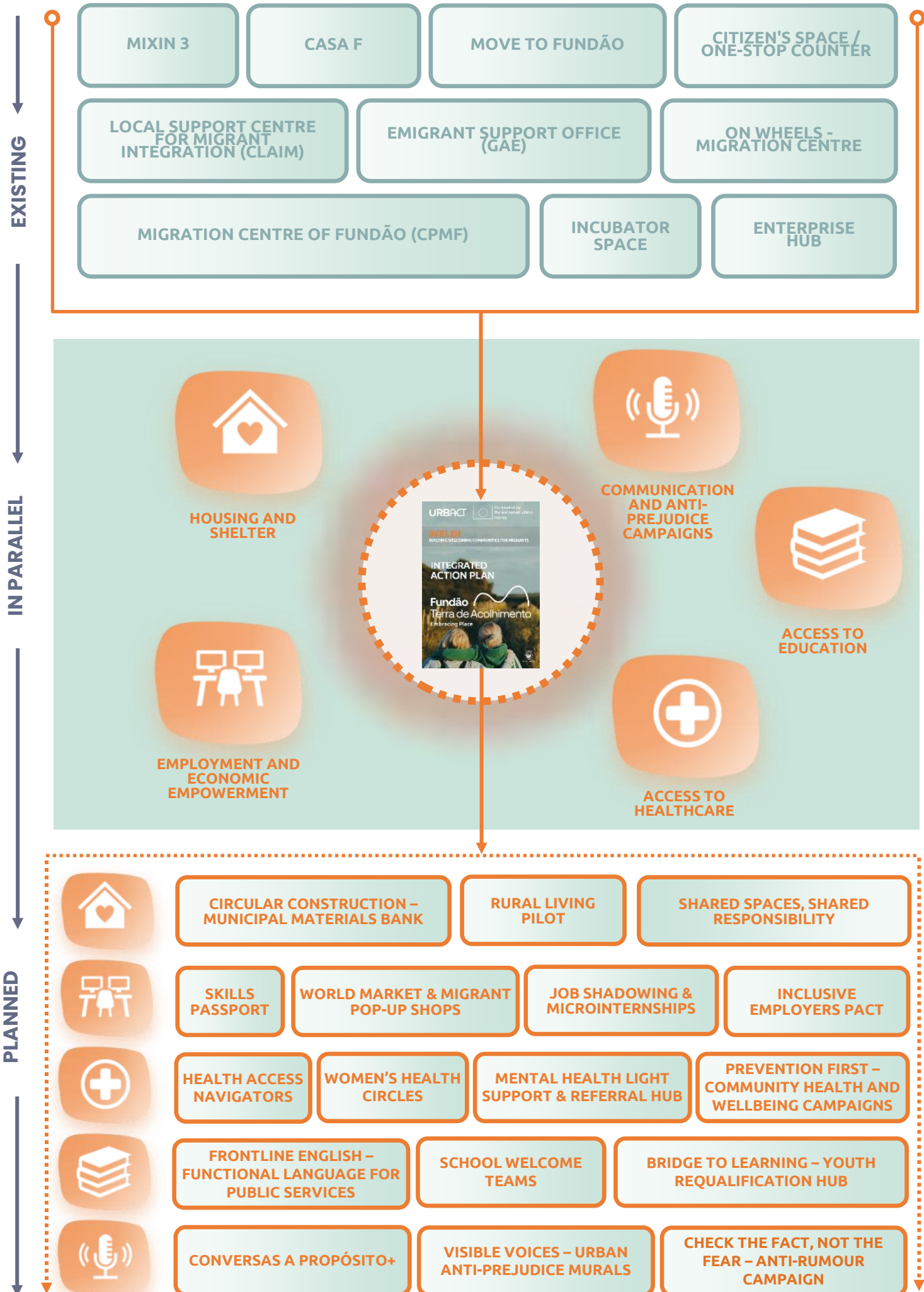
Each action sheet outlines

- A short description
- Intended results
- Key partners and resources
- Timeline and funding needs
- Relevance to cross-cutting goals such as gender equality, sustainability and digital inclusion

This structure ensures coherence, visibility and transferability — not only for implementation in Fundão, but as inspiration for similar rural areas across Europe.

**The full list of actions begins on the next page (p. 28), grouped by strategic theme.**





The background of the entire page is a photograph of a traditional stone building with a tiled roof. Overlaid on the left side is a white line-art map of a region with several location pins. In the top right corner, there is a small white 'x' icon. On the right side, there is a rounded orange square containing a white icon of a house with a heart inside. The title 'HOUSING AND SHELTER' is centered in a large, bold, orange font, framed by two horizontal orange lines.

# HOUSING AND SHELTER

## TOPIC HOUSING AND SHELTER

INCLUSIVE, AFFORDABLE, AND COMMUNITY-BASED HOUSING SOLUTIONS FOR MIGRANT AND VULNERABLE RESIDENTS IN A RURAL, LOW-DENSITY TERRITORY.

**MAIN OBJECTIVE** To ensure fair and inclusive access to adequate housing for migrants and vulnerable groups, by revitalising empty housing stock, promoting circular construction practices, and encouraging active participation in housing improvement across both urban and rural areas.

**VISION** Fundão envisions a future where housing becomes a powerful driver of integration, regeneration and cohesion — not merely through access to shelter, but through a transformative, community-led approach that values participation, equity, and sustainability. The municipality seeks to act as a rural European frontrunner in linking housing inclusion with skills empowerment and territorial innovation.

**BACKGROUND** In recent years, Fundão has faced significant challenges in guaranteeing access to adequate housing for all. Many migrants — including seasonal agricultural workers, young professionals, and newly arrived families — encounter **a lack of available and affordable rental options**, cultural or administrative barriers, and **poor housing conditions**, particularly in multi-family buildings. At the same time, **numerous rural villages host vacant or deteriorated homes**, many of which could be reactivated through coordinated investment and community involvement.


The WELDI Local Action Group identified housing not only as a basic need but as a **strategic entry point for integration, demographic renewal, and sustainable development**. Actions were co-designed to address **systemic housing exclusion**, unlock local **material and social capital**, and empower residents — migrants and non-migrants alike — to co-create dignified, liveable and shared environments.

**INSPIRATION** From Ioannina (Greece) and **Portugal's own Participatory Budgeting culture**, the municipality adapted ideas of collective design and co-maintenance of shared spaces, shaping the "Shared Spaces, Shared Responsibility" action.

From European examples like **"ReUse Centres" (Austria)** and **"La Petite Rockette" (France)**, Fundão designed the "Circular Construction – Municipal Materials Bank + DIY Workshops" action, linking the circular economy to migrant integration through upskilling.

From **Welcome Villages (France)** and **"Revive and Thrive" (Ireland)**, the "Rural Living Pilot – A New Start in Old Homes" was developed, connecting rural housing rehabilitation to mobility support and long-term social anchoring.

ACTION TITLE & SHORT DESCRIPTION	INTEND RESULT	RESOURCES & ASSETS	RESPONSIBLE ORGANISATION / KEY PARTNERS
<p><b>1. CIRCULAR CONSTRUCTION – MUNICIPAL MATERIALS BANK + DIY WORKSHOPS</b></p> <p>A circular renovation initiative that combines environmental sustainability with social inclusion. The municipality will create a depot for reusable construction materials, donated by private companies and contractors, which will be made available to eligible residents for use in small-scale home improvement and rehabilitation projects.</p> <p>Alongside the materials bank, a series of hands-on DIY workshops will be organised, offering technical guidance and basic training in renovation skills such as insulation, plastering, flooring and painting. Migrants, long-term unemployed individuals, and low-income households will be prioritised, with support from municipal staff, volunteers and vocational instructors.</p> <p>By promoting skills development, community engagement and circular economy principles, this action offers a practical and replicable model for sustainable housing improvement with strong social impact.</p>	<p>Reduced renovation costs for vulnerable households</p> <p>Acquisition of practical construction skills</p> <p>Promotion of environmental sustainability and circular economy principles</p> <p>Stronger community engagement and empowerment</p> <div data-bbox="619 728 746 857" data-label="Image"> </div> <p><b>ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY</b> – Promotes the reuse of construction materials and teaches sustainable renovation practices that reduce environmental impact.</p>	<p>Municipal warehouse space</p> <p>Agreements with local construction firms</p> <p>Volunteer trainers and municipal technical staff</p> <p>Basic tools and transportation</p>	<p><b>Municipality of Fundão</b> (technical departments)</p> <p>Local construction companies</p> <p>NGOs and migrant associations</p> <p>Parish councils (for outreach and local coordination)</p>
<p><b>2. RURAL LIVING PILOT – A NEW START IN OLD HOMES</b></p> <p>A targeted pilot initiative designed to <b>revitalise low-density rural villages</b> by allocating renovated vacant homes to <b>young adults and migrant families</b> seeking to settle long-term in Fundão. The programme combines access to affordable housing with practical integration support — including mobility assistance, mentorship by local residents, and coordination with job orientation, language learning, and community engagement.</p> <p>Homes will be selected in partnership with <b>parish councils and local landlords</b>, and basic rehabilitation works will be supported through municipal resources and local contributions. Each household will be matched with a <b>community mentor</b> to support social anchoring and help navigate rural life.</p> <p>A distinctive feature of this action will be the creation of <b>intergenerational volunteer brigades</b>, composed of local youth, students from <b>UBI (University of Beira Interior)</b> and nearby <b>secondary and vocational schools</b>. These teams will support rehabilitation efforts during short-term placements (e.g. 1 week), gaining practical skills and strengthening their connection to the territory.</p> <p>This action strategically connects <b>housing, rural repopulation and social inclusion</b> by transforming underused buildings into opportunities for shared, sustainable territorial development.</p>	<p>Rural revitalisation through inclusive repopulation</p> <p>Improved housing access outside urban areas</p> <p>Strengthened community bonds and intergenerational solidarity</p> <p>Greater territorial balance and service sustainability</p> <p>Skills development through civic participation</p> <div data-bbox="608 1706 735 1836" data-label="Image"> </div> <p><b>ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY</b> – Revitalises rural villages through the reuse of vacant housing, reducing urban pressure and encouraging low-impact living.</p>	<p>Mapping of vacant rural housing stock</p> <p>Small-scale renovation budget or materials (linked to DIY programme)</p> <p>Mobility support (e.g. transport vouchers, ride-sharing)</p> <p>Community mentors and parish support</p> <p>Volunteer mobilisation (UBI, vocational schools, youth services)</p>	<p><b>Municipality of Fundão</b></p> <p>Parish councils and local housing owners</p> <p>GIAV / Social Services</p> <p>Employment and vocational centres</p> <p>UBI – University of Beira Interior</p> <p>Local secondary and vocational schools</p>

ACTION TITLE & SHORT DESCRIPTION	INTEND RESULT	RESOURCES & ASSETS	RESPONSIBLE ORGANISATION / KEY PARTNERS
<p><b>3. SHARED SPACES, SHARED RESPONSIBILITY</b></p> <p>A participatory renovation programme focused on improving the shared areas of multi-family buildings, particularly those with a high concentration of migrant residents. Through co-design sessions facilitated by municipal architects and local mediators, residents are invited to identify priorities and jointly implement small-scale improvements such as painting stairwells, enhancing lighting, creating green corners, or revitalising communal courtyards.</p> <p>The process encourages collaboration among neighbours of different backgrounds and promotes a sense of shared ownership, responsibility and pride in the living environment. It also provides opportunities for informal learning and intercultural exchange within the residential context.</p> <p>By transforming everyday spaces through collective effort, this action strengthens social ties, improves housing quality, and fosters inclusive neighbourhood identities.</p>	<p>Enhanced liveability and visual quality of buildings</p> <p>Strengthened neighbour relationships and sense of ownership</p> <p>Reduced tensions and stigmatisation</p> <p>Empowerment through collaborative action</p>	<p>Municipal architectural and design support</p> <p>Micro-funds for materials (paint, tools, lighting)</p> <p>Community organisers or facilitators</p> <p>Use of public meeting rooms for planning</p>	<p><b>Municipality of Fundão</b> (Architecture, Urbanism)</p> <p>Residents' associations or informal committees</p> <p>NGOs (for mediation or facilitation)</p> <p>Migrant community representatives</p>
<div>  <p><b>ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY</b> – Improves shared housing conditions through collaborative renovation, reinforcing environmental care in residential contexts.</p> </div>			

Type of Inve

ACTION TITLE	TIMESCALE					ESTIMATED BUDGET	MAIN FUNDING SOURCES	TYPE OF INVESTMENT
	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030			
<b>1. CIRCULAR CONSTRUCTION – DIY WORKSHOPS</b>						150 000,00 €	PT2030, AMIF, EEA Grants	Infrastructure & training
<b>2. RURAL LIVING PILOT</b>						200 000,00 €	PT2030, ERDF, EUI	Housing rehab & social support
<b>3. SHARED SPACES, SHARED RESPONSIBILITY</b>						120 000,00 €	URBACT, AMIF	Community micro-works

= Start-up / Pilot
  = Implementation / Expansion
  = Evaluation
  = Maintenance / Transfer

# EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT



## TOPIC EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

FOSTERING INCLUSIVE ACCESS TO THE LABOUR MARKET AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR MIGRANTS AND VULNERABLE GROUPS THROUGH RECOGNITION, SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT.

**MAIN OBJECTIVE** To support migrants in accessing decent employment and entrepreneurial opportunities by removing structural barriers, recognising informal competences, and promoting inclusive partnerships with the local business ecosystem.

**VISION** Fundão envisions a local economy where **diversity is a driver of innovation and inclusion, and where migrants' skills and ambitions are recognised, valued and activated.** The municipality seeks to become a rural model for fair labour integration, sustainable micro-entrepreneurship, and employer commitment to diversity.

**BACKGROUND** Migrants play a crucial role in the economy of Fundão — from seasonal agricultural work to logistics, hospitality and caregiving. Yet many remain trapped in **low-paid or precarious jobs, invisible to the formal economy, or underemployed despite existing competences.**

Barriers include lack of language proficiency, non-recognition of skills acquired abroad, and the absence of employer readiness to adapt HR practices. Furthermore, the local entrepreneurial ecosystem has potential but remains **underused by migrant communities**, particularly women and young people

The IAP process revealed a strong interest among local employers to engage more proactively in inclusion, as well as a vibrant diversity of informal economic activity that could be formalised and scaled. The strategy adopted promotes a **twin-track approach**: unlocking individual potential (through skills validation and micro-entrepreneurship) and **shifting systemic practices** (through business engagement and inclusive recruitment).

**INSPIRATION** The “**Skills Passport**” action takes inspiration from the “**European Skills Profile Tool**” and France’s **Passeport de Compétences**, localised in partnership with IEFP and sector employers.

The “**World Market & Migrant Pop-Up Shops**” action draws on experiences like “**Pop-Up Sociale**” (Italy) and Lisbon’s “**StartUp Street**”, adapting them to Fundão’s small urban context.


The “**Job Shadowing & Microinternships**” initiative echoes short-placement models tested in Germany (“**Job Taster Weeks**”) and Ireland (“**Shadow Me**”), promoting smoother labour market access through trust-building.


The “**Inclusive Employers Pact – Fundão Edition**” follows the example of “**Inclusive Employers UK**” and France’s “**Charte Entreprises Inclusives**”, offering a structured way for businesses to engage in the integration effort.

ACTION TITLE & SHORT DESCRIPTION	INTEND RESULT	RESOURCES & ASSETS	RESPONSIBLE ORGANISATION / KEY PARTNERS
<p><b>4. SKILLS PASSPORT – RECOGNITION OF INFORMAL COMPETENCES</b></p> <p>This action will establish a local mechanism to identify, assess and formally recognise the informal competences of migrant residents who lack certified qualifications but possess valuable experience. Through practical, demonstration-based evaluations in sectors such as construction, agriculture, caregiving and textiles, individuals will receive a personalised “Skills Passport” that documents their abilities in a clear and credible format.</p> <p>The Skills Passport will be developed in close cooperation with the IEPF and relevant local employers, ensuring that assessments respond to real labour market needs. Holders of the passport will be supported in connecting to local job offers, short vocational training modules or micro-enterprise opportunities. The approach aims to speed up labour market integration and reduce the underemployment of skilled migrants, especially in rural areas where their contribution is essential but often unrecognised.</p> <p>This action provides an inclusive alternative to traditional qualification systems <b>by making invisible competences visible</b>, enabling faster economic inclusion and promoting a better match between local supply and demand for labour.</p>	<p>Formal visibility of previously unrecognised migrant skills</p> <p>Better matching between candidates and local job market needs</p> <p>Faster labour market access, particularly in rural and seasonal sectors</p> <p>Motivation for further training or business development</p> <div data-bbox="635 869 782 990" data-label="Image"> </div>	<p>Trained skill assessors and sector-specific testing formats</p> <p>Digital system for issuing and storing Skills Passports</p> <p>Collaboration protocols with employers and training providers</p> <p>Outreach tools in multiple languages</p>	<p><b>IEFP Fundão and local vocational centres (GIP)</b></p> <p>Municipality of Fundão (Employment and Social Innovation Units)</p> <p>Sector employers (farming, logistics, services)</p> <p>Parish councils and migrant associations (for mobilisation)</p> <p>Centro Qualifica</p>
<p><b>5. WORLD MARKET &amp; MIGRANT POP-UP SHOPS</b></p> <p>An intercultural commerce and entrepreneurship programme designed to empower migrant entrepreneurs and celebrate cultural diversity through local economic activity. The initiative will establish a regular calendar of “World Markets” — open-air fairs featuring traditional products, food, crafts, and services — alongside a network of rotating pop-up shops hosted in temporarily vacant retail units across Fundão’s town centre.</p> <p>Participants will benefit from tailored support including legal guidance for business formalisation, branding and communication tools, and basic financial literacy training. These efforts will be complemented by the creation of a digital “Shops of the World” map to increase public visibility, stimulate inclusive tourism and foster civic pride.</p> <p>By transforming underused urban spaces into vibrant platforms for migrant-led enterprise, this action links inclusion, regeneration and cultural expression in one visible and sustainable model.</p>	<p>Increased number of legally registered migrant-led microbusinesses</p> <p>Revitalisation of unused urban spaces and commercial diversity</p> <p>Enhanced intercultural understanding through public interaction</p> <p>Empowerment of women and youth entrepreneurs from migrant backgrounds</p> <div data-bbox="625 1668 762 1812" data-label="Image"> </div>	<p>Access to municipal or private commercial units for temporary use</p> <p>Training modules in entrepreneurship and licensing procedures</p> <p>Microcredit or startup support fund</p> <p>Communications platform and visual identity kit</p>	<p><b>Municipality of Fundão</b> (Entrepreneurship and Urban Regeneration Units)</p> <p>ACICF (local business association)</p> <p>Migrant support NGOs (e.g. Fundão Acolhe, CLAIM)</p> <p>Local media and schools (for promotional storytelling)</p>

**DIGITALISATION** – Introduces a digital system to assess, register and match migrant skills with employment or training opportunities.

**GENDER EQUALITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES** – Encourages entrepreneurship among women and underrepresented groups, promoting economic inclusion and autonomy.

ACTION TITLE & SHORT DESCRIPTION	INTEND RESULT	RESOURCES & ASSETS	RESPONSIBLE ORGANISATION / KEY PARTNERS
<b>6. JOB SHADOWING &amp; MICROINTERNSHIPS</b> <p>This action will provide short-term job exposure placements, lasting between 3 and 10 days, for migrants in local businesses, public institutions and community services. Participants will be paired with professionals who they can observe and assist, allowing them to experience real workplace environments, understand basic labour expectations, and acquire sector-specific vocabulary and soft skills.</p> <p>Before each placement, participants will take part in a preparatory session covering workplace norms, communication strategies and safety basics. Afterward, they will receive coaching to reflect on the experience and explore next steps. Employers involved in the programme will receive intercultural guidance and be encouraged to consider follow-up options such as vocational training, trial employment or mentorship.</p>	<p>Greater confidence and orientation for migrant jobseekers</p> <p>Reduced hiring hesitation from employers</p> <p>Expansion of informal and professional networks</p> <p>Smoother transitions into sustainable employment</p>	<p>Network of participating employers and service providers</p> <p>Coordinators and mentors to match and accompany participants</p> <p>Logistics support (transportation, insurance, allowances)</p> <p>Evaluation templates and feedback tools</p>	<p><b>Municipality of Fundão</b> (Employment and Inclusion Units)</p> <p>Local businesses, cooperatives and services</p> <p>Schools and training centres (as hosting or referring entities)</p> <p>NGOs and migrant community groups</p>
 <p><b>GENDER EQUALITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES</b> – Fosters equal access to real work environments, particularly benefiting women, youth and first-time jobseekers.</p>			

<b>7. INCLUSIVE EMPLOYERS PACT – FUNDÃO EDITION</b> <p>A municipal pact encouraging local employers to commit publicly to inclusive recruitment and fair workplace practices. Participating companies will sign a charter outlining voluntary principles (e.g., equal opportunities, language-sensitive onboarding, cultural awareness) and gain access to support measures such as intercultural training, mediation services, and recruitment fairs focused on migrant candidates. Recognised employers will be listed in an online “Inclusive Employers Directory” and can display the “Fundão for Inclusion” seal. The programme will include annual roundtables and knowledge exchange events.</p>	<p>Stronger engagement of the private sector in integration efforts</p> <p>More inclusive HR and recruitment practices in local businesses</p> <p>Increased retention of migrant employees and reduced workplace conflict</p> <p>Public recognition of inclusive employers as local ambassadors of cohesion</p>	<p>Employer pact framework and engagement toolkit</p> <p>Training modules and consultancy support</p> <p>Visibility and certification package (website, badge, local press)</p> <p>Event coordination and follow-up structures</p>	<p><b>Municipality of Fundão</b> (Innovation, Employment and Communication Units)</p> <p>Business associations and HR networks</p> <p>Local social economy actors (e.g., cooperatives)</p> <p>CLAIM Fundão and Diversity Officers</p>
 <p><b>GENDER EQUALITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES</b> – Promotes inclusive recruitment practices and equal workplace opportunities across genders and cultural backgrounds.</p>			

ACTION TITLE	TIMESCALE					ESTIMATED BUDGET	MAIN FUNDING SOURCES	TYPE OF INVESTMENT
	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030			
<b>4. SKILLS PASSPORT – RECOGNITION OF INFORMAL COMPETENCES</b>						140 000,00 €	AMIF, IEFP, Erasmus+	Digital tool & assessments
<b>5. WORLD MARKET &amp; MIGRANT POP-UP SHOPS</b>						180 000,00 €	FAMI, URBACT	Entrepreneurship support
<b>6. JOB SHADOWING &amp; MICROINTERNSHIPS</b>						110 000,00 €	Erasmus+, AMIF	Placement logistics & coaching
<b>7. INCLUSIVE EMPLOYERS PACT – FUNDÃO EDITION</b>						90 000,00 €	AMIF, URBACT	HR & employer incentives

= Start-up / Pilot
  = Implementation / Expansion
  = Evaluation
  = Maintenance / Transfer



# ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE



## TOPIC ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

REMOVING BARRIERS AND PROMOTING EQUITABLE, CULTURALLY SENSITIVE ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE FOR MIGRANTS AND VULNERABLE GROUPS IN FUNDÃO.

**MAIN OBJECTIVE** To improve access to health services, health literacy, and prevention for migrant communities, with a particular focus on remote areas, maternal health, mental wellbeing, and early detection.

**VISION** Fundão aspires to build an inclusive healthcare ecosystem that is responsive to the needs of a diverse population. The vision is centred on trust, proximity, and prevention — ensuring that **all residents, regardless of background or legal status, can access information, services and support with dignity**. The municipality aims to lead by example in rural and decentralised health inclusion through **cultural mediation, mobile services and community empowerment**.

**BACKGROUND** Despite good national coverage through the public health service, many migrants in Fundão face **invisible but persistent barriers** to healthcare access. These include: **Language and administrative hurdles; Lack of culturally adapted services; Insufficient awareness of available care; Stigma around mental health and reproductive health**, particularly among women and youth.

Geographic dispersion and low digital literacy in rural areas exacerbate these issues. Although CLAIM and Fundão Acolhe provide important support, the need for **proactive, mobile and community-rooted responses** is increasingly evident.

The WELDI process highlighted that improving access to healthcare goes beyond formal registration — it requires **local coordination, prevention-first strategies, and new forms of mediation**.

**INSPIRATION** **Health Access Navigators** were inspired by **community health workers** in Seine-Saint-Denis (FR) and by experiences in Barcelona, where trained migrant peers assist with system navigation and translation.

**Women's Health Circles** reflect participatory health models like “**Saúde+Mulher**” (Portugal) and “**Well Women's Project**” (UK), creating culturally safe spaces for group education and support.

The **Mental Health Light Support & Referral Hub** builds on simplified models of first-line psychological support piloted in Greece and by NGOs in rural Portugal, ensuring early intervention and destigmatisation.


**Prevention First – Community Health and Wellbeing Campaigns** is inspired by **mobile health outreach in Ioannina (Greece)**, **COVID-19 local response initiatives in Fundão**, and Ireland's “**Healthy Communities**” programme. It promotes **health equity and cultural inclusion** by bringing preventive information and services directly into communities — particularly those often overlooked by traditional healthcare delivery systems.

ACTION TITLE & SHORT DESCRIPTION	INTEND RESULT	RESOURCES & ASSETS	RESPONSIBLE ORGANISATION / KEY PARTNERS
<p><b>8. HEALTH ACCESS NAVIGATORS – COMMUNITY-BASED MEDIATION</b></p> <p>This action establishes a structured and decentralised system of Health Access Navigators — migrant residents trained to guide newcomers in understanding and using the Portuguese National Health Service (SNS). These peer mediators will assist with basic interpretation during appointments, help book consultations, clarify medical terminology, and explain how to access primary and preventive care. The navigators will be present in community centres, parish councils, schools, and during municipal outreach events.</p> <p>This decentralised support model will prioritise rural and low-density areas, where distance and unfamiliarity with local services often prevent migrants from receiving timely care. The training programme will be co-developed with local health professionals to ensure accuracy and responsiveness.</p>	<p>Improved access to healthcare and reduced reliance on emergency care</p> <p>Strengthened health literacy and system navigation capacity</p> <p>More efficient use of existing services, with fewer missed appointments</p> <p>Development of migrant leadership and intercultural trust in public services</p> <div data-bbox="624 741 772 864" data-label="Image"> </div>	<p>Co-developed training curriculum with ULS and CLAIM</p> <p>Digital support tools (translated guides, appointment systems)</p> <p>Travel allowances and modest stipends for navigators</p> <p>Outreach and visibility materials in multiple languages</p>	<p><b>Municipality of Fundão</b> (Health &amp; Participation Units)</p> <p>CLAIM Fundão / Fundão Acolhe</p> <p>ULS Cova da Beira (public health coordination)</p> <p>Parish councils and local associations</p> <p>ICAD – Integrated Response Centre of Castelo Branco (CRI Castelo Branco)</p>
<p><b>9. WOMEN'S HEALTH CIRCLES – SAFE SPACES FOR WELLBEING</b></p> <p>This action creates dedicated group spaces for migrant women to access health information, mutual support and professional guidance in a culturally safe and inclusive format. Held monthly, each Health Circle will address topics such as contraception, pregnancy, menopause, mental health, body awareness, nutrition, and women's rights within the national health system.</p> <p>The sessions will be facilitated by female healthcare professionals and supported by intercultural mediators, using translated materials and visual tools to ensure accessibility. The format encourages storytelling and horizontal exchange, reinforcing peer support and creating bridges between health systems and traditionally underserved groups.</p>	<p>Enhanced reproductive and mental health literacy among migrant women</p> <p>Increased uptake of preventive services and informed health decisions</p> <p>Stronger peer connections and reduced isolation</p> <p>More culturally sensitive maternal care pathways</p> <div data-bbox="624 1328 772 1464" data-label="Image"> </div>	<p>Local venues (e.g. schools, parish halls, family centres)</p> <p>Network of female professionals and trained mediators</p> <p>Visual materials and interactive toolkits</p> <p>Childcare support during sessions to enable participation</p>	<p><b>Municipality of Fundão</b> (Health, Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Units)</p> <p>ULS (Maternal and Family Health teams)</p> <p>Women's organisations and migrant networks</p> <p>CLAIM Fundão and parish councils</p> <p>ICAD – Integrated Response Centre of Castelo Branco (CRI Castelo Branco)</p>
<p><b>10. MENTAL HEALTH LIGHT SUPPORT &amp; REFERRAL HUB</b></p> <p>This action introduces a decentralised first-response service for mental health, focused on vulnerable migrants and young people experiencing emotional distress. Based in informal community locations such as libraries, schools, youth centres and cafés, the service will provide listening spaces, psychoeducation workshops, and clear referral pathways to professional care.</p> <p>The hub will be staffed by a rotating team including a mental health professional (e.g. psychologist) and a trained cultural mediator. The approach is designed to destigmatise emotional wellbeing, provide fast responses without bureaucratic delay, and make mental health support visible and approachable.</p>	<p>Early identification of mental health issues and trauma</p> <p>Greater help-seeking behaviour in migrant populations</p> <p>Reduced stigma around psychological support</p> <p>Improved retention in education and employment among vulnerable youth</p> <div data-bbox="624 1921 772 2045" data-label="Image"> </div>	<p>Contracts for mental health professionals and mediators</p> <p>Outreach venues in youth-friendly and informal settings</p> <p>Interactive workshop formats and translated materials</p> <p>Referral protocol with ULS mental health teams</p>	<p><b>Municipality of Fundão</b> (Youth, Health and Social Services Units)</p> <p>ULS (Mental Health Department)</p> <p>Schools, youth associations and NGOs</p> <p>CLAIM Fundão and GIAV</p> <p>ICAD – Integrated Response Centre of Castelo Branco (CRI Castelo Branco)</p>

**DIGITALISATION** – Includes digital tools to assist with appointment booking, translation and healthcare orientation in multiple languages.

**GENDER EQUALITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES** – Specifically addresses women's health needs in culturally safe settings, promoting bodily autonomy and access to care.

**DIGITALISATION** – Uses mobile and digital platforms to provide light mental health support and referrals in informal community spaces.

ACTION TITLE & SHORT DESCRIPTION	INTEND RESULT	RESOURCES & ASSETS	RESPONSIBLE ORGANISATION / KEY PARTNERS
<p><b>11. PREVENTION FIRST – COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLBEING CAMPAIGNS</b></p> <p>This action promotes preventive health and wellbeing among migrant communities through culturally adapted campaigns delivered in partnership with local health providers and civil society. Activities will include mobile health outreach, nutritional education, and screening for early risk factors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Health promotion efforts will focus on: Mobile vaccination units (e.g. flu, HPV),</li> <li>- Screening days for chronic conditions (diabetes, hypertension),</li> <li>- Healthy eating campaigns (e.g. during Ramadan or seasonal periods),</li> <li>- Awareness of youth hypertension and the importance of vitamins and supplements.</li> </ul> <p>Campaigns will be delivered in multiple languages, using visual tools, community radio, SMS alerts and in-person outreach. Events will be prioritised in rural parishes, agricultural sites, and community markets, ensuring accessibility for hard-to-reach groups.</p> <p>By linking public health equity with cultural competence, this action will reduce barriers to preventive care and reinforce trust between migrant communities and the local health system.</p>	<p>Higher vaccination and screening rates among migrants</p> <p>Increased awareness of healthy nutrition and risk factors</p> <p>Greater use of preventive services in underserved areas</p> <p>Strengthened community health networks</p> <p>Enhanced communication between residents and local health structures</p>	<p>Mobile health units and temporary screening stations</p> <p>Interpreters and cultural mediators</p> <p>Collaboration with pharmacies, parishes and associations</p> <p>Visual materials, radio segments and digital reminders</p> <p>Data from previous campaigns and local health reports</p>	<p><b>Municipality of Fundão</b> (Public Health and Communication Units)</p> <p>ULS Cova da Beira (Preventive Health Division)</p> <p>Local pharmacies and civil society organisations</p> <p>Migrant-led associations and volunteers</p> <p>Market organisers and parish councils</p> <p>ICAD – Integrated Response Centre of Castelo Branco (CRI Castelo Branco)</p>
 <p><b>DIGITALISATION</b> – Uses digital channels (SMS, audio messages, community platforms) to deliver multilingual outreach and boost access to preventive health among hard-to-reach groups.</p>			

ACTION TITLE	TIMESCALE					ESTIMATED BUDGET	MAIN FUNDING SOURCES	TYPE OF INVESTMENT
	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030			
<b>8. HEALTH ACCESS NAVIGATORS – COMMUNITY-BASED MEDIATION</b>						140 000,00 €	AMIF, PT2030	Training & community mediation
<b>9. WOMEN'S HEALTH CIRCLES – SAFE SPACES FOR WELLBEING</b>						120 000,00 €	FAMI, EEA Grants	Workshops & peer facilitation
<b>10. MENTAL HEALTH LIGHT SUPPORT &amp; REFERRAL HUB</b>						160 000,00 €	Health Ministry, AMIF	Mental health staff & tools
<b>11. PREVENTION FIRST – COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLBEING CAMPAIGNS</b>						130 000,00€	SNS, PT2030	Mobile health outreach

= Start-up / Pilot
  = Implementation / Expansion
  = Evaluation
  = Maintenance / Transfer



# ACCESS TO EDUCATION



## TOPIC ACCESS TO EDUCATION

PROMOTING INCLUSIVE AND LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR MIGRANT CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND ADULTS THROUGH LANGUAGE SUPPORT, SCHOOL INTEGRATION, AND FLEXIBLE REQUALIFICATION PATHWAYS.

**MAIN OBJECTIVE** To ensure equitable access to quality education and training for migrants of all ages by removing linguistic, digital, and administrative barriers, strengthening school inclusion mechanisms, and supporting re-entry into learning and vocational pathways.

**VISION** Fundão aims to create a truly inclusive and learner-centred education ecosystem that welcomes migrant learners as contributors to the local learning community. The vision extends from early childhood to adult requalification, combining formal and non-formal approaches, fostering institutional adaptability, and equipping public service professionals with the tools to communicate effectively across cultures and languages.

**BACKGROUND** While Fundão has invested in inclusive education, challenges remain in integrating newly arrived students, supporting young migrants with interrupted schooling, and bridging the language gap between public service staff and non-Portuguese speakers. In rural areas, access to flexible learning is limited, and adult migrants often struggle to navigate education and public services due to linguistic and digital barriers. There is a clear need to enhance school welcoming practices, requalification opportunities, and frontline communication skills.

**INSPIRATION** **Frontline English – Functional Language for Public Services:** Inspired by staff language training models from Ioannina and Seine-Saint-Denis, where improving communication with migrant residents is a priority, and by “Welcoming Language” (Scotland).

**School Welcome Teams:** Builds on Fundão’s own “Welcome to School” and draws from the “Schools of Sanctuary” (UK) network and the peer mediation practices of Seine-Saint-Denis, promoting shared responsibility in school inclusion.

**Bridge to Learning – Youth Requalification Hub:** Inspired by youth education support initiatives in Ioannina (for refugee students), and second-chance programmes in Brussels Capital Region and Portugal, tailored to young migrants with interrupted or no prior formal education.

ACTION TITLE & SHORT DESCRIPTION	INTEND RESULT	RESOURCES & ASSETS	RESPONSIBLE ORGANISATION / KEY PARTNERS
<p><b>12. FRONTLINE ENGLISH – FUNCTIONAL LANGUAGE FOR PUBLIC SERVICES</b></p> <p>This action introduces a targeted in-person language training programme for frontline staff in public services — including municipal departments, health centres, schools, and parish councils — to improve communication with non-Portuguese-speaking migrant residents.</p> <p>The training focuses on practical, spoken English for everyday service situations such as booking appointments, giving directions, explaining administrative procedures, or responding to emergencies. Emphasis will be placed on oral comprehension, pronunciation and confidence-building, rather than written grammar or formal exams.</p> <p>Courses will be delivered in short, flexible sessions adapted to each professional context, using role-play, scenario simulations, visual aids, and basic sector-specific vocabulary. Activities will take place during working hours and can include optional internal certification.</p> <p>By providing staff with real-world communication tools, this action helps ensure more accessible, respectful and effective services for all.</p>	<p>Improved verbal communication between public staff and migrants</p> <p>Reduced misunderstandings and service barriers</p> <p>Increased user satisfaction and staff confidence</p> <p>Stronger institutional response to linguistic diversity</p> <div data-bbox="619 741 758 887"> </div>	<p>Experienced language instructors with sector awareness</p> <p>Printed and visual learning materials (e.g. flashcards, signage)</p> <p>Role-play scripts adapted to Fundão's public services</p> <p>Municipal coordination and time allocation for participation</p> <p>Light infrastructure for small-group training sessions</p>	<p><b>Centro Qualifica +</b></p> <p>Municipality of Fundão (Human Resources &amp; Inclusion Units)</p> <p>Public health centres, schools, parish councils</p> <p>CLAIM Fundão (for language mediation support)</p>
<p><b>13. SCHOOL WELCOME TEAMS – PEER AND FAMILY INTEGRATION SUPPORT</b></p> <p>This action will scale up and formalise a successful initiative piloted at Fundão Secondary School, by establishing structured <b>Welcome Teams</b> across all school clusters (<b>agrupamentos escolares</b>) in the municipality.</p> <p>Each team will include <b>teachers, administrative staff, older students and migrant parents</b>, working together to support newly arrived pupils and their families. Their role is to <b>facilitate smooth school integration</b> through welcoming routines, orientation tools and accessible communication.</p> <p>Support measures will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Translated welcome kits</b> with school rules, contacts, and timetables;</li> <li>- <b>Guided school tours</b> and introduction sessions;</li> <li>- <b>Peer mentoring</b> schemes between older and younger students;</li> <li>- <b>Informal digital communication channels</b>, such as WhatsApp or messaging apps, to help families stay informed about school life.</li> </ul> <p>Welcome Teams will also act as <b>cultural mediators</b>, helping the broader school community understand the realities, expectations and needs of migrant families — reinforcing trust and inclusion.</p> <p>By embedding this structure into <b>all public schools</b>, the action creates a sustainable, community-driven approach to educational inclusion, grounded in co-responsibility.</p>	<p>Smoother school integration for migrant pupils</p> <p>Stronger parental involvement from diverse backgrounds</p> <p>Better communication with non-Portuguese-speaking families</p> <p>Improved peer solidarity and a more welcoming school culture</p> <p>Replication of good practices across the municipality</p> <div data-bbox="619 1854 758 2000"> </div>	<p>Welcome kits with translated leaflets and checklists</p> <p>Time allocation for team coordination and meetings</p> <p>Volunteer mobilisation and training (students, parents)</p> <p>School space for meetings and mentoring activities</p> <p>Collaboration with parish networks and social services</p>	<p><b>Agrupamento de Escolas do Fundão (all school clusters)</b></p> <p>Municipality of Fundão (Education and Participation Units)</p> <p>Student councils and parent associations</p> <p>CLAIM Fundão and local support organisations</p> <p>Parish councils and community centres</p>
		<p><b>GENDER EQUALITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES</b> – Promotes fairer access to essential public services for migrant women and vulnerable groups by removing language-related barriers and improving respectful communication.</p>	
		<p><b>GENDER EQUALITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES</b> – Engages both male and female students and parents in school-based inclusion efforts, promoting shared responsibility and equal involvement in education..</p>	

ACTION TITLE & SHORT DESCRIPTION	INTEND RESULT	RESOURCES & ASSETS	RESPONSIBLE ORGANISATION / KEY PARTNERS
<p><b>14. BRIDGE TO LEARNING – YOUTH REQUALIFICATION HUB</b></p> <p>This action creates a local <b>Requalification Hub</b> for <b>young people aged 16 to 25</b> — including migrant youth, lusodescendants, and local residents — who are not in education, employment or training (NEETs), or who arrived in Portugal with interrupted schooling.</p> <p>The hub will offer <b>flexible, individualised learning pathways</b> that combine academic recovery, language support, and vocational orientation. Services will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Skills and literacy assessments</li> <li>- Portuguese language tutoring</li> <li>- Preparation for <b>school equivalency exams</b></li> <li>- <b>Basic digital literacy and career planning tools</b></li> <li>- Guidance towards professional training, internships or job placement</li> <li>- Development of a <b>bilingual personal portfolio (PT/EN)</b> with competences, experience and aspirations</li> </ul> <p>Delivery will be coordinated with schools, youth services and vocational centres, and hosted in an accessible, youth-friendly environment. The approach is <b>modular, informal and empowering</b>, placing young people at the centre of their own requalification journey.</p> <p>This action tackles early school leaving, limited professional visibility, and the lack of continuity for young migrants and vulnerable youth in rural areas.</p>	<p>Lower number of NEETs among migrant and local youth</p> <p>Greater access to requalification, certification and training</p> <p>Improved language and soft skills</p> <p>Stronger links between education, employment and inclusion services</p> <p>Visibility and empowerment through the creation of bilingual professional portfolios</p>	<p>Dedicated learning space (e.g. school, youth centre or innovation hub)</p> <p>Tutors, mentors and guidance counsellors</p> <p>Coordination with IEFP, vocational schools and digital tools</p> <p>Transport vouchers or connectivity support</p> <p>Curriculum adapted to local training/employment opportunities</p>	<p><b>Municipality of Fundão</b> (Youth, Education and Social Services Units)</p> <p>Agrupamento de Escolas / Escola Profissional do Fundão</p> <p>IEFP and vocational training centres</p> <p>Local NGOs and youth-led associations</p> <p>CLAIM Fundão</p>



**DIGITALISATION** – Uses digital tools to support flexible learning, job orientation and portfolio creation, improving the visibility of skills and pathways for all young people, regardless of origin.

ACTION TITLE	TIMESCALE					ESTIMATED BUDGET	MAIN FUNDING SOURCES	TYPE OF INVESTMENT
	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030			
<b>12. FRONTLINE ENGLISH – FUNCTIONAL LANGUAGE FOR PUBLIC SERVICES</b>						100 000,00 €	AMIF, Erasmus+	Language training modules
<b>13. SCHOOL WELCOME TEAMS – PEER AND FAMILY INTEGRATION SUPPORT</b>						90 000,00 €	PT2030, AMIF	Materials & coordination
<b>14. BRIDGE TO LEARNING – YOUTH REQUALIFICATION HUB</b>						150 000,00 €	PT2030, IEFP	Blended learning platform

	= Start-up / Pilot		= Implementation / Expansion		= Evaluation		= Maintenance / Transfer
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# COMMUNICATION AND ANTI-PREJUDICE CAMPAIGNS

## TOPIC COMMUNICATION AND ANTI-PREJUDICE CAMPAIGNS

PROMOTING INCLUSIVE NARRATIVES, COMBATING MISINFORMATION, AND FOSTERING SOCIAL COHESION THROUGH STORYTELLING, ARTISTIC EXPRESSION, AND YOUTH-LED COMMUNICATION.

**MAIN OBJECTIVE** To build a culture of empathy and inclusion by supporting creative, community-rooted campaigns that challenge prejudice, give voice to migrant experiences, and reshape public perceptions at the local level

**VISION** Fundão envisions a municipality where diversity is publicly recognised, migrant voices are actively heard, and young people are empowered to take the lead in shaping an inclusive narrative. Through arts, media and digital tools, communication becomes a space of connection, not division — encouraging pride in a plural and welcoming local identity.


**BACKGROUND** Fundão's previous work in inclusion has shown that while access to services is essential, **combating prejudice and misinformation remains a key challenge**. Focus groups and the SSA process revealed that migrants often feel unseen or misrepresented in public discourse, and that **youth are both exposed to stereotypes and crucial in reversing them**.


The podcast "**Conversas a Propósito**", developed locally, demonstrated the power of storytelling to shift perspectives. However, there is a need to **scale and diversify the formats**, bring campaigns into **public spaces and digital platforms**, and engage citizens — especially the younger generation — **as producers, not just consumers**, of inclusive content.

**INSPIRATION** "**Conversas a Propósito+**" builds on the original Fundão podcast and is informed by youth storytelling models such as "**Refugee Voices Tours**" (Berlin) and "**Youth4Inclusion**" (Portugal).

"**Visible Voices – Urban Anti-Prejudice Murals**" draws from community art projects promoted by Seine-Saint-Denis and from international examples like "**Uniti per l'Arte**" (Italy) and "**Migration Memory Encounters**" (Austria).

"**Check the Fact, Not the Fear – Anti-Rumour Campaign**" is inspired by the **Anti-Rumours Global strategy (Barcelona)** and complements the findings of **Fundão's MIXin3** focus groups on disinformation, fear-based narratives, and the importance of youth-led digital content.

ACTION TITLE & SHORT DESCRIPTION	INTEND RESULT	RESOURCES & ASSETS	RESPONSIBLE ORGANISATION / KEY PARTNERS
<p><b>15. CONVERSAS A PROPÓSITO+ – YOUTH-PRODUCED STORIES FOR SOCIAL CHANGE</b></p> <p>This action builds on the successful municipal podcast “Conversas a Propósito” by transforming it into a youth-led creative media lab. Secondary school and university students will be trained in podcasting, video production, and storytelling techniques, with the aim of producing original short episodes that feature migrant stories, challenge prejudice, and promote inclusive narratives.</p> <p>The content will be shared across multiple platforms — including social media, municipal websites, local radio and school events — creating a permanent intercultural communication channel co-owned by the youth of Fundão. The initiative will also offer media literacy skills, strengthen civic voice, and foster empathy across generations.</p> <p>By placing young people in the role of inclusive storytellers, this action nurtures active citizenship and gives visibility to diversity through creative expression.</p>	<p>Increased intercultural understanding among young people</p> <p>Enhanced visibility of migrant voices and local diversity</p> <p>Development of communication and media skills in youth</p> <p>Integration of inclusive narratives into public education and discourse</p> <div data-bbox="624 696 770 819">  </div> <p><b>DIGITALISATION</b> – Equips youth with digital storytelling skills and platforms to share migrant narratives and combat prejudice.</p>	<p>Podcast studio or mobile recording kits</p> <p>Media literacy and storytelling trainers</p> <p>Partnerships with schools and Rádio Cova da Beira</p> <p>Youth mentors and co-creation facilitators</p>	<p><b>Municipality of Fundão</b> (Education, Youth and Communication Units)</p> <p>Local schools, universities and media outlets—Rádio Cova da Beira</p> <p>CLAIM Fundão and migrant youth groups</p> <p>Cultural associations and podcast producers</p>
<p><b>16. VISIBLE VOICES – URBAN ANTI-PREJUDICE MURALS</b></p> <p>This action will transform public spaces in Fundão and surrounding parishes through the creation of large-scale murals co-designed by local and migrant artists. Each mural will visually narrate a real story of migration, intercultural friendship or personal resilience, turning walls into platforms for dialogue, memory and representation.</p> <p>The murals will feature QR codes linking to related digital content — such as podcast episodes, video testimonies or educational materials — bridging physical space with interactive storytelling. The creative process will include participatory workshops with schools, youth groups and local communities, encouraging reflection, co-creation and collective pride.</p> <p>By embedding stories of coexistence into the urban fabric, this action turns everyday landscapes into lasting tools for anti-prejudice education and cultural recognition.</p>	<p>Increased cultural visibility in the public space</p> <p>Reduction of subtle and structural prejudice through artistic dialogue</p> <p>Greater engagement of youth and artists in anti-discrimination</p> <p>Lasting visual impact and community pride</p> <div data-bbox="617 1429 754 1570">  </div> <p><b>GENDER EQUALITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES</b> – Engages artists of all backgrounds and genders in collective storytelling through public art.</p>	<p>Public walls and permission from property owners</p> <p>Artist fees and materials (paint, scaffolding, documentation)</p> <p>QR-linked digital platform</p> <p>Educational workshops with local schools and associations</p>	<p><b>Municipality of Fundão</b> (Urbanism, Culture and Participation Units)</p> <p>Local and migrant artists</p> <p>Schools, parish councils and community centres</p> <p>Cultural NGOs and local media</p>

ACTION TITLE & SHORT DESCRIPTION	INTEND RESULT	RESOURCES & ASSETS	RESPONSIBLE ORGANISATION / KEY PARTNERS
<p><b>17. CHECK THE FACT, NOT THE FEAR – ANTI-RUMOUR CAMPAIGN</b></p> <p>This action will launch a youth-led digital campaign to combat misinformation and debunk persistent stereotypes about migrants — including myths related to welfare, safety, employment and religion. Co-designed with local students and media trainers, the campaign will produce short, visually engaging content such as videos, animations, infographics and podcast clips.</p> <p>All content will be adapted to Fundão’s specific context and disseminated through platforms commonly used by local youth and families, including Instagram, WhatsApp groups, Rádio Cova da Beira and municipal channels. Materials will be fact-checked and presented in accessible, multilingual formats to encourage broad community engagement.</p> <p>By tackling disinformation at the source — where it circulates most rapidly — this action builds digital resilience and promotes an</p>	<p>Increased critical thinking and fact-based discussions</p> <p>Reduced online and offline misinformation about migration</p> <p>Empowered youth as content creators and ambassadors of inclusion</p> <p>Improved public debate on diversity and rights</p>	<p>Youth media teams and communication trainers</p> <p>Collaboration with fact-checking organisations</p> <p>Graphic design and animation support</p> <p>Dissemination via municipal platforms and community radio</p>	<p><b>Municipality of Fundão</b> (Communication and Youth Units)</p> <p>Local schools and youth councils</p> <p>Rádio Cova da Beira and regional media</p> <p>Migrant support NGOs and digital literacy educators</p>
 <p><b>DIGITALISATION</b> – Deploys a fully digital campaign to counter disinformation and promote inclusive narratives on social platforms.</p>			

ACTION TITLE	TIMESCALE					ESTIMATED BUDGET	MAIN FUNDING SOURCES	TYPE OF INVESTMENT
	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030			
<b>15. CONVERSAS A PROPÓSITO+ – YOUTH-PRODUCED STORIES FOR</b>						110 000,00 €	Erasmus+, AMIF	Media lab equipment
<b>16. VISIBLE VOICES – URBAN ANTI-PREJUDICE MURALS</b>						130 000,00 €	EEA Grants, URBACT	Artistic production
<b>17. CHECK THE FACT, NOT THE FEAR – ANTI-RUMOUR CAMPAIGN</b>						100 000,00 €	AMIF, Erasmus+, PT2030	Digital content & youth training

= Start-up / Pilot
  = Implementation / Expansion
  = Evaluation
  = Maintenance / Transfer

## 4.3 RISK ASSESSMENT

### *Anticipating barriers and ensuring adaptive implementation*

Delivering an inclusive and community-driven action plan in a rural territory like Fundão comes with a set of challenges. While the actions proposed in this IAP are realistic and locally grounded, the implementation process may face internal and external risks that must be anticipated and managed proactively.

The table below outlines the **main categories of risk**, their **potential impact on the plan**, and the **mitigation measures** that will be adopted.

RISK CATEGORY	POTENTIAL IMPACT	MITIGATION STRATEGY
<b>Availability of funding</b>	Many actions depend on securing external funds.	Identify new funding sources, including private sector or philanthropic partnerships.
<b>Institutional delays</b>	Delays in public procurement, staffing or political approval may slow implementation.	Advance planning, early budget alignment, and cross-departmental coordination will reduce bottlenecks.
<b>Limited participation</b>	Difficulty mobilising target groups (e.g. migrants, youth) could affect action uptake.	Partnering with trusted local actors and mediators; using accessible formats; investing in outreach.
<b>Staff turnover</b>	Loss of key municipal or project staff may disrupt continuity and local knowledge.	Ensuring documentation, shared ownership and capacity-building across departments.
<b>Mismatch between ambition and resources</b>	Some actions may require more funding or human capacity than initially planned.	Phased implementation, flexible timelines, and strategic partnerships to share costs and expertise.
<b>Community resistance or prejudice</b>	Anti-migrant sentiment may undermine participation or communication campaigns.	Early engagement of residents, use of storytelling and visible benefits to build trust and empathy.
<b>Digital exclusion</b>	Some target groups may lack access to devices or digital literacy.	Blended formats (online + in-person), digital mediators, and support from schools and libraries.
<b>Regulatory or legal constraints</b>	Bureaucratic obstacles (e.g. housing regulations, recognition of skills) may block progress.	Close work with national agencies (IEFP, housing services) to anticipate requirements and find solutions.

**Overall**, the municipality sees risk management not as an obstacle but as part of a **learning-by-doing approach**. The flexible and modular structure of the IAP allows for **adjustments based on feedback, context and results**, while keeping the core vision and values intact.



## 4.4 IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

### Tracking results, learning from experience

To ensure the IAP creates meaningful change, Fundão will apply a simple and effective evaluation model. The goal is not just to count activities, but to understand what works, for whom, and why.

Each action will be monitored through a set of indicators, covering four key dimensions:

1. **Access** – Are migrant residents using the services?
2. **Participation** – Are migrants involved in shaping or delivering the actions?
3. **Quality** – Are the actions delivered effectively and with user satisfaction?
4. **Change** – Are we seeing improvements in inclusion, trust, and opportunity?

Indicators will include both **numbers** (e.g. participants, sessions, referrals) and **feedback** (e.g. testimonials, interviews, informal reflections).

Fundão's **Migration Centre** and **ULG members** will support annual tracking, using a combination of internal reports, quick surveys and community dialogues. Results will guide adjustments, support funding applications, and promote shared learning.

A full list of indicators per action is provided in the next table (see p. 46 and p.47).

Ultimately, the IAP is a flexible roadmap — its value lies not only in action delivery, but in **strengthening local capacity to reflect, adapt and include**.

ACTION TITLE	ACCESS INDICATORS	PARTICIPATION INDICATORS	QUALITY INDICATORS	CHANGE INDICATORS
1. CIRCULAR CONSTRUCTION – DIY WORKSHOPS	Participants reached; number of DIY sessions	Co-design involvement; community input	Satisfaction scores; reuse rate	Skills improved; self-renovation cases
2. RURAL LIVING PILOT	Families housed; housing units activated	Mentorships created; parish coordination	Housing quality; settlement follow-up	Demographic retention; village reactivation
3. SHARED SPACES, SHARED RESPONSIBILITY	Buildings improved; residents engaged	Resident-led design; feedback collected	Improvement durability; inclusion feedback	Neighborhood cohesion; care for space
4. SKILLS PASSPORT	Passports issued; sectors validated	Stakeholder workshops; candidate engagement	Employer validation; accuracy rate	Job access speed; confidence increase
5. WORLD MARKET & MIGRANT POP-UP SHOPS	Traders supported; pop-up locations used	Trader diversity; events co-organized	Business legalization; branding quality	Income generation; visibility of cultures
6. JOB SHADOWING & MICROINTERNSHIPS	Internships completed; profiles matched	Employer feedback; post-placement actions	Learning outcomes; mentor feedback	Employment access; network expansion
7. INCLUSIVE EMPLOYERS PACT – FUNDÃO EDITION	Companies involved; pledges signed	Staff consultation; HR collaboration	Diversity practice adoption; staff feedback	Inclusive hiring; workplace retention
8. HEALTH ACCESS NAVIGATORS	Mediators trained; sessions held	Partner NGOs engaged; co-design feedback	Navigation success rate; case resolution	Health access equity; reduced missed visits
9. WOMEN'S HEALTH CIRCLES	Sessions delivered; women reached	Peer facilitation; local networks mobilized	Trust ratings; wellbeing follow-up	Service uptake; reduced stigma

ACTION TITLE	ACCESS INDICATORS	PARTICIPATION INDICATORS	QUALITY INDICATORS	CHANGE INDICATORS
<b>10. MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT &amp; REFERRAL HUB</b>	Users assisted; schools/centres covered	User co-creation; referral feedback	Referral speed; user retention	Mental wellbeing gains; early detection
<b>11. PREVENTION FIRST – COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLBEING CAMPAIGNS</b>	People screened; outreach sites	Partner clinics; info session feedback	Screening follow-up; information clarity	Increased prevention; reduced gaps
<b>12. FRONTLINE ENGLISH – PUBLIC SERVICES</b>	Staff trained; coverage by department	Interactive training; participant feedback	Usefulness ratings; retention tests	Improved user-staff interaction
<b>13. SCHOOL WELCOME TEAMS</b>	Teams set up; pupils/parents involved	Parent groups; multilingual resources	Adaptation to needs; school feedback	Better pupil integration; parent engagement
<b>14. BRIDGE TO LEARNING – YOUTH HUB</b>	Youth enrolled; pathways activated	Youth-led guidance; drop-out tracking	Youth progression; mentor assessment	Return to education or training
<b>15. CONVERSAS A PROPÓSITO+</b>	Youth trained; episodes published	Community storytelling; school use	Media quality; audience response	Narrative shift; youth leadership
<b>16. VISIBLE VOICES – URBAN MURALS</b>	Murals completed; QR scans tracked	Artist workshops; student participation	Artistic quality; story accuracy	Attitude change; inclusive symbolism
<b>17. CHECK THE FACT – ANTI-RUMOUR CAMPAIGN</b>	Materials shared; viewers reached	Youth co-creation; campaign pilots	Clarity; myth debunking effectiveness	Reduced misinformation; stronger dialogue



## 4.5 GOVERNANCE AND PARTNERSHIPS

### *Shared responsibility and coordinated implementation*

The success of this IAP depends on clear leadership, strong local ownership, and sustained cooperation between different sectors. Fundão's governance model is designed to ensure that implementation is not just managed by the municipality, but co-owned by key actors across public services, civil society and migrant communities.

#### LEAD COORDINATION BODY

The **Municipality of Fundão** will act as the lead coordinator of the IAP, through the **Department for Social Inclusion and Citizenship**, with technical support from the **Migration Centre** and **CLAIM Fundão**. This unit will oversee action monitoring, interdepartmental coordination, reporting, and alignment with other strategic plans (such as MIXin3).

#### CORE IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS

Each action will be delivered in close collaboration with relevant local actors, such as:

- **Public institutions:** IEPF, health centres, schools, parish councils
- **Civil society:** migrant associations, youth groups, NGOs
- **Employers:** local businesses, social economy initiatives
- **Cultural and media organisations:** Rádio Cova da Beira, artists, local press
- **Volunteers and residents:** especially those involved in co-design and peer support models

Formal and informal partnerships will be adapted to each action's nature and scale. Wherever possible, the plan will build on **existing cooperation networks** to avoid duplication and ensure continuity.

#### URBACT LOCAL GROUP (ULG)

The **URBACT Local Group**, active since 2023, will continue to play a key role in governance as a space for joint reflection, mobilisation and monitoring. ULG members include municipal staff, service providers, educators, cultural actors and migrants themselves. The group will meet at least twice a year to review progress, discuss challenges and adjust priorities.

#### YOUTH AND MIGRANT VOICE

Ensuring the meaningful participation of migrants and young people is central to the governance model. This will include:

- Involvement of **peer mediators, youth councils** and **school teams** in action delivery
- Periodic **consultations and storytelling** spaces
- Support for **leadership pathways** for underrepresented voices

#### SUSTAINABILITY AND LONG-TERM OWNERSHIP

While some actions are pilot initiatives, the IAP is designed for sustainability. Actions will be gradually embedded into existing municipal services or handed over to local institutions and community groups with proven capacity and trust. Capacity-building and visibility will be key to supporting this transition.



fundão  
365 dias à descoberta

Um documentário  
sobre raízes e asas .

A documentary  
about roots and wings.

Fundão  
Terra de Acolhimento  
Embracing Place



**COMMUNICATION AND**  
**ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY**

# COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

*Keeping the IAP visible, participatory and community-driven*

Effective communication is key to the success of this Integrated Action Plan. It ensures that migrant residents, public servants, partners and the wider community are informed, involved and motivated throughout the implementation process.

Fundão's communication and engagement strategy is built on three guiding principles:

## VISIBILITY

The IAP will be made visible through clear, multilingual, and accessible channels. Actions, milestones and opportunities will be communicated regularly via:

- The **Municipality of Fundão website** and the **platform fundaoa-colhe.pt**
- Local radio (e.g. **Rádio Cova da Beira**), community noticeboards, and parish centres
- Social media (Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram) and schools

Each action will include tailored outreach depending on the target group — such as youth, women, rural residents, or employers.

## PARTICIPATION

Communication is not only top-down. Migrants and local actors will be invited to **co-create content**, give feedback, and lead parts of the engagement process. Examples include:

- Podcasts, videos and murals produced by young people
- Peer mediators supporting communication in health and education
- Storytelling formats shared in schools, events and public spaces

Feedback loops — such as quick surveys, focus groups or open meetings — will be embedded in each phase to adapt messages and improve practices.

## RECOGNITION AND REPLICATION

The strategy will highlight positive examples and “success stories” from different parts of the IAP to inspire participation and transferability. Local partners and institutions that actively promote inclusion will be recognised (e.g. via the “Fundão for Inclusion” label).

Where relevant, Fundão will share its experience through URBACT, national platforms and European networks, contributing to wider learning on inclusion in rural and small-town contexts.

In short, communication is not a side activity, but a central part of building inclusive communities. It helps make migrants visible not only as users of services, but as co-authors of shared progress.

## IAP WELDI FUNDÃO – COMMUNICATION ACTION PLAN

ACTION / GOAL	KEY ACTIVITIES	TARGET AUDIENCE	COMMUNICATION CHANNELS	TIMING
<b>Launch of the IAP (public announcement)</b>	Press release, public event, publication online	General public, media, partners	Municipal website, Rádio Cova da Beira, local press	Q1 2026
<b>Engaging migrant residents about new services</b>	Flyers, WhatsApp groups, posters in strategic points	Migrant communities, interpreters, NGOs	Parish centres, WhatsApp, multilingual flyers	Rolling (from Q2 2026)
<b>Involving youth in media and storytelling</b>	Podcast & video training in schools and media labs	Secondary students, university youth	Instagram, YouTube, school radio	Q3 2026 – Q2 2027
<b>Informing service staff and institutions</b>	Targeted briefings and email newsletters to staff	Municipal departments, schools, health staff	Internal emails, team meetings, intranet	Start of each school year
<b>Highlighting positive examples and role models</b>	Social media series, mural coverage, interviews	Local population, schools, visitors	Facebook, murals with QR codes, podcast episodes	Twice a year
<b>Combating stereotypes and misinformation</b>	Infographics, anti-rumour videos, fact-check posts	Public at large, especially online audiences	Instagram reels, TikTok, municipal site	Monthly (from Q2 2027)
<b>Reporting progress and evaluation results</b>	Annual summary posted online and shared in ULG	ULG members, funders, local institutions	PDF reports, infographics, public presentations	Annually (starting Q4 2027)

A large crowd of diverse people is gathered outdoors on a grassy area, possibly for a community event or festival. In the background, there are large blue and orange awnings. Overlaid on the image is a white line-art graphic of a globe with three location pins. The text "OUTLOOK AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVES" is prominently displayed at the bottom in large, bold letters.

# OUTLOOK AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

# OUTLOOK AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

## *From inclusive pilot actions to sustainable territorial transformation*

The WELDI Integrated Action Plan is not an isolated document or a time-limited project. It is part of a broader, evolving strategy to make Fundão a reference territory for inclusion, participation and innovation in rural Europe. The plan reflects a vision where migration is not only managed but valued; where diversity is not only accepted but celebrated; and where small towns are not left behind but lead the way in rethinking integration.

As implementation begins, several of the proposed actions are expected to generate lasting institutional, social and territorial change. Some will quickly embed themselves into the routines of local services — such as the School Welcome Teams or Health Access Navigators — while others, like the Circular Construction workshops or the World Market & Pop-Up Shops, may start as pilots and gradually scale through partnerships and community ownership.

One key outlook is the **mainstreaming of successful interventions**. The municipality will evaluate early outcomes and, where positive, incorporate them into permanent programmes and budget lines. This includes formalising peer mediation structures, integrating youth-produced media into school curricula, or ensuring annual visibility for inclusive employers and migrant-led initiatives.

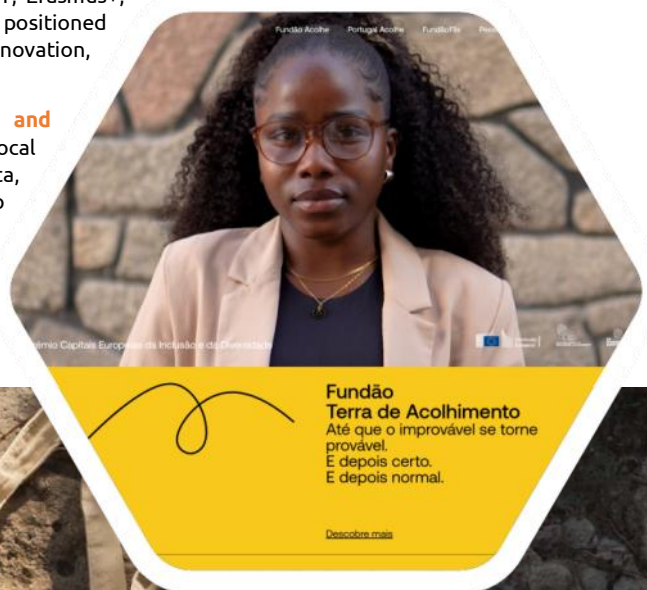
At the same time, the IAP opens new avenues for **European cooperation and investment**. The connections built through the WELDI network — and through parallel initiatives like URBACT, Erasmus+, Interreg and EUI — will serve as a launchpad for follow-up projects. Fundão is well positioned to lead or participate in thematic partnerships on topics such as rural housing innovation, circular skills, youth civic engagement and inclusive labour market transitions.

The municipality also recognises the importance of **institutional learning and adaptability**. Migration flows and community needs evolve, and so must local strategies. The IAP is conceived as a flexible roadmap, able to incorporate new data, tools and ideas. The municipal Migration Observatory and the URBACT Local Group will continue to play a role in identifying gaps, amplifying community voices and proposing new solutions.

Crucially, Fundão sees this plan not only as a local instrument but as a **contribution to wider European learning**. Small and medium-sized towns across the continent are facing similar challenges — ageing populations, depopulated villages, strained public services, and growing diversity. The actions designed and tested here may not be universal, but they offer **transferable insights**, especially for territories with limited resources and strong community ties.

Through publications, peer exchanges, site visits and storytelling formats, Fundão is committed to sharing both its achievements and its lessons — including what didn't work, and why. The goal is to inspire and support others, just as the town has learned from cities like Seine-Saint-Denis within the WELDI partnership.

In the end, what this IAP proposes is simple but powerful: that **inclusion becomes a permanent, visible and shared responsibility**, embedded in how a territory defines success. It is not a separate agenda, but a lens through which public services, planning, education and community life are reimagined. With sustained leadership, cross-sector collaboration and civic trust, **Fundão is ready to move from words to action — and from action to impact.**



A person is seen from behind, sitting at a white desk on a grassy hillside. They are working on a laptop. A yellow and black bicycle is parked next to the desk. In the background, there is a vast valley with a town and rolling hills under a clear sky. Overlaid on the image are several white dashed lines forming a large circle and a smaller circle, along with several 'x' marks. A large white outline of a globe with three location pins is also overlaid on the right side of the image.

# BIBLIOGRAPHY AND WEB REFERENCES

# BIBLIOGRAPHY AND WEB REFERENCES

This Integrated Action Plan has drawn upon a wide range of local, national and European resources, including strategic documents, good practices, policy reports and project platforms. The following references have informed the diagnosis, design and implementation logic of the Fundação IAP:

## LOCAL AND NATIONAL SOURCES

- Município do Fundão (2021). *Plano Municipal para a Integração de Migrantes – MIXin3*. <https://fundaoacolhe.pt>
- CLAIM Fundão – Centro Local de Apoio à Integração de Migrantes. <https://www.acm.gov.pt>
- IEFP – Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional. <https://iefp.pt>

## EUROPEAN POLICY AND STRATEGIC FRAMEWORKS

- European Commission (2021). *Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021–2027*. <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration>
- European Commission. *EU Rural Action Plan and Long-Term Vision for Rural Areas*. <https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/long-term-vision-rural-areas>

## URBACT AND WELDI RESOURCES

- URBACT Secretariat (2023). *UIV-APN Guide: Integrated Action Plans*.
- URBACT WELDI Network (2023–2025). *Internal Exchange Reports, Peer Reviews and Templates*. <https://urbact.eu>
- URBACT Knowledge Hub – Inclusion and Migration. <https://urbact.eu/topics/social-inclusion>

## GOOD PRACTICES AND PROJECT INSPIRATIONS

- “Refugee Voices Tours” – Berlin <https://www.refugeevoices tours.org>
- “Uniti per l’Arte” – Bologna
- “MindSpring” Programme – Netherlands
- “Passeport de Compétences” – France
- “MapMyCulture” – Spain
- “StartUp Street” – Lisbon
- “Inclusive Employers UK” – <https://www.inclusiveemployers.co.uk>
- “Anti-Rumours Global” – Barcelona <https://antirumours.com>
- “Schools of Sanctuary” – UK <https://schools.cityofsanctuary.org>

## VISUAL AND COMMUNICATION TOOLS

- Rádio Cova da Beira – Local Media Partner <https://www.radiocovadabeira.pt>
- Canva and Flaticon – Icons and infographics
- Fundação Acolhe Platform – Municipal Communication and Information Portal <https://fundaoacolhe.pt>



# FINAL NOTES

# FINAL NOTES

## *Acknowledgements and thanks*

The Municipality of Fundão would like to express sincere thanks to all those who have contributed to the creation of this Integrated Action Plan.

This document is the result of **shared reflection, practical cooperation and collective ambition**. It was shaped through conversations with migrant residents, frontline workers, teachers, employers, volunteers, and local institutions — all of whom brought their experiences, concerns and ideas with generosity and openness.

We warmly thank the members of the **URBACT Local Group (ULG)**, who have been active throughout the WELDI process, offering strategic input, participating in pilot actions and ensuring that the plan remains grounded in local reality. Their commitment to inclusion and civic dialogue is at the heart of this IAP.

Special recognition is due to the team at **CLAIM Fundão**, the **Fundão Migration Centre**, and all departments of the municipality who have supported the process — particularly the services of education, social inclusion, health, urban planning and culture.

We also gratefully acknowledge the **URBACT Secretariat**, the **WELDI Lead Partner**, the **Lead Expert Dirk Gebhardt**, and **our partner cities across Europe**, whose expertise, peer support, and openness to exchange have inspired and strengthened our work.

Finally, we would like to thank the **residents of Fundão**, both long-standing and newly arrived, who continue to shape the identity of this territory through their presence, their efforts, and their belief that diversity makes us stronger.

**Together, we build a more inclusive and welcoming Fundão — for today and for the future.**

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# fundão



## INTEGRATED ACTION PLAN



**Fundão**  
**Embracing Place**  
Until the unlikely  
becomes likely.  
And then certain.  
And then normal.



**URBACT**



Co-funded by  
the European Union  
Interreg