

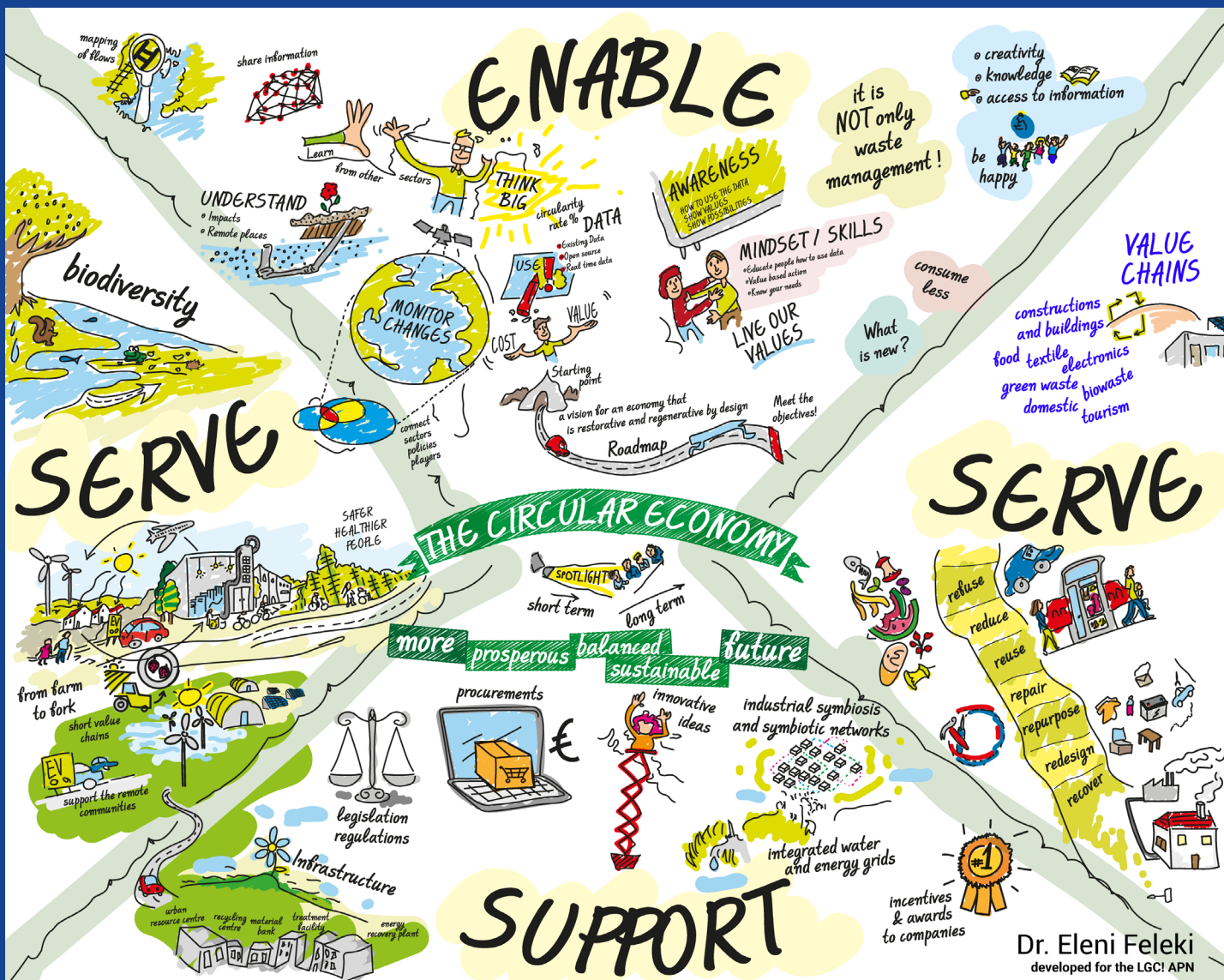
# LET'S GO CIRCULAR!

Paving the way for a circular transition of cities

December 2025

## 6th QUARTERLY REPORT

By Dr. Eleni Feleki, Lead expert



Dr. Eleni Feleki  
developed for the LGC! APN

- 8th Transnational Meeting in Cluj Napoca, May 2025
- 9th Transnational Meeting in Corfu, September 2025
- 10th Transnational meeting in Granada, December 2025

- Climate Conference in Cluj Napoca
- Smart Cities Expo Barcelona
- Open day in Granada, December 2025

Study visits in Cluj Napoca, Corfu and Granada

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# LET'S GO CIRCULAR!

Paving the way for a circular transition of cities

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- 2. 8th transnational meeting in Cluj Napoca: **Tools developed;**  
**Highlights including study visits; Lessons learnt and next steps**
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**Highlights including study visits; Lessons learnt and next steps**
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**Highlights including study visits; Lessons learnt and next steps**
- 5. Granada Open Day
- 6. Participation of the network in Conferences and Summits
- 7. Support of the network to additional URBACT activities

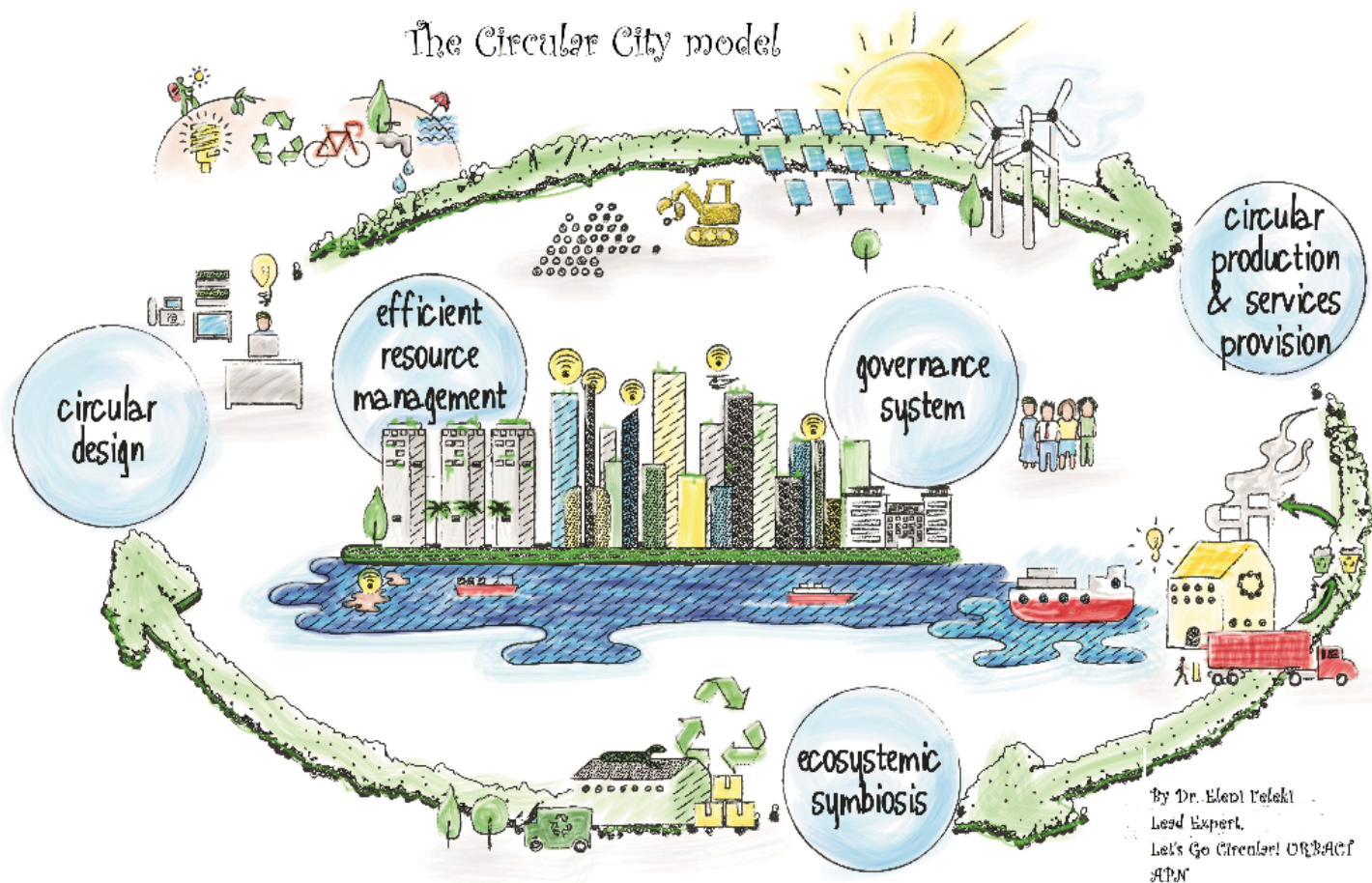
# LET'S GO CIRCULAR!

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## The network in a nutshell

With **Munich as Lead Partner**, the URBACT “LET’S GO CIRCULAR! – Paving the way for a circular transition of cities” network started in **June 2023**.

The cities that take part in the network, apart from Munich, include Cluj-Napoca metropolitan area in Romania, the Greek island of Corfu, Granada in Spain, Malmö in Sweden, Riga in Latvia, Oulu in Finland, as well as Guimarães and Lisbon in Portugal and Tirana. **Our understanding of the circular city** is depicted here!



**The themes of focus of the network are the following:**

1. Governance
2. Education, information, capacity building for circular consumption patterns
3. Development of methodologies and tools
4. Fostering innovation and entrepreneurship
5. Infrastructure



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## 8<sup>th</sup> transnational meeting in Cluj Napoca

### Message about circular economy at local level

The City's vision towards 2030 is to be **green, digital and resilient**.

Strategic decisions are taken following a **strong ecosystemic approach**, trying to have everyone around the table. There is a strong focus to **reduce GHG emissions, increase green spaces, implement the metropolitan green ring**, and the 3-30-300 rule. The City has already **achieved 40%** of the objectives in terms of planted trees, and with the east park, the city is supposed to get even closer to the target. Since the accession of the city into the EU, there has been a constant need to access EU funds.

Source: Mr. Liviu Purtator, Marketing Strategy Service, Cluj Napoca City

### Our ice break

A new **pin** is added to our hat that will continue its journey from city to city, until our **final event in Granada, in December 2025**. This is an amusing activity that is taking place in every transnational meeting.





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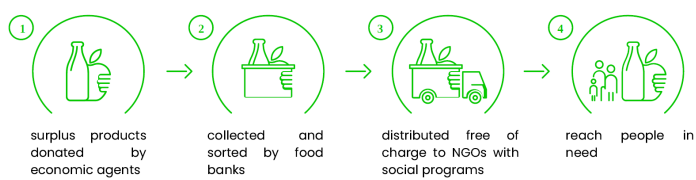
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## 8<sup>th</sup> transnational meeting in Tirana – Highlights

### Food Bank

While **6000 tons go to waste every day in Romania, 27.9% of population are at risk of poverty or social exclusion (second highest in the EU).**

Up to 50% of all food waste is produced by individual consumers in urban areas. **The Food Bank (Banca Pentru Alimente)** is a non-profit organisation that reduces food waste in the food sector and reduces poverty and hunger among disadvantaged groups in Cluj Napoca, Alba, Sibiu and Bistrița-Năsăud counties.



Tons of food saved from waste since founded (2018 - present)

4.697



Food saved from waste  
**1.483**  
tons



equivalent to **2.967.444** meals



**36 companies have donated products with a commercial value of EURO 4.885.774.** Types of donated products: leftovers after promotional events, with imperfections in appearance or size, close to expiration date (minimum 24h valid), with wrong packaging or labels, unused stock, free samples or seasonal products.

**149 non-governmental associations distributed the donated food to approximately 58.000 people.**

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8th transnational meeting Cluj– Study visit

## Study visit at Salina Turda

**Turda Salt Mine** is the world's most spectacular underground formation shaped by people. It is also one of the most **spectacular tourist destinations in the world**. It is the underground formation that people created in a special natural environment, in the depths of Transylvania, digging into the salt deposited after the evaporation of the sea that covered the entire region millions of years ago. **Now, the salt from Turda Salt Mine could cover the salt requirement for the entire Planet for 60 years, if it were necessary.**

The study visit is in line with our network's foundations, to protect and sustain natural resources, for the future generations.





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## Presentation of tools developed for participatory action planning implementation

### Template for budgeting actions

Title of action		Relevant strategies, policies, development programmes	
Link to intervention line			
Link to specific (operational) objective			
Short description of the action	Output indicator	Timescale	Rough cost estimation
Estimated impact on sustainability	(environmental/ social/economic/local/territorial/national)		€
Cross-cutting topics addressed	(diversity, green transition, digitalization)		
Status of the action	(On going/ planned/ new action)		
Rough risk estimation	(High/ low/ medium)		
Action owner			
Key stakeholders involved			
Horizontal level of governance			
Sectorial			
Vertical level of governance			
Territorial level			
Hard and soft investments			

List of activities for action # 1	Start – End date	Funds and other resources needed	Funding, financing and resource allocation programme	Risks	Stakeholders involved	Outputs
Activity #1 name xxx						
Description xxx						
Activity #2 name xxx						
Description xxx						
Activity #3						
Description xxx						
Total funds and assets needed						

Tools for budgeting and financing actions are presented. As soon as budgeting, is done, we then need to finance the actions, **combining public, private, regional, national, and EU funds.**

Community and donors

Global Communities - Crowdfunding

Donors

Local Communities

City own funds

Financial institutions

European Investment Bank (EIB)

Development Banks (DB)

Commercial Banks (CB)

Relevant for cities

European Energy Efficiency Fund

European Urban Initiative

Horizon Europe

Interreg – European Territorial Cooperation

Life+ programme and EUKI

Connecting Europe Facility (Digital, Energy and Transport)

Creative Europe

Digital europe

EEA and Norway grants

ERASMUS+

ESPON



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## Presentation of tools developed for participatory planning implementation

### Templates for creating funding mixes

Each funder needs to be assessed against eight criteria in order to cope up with **funding mixes**, per action. **The criteria are the following:**

1. How much funds could realistically be available for this action from this source?
2. Which of the activities are eligible for funding?
3. Which of the activities are NOT eligible for funding?
4. When is the next call or opportunity to apply for this funding?
5. When will the funder make the decision about the funding of the action?
6. Do you have experience in applying for this type of fund?
7. How successful were you in the past?
8. Are there any specific requirements for funding which cause issues?

For the assessment of the funders and options, the following tables can be used:

Action x	Name of the action		Overall budget of the action	
Funding source /criteria	Criterion 1	Criterion ...	Criterion 8	
Funder A: Municipality				
Funder B: Regional programme				
Funder C: Horizon call				
Funder D: Life				
Funder E: xxxx				

Options for action x	Funding mixes
1	Funder A, B,
2	Funder A,C
3	Funder C,D, E

Option appraisal question	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
How many funding sources are in the mix?			
Can all project costs be covered by the funding mix?			
Can all project activities be funded by the funding mix? If no, which are the activities that cannot be funded? Are these activities critical for the project? If yes, what other funding avenues exist for them?			
Are there any timing issues (critical timing gaps between call deadlines, time of decision)? If yes, how significant are they?			
How much human resources does your organization have to administer and manage the application process for all the funding applications in the mix?			
For how many of the identified funding sources does your organization/ key partners have experience of applying for funding?			
For how many of the identified funding sources does your organization/ key partners registered success in applying for funding?			
Are there any specific requirements of funders that might be difficult to meet and thereby reduce the likelihood of being successful in accessing the funds?			

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## Highlights

### Peer review of IAPs

Cities worked in groups, **to assess their progress** and **exchange ideas** and solutions using a common template shared in advance.



3. INTEGRATED APPROACH			
Parameters	Score	Concerns	Suggestions
The impact of the actions is referred in terms of environment, society and economy			
Contributions from range of agencies within the area to the action plan (horizontal integration)			
Contributions from higher levels of government in the action plan (vertical integration)			
Actions from both ERDF and ESF type are included either hard or soft actions			
3 Total score	0		
4 - FINANCE AND PLANNING IMPLEMENTATION			
Parameters	Score	Concerns	Suggestions
Gantt chart showing actions and timetable			
Financial planning and good funding mix			
Identifies and relates to specific measure in ERDF and/or ESF programmes			
Risks. Are risks identified and mitigated?			
4 Total Score	0		
5 - URBACT & EU ADDED VALUE			
Parameters	Score	Concerns	Suggestions
There is an explicit link to exchange and learning activities and mainly to the lines of intervention			
Learning from good practice elsewhere in Europe			
5 Total Score	0		
Final Score	0		
SUMMARY ANALYSIS			
Themes	Average score for theme	No of criteria measured in theme	Total scores
1 - PROCESS OF ACTION PLAN	0	2	0
2 - CONTENT OF ACTION PLAN	0	10	0
3 - INTEGRATED APPROACH	0	4	0
4 - FINANCE AND PLANNING	0	4	0
5 - URBACT & EU ADDED VALUE	0	2	0
Grand Total Score	0	22	0

**A group therapy session followed**, where ULG coordinators shared briefly the insights they got from their peers, during the peer review.

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## Highlights

### Presentation and workshop on monitoring frameworks

A presentation and workshop have been prepared and held by **Igor Kos**, URBACT ad hoc expert. The workshop was held in 3 parts: short presentation of the theory behind the monitoring frameworks, group activities in peer-to-peer format and conclusion with discussion. Participants were given in short presentation of **importance of monitoring plan**, how to use it for decision making and communication.

[ A Monitoring Plan Consists of (1):

#### Objectives of Monitoring

What do you want to monitor and why?

#### Indicators

Specific, measurable metrics to assess progress or performance.

#### Data Collection Methods

How will the data be collected?

#### Data Sources

Where will the data come from?

#### Frequency and Timing

When and how often will data be collected and reviewed?

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[ A Monitoring Plan Consists of (2):

#### Roles and Responsibilities

Who will be responsible for collecting, analysing, and reporting data?

#### Reporting Mechanisms

How and to whom will the findings be communicated?

#### Tools and Resources

What tools or systems will be used to support monitoring?

#### Quality Assurance Procedures

How will you ensure the data is reliable and accurate?

#### Feedback and Adaptation Process

How will monitoring results be used to improve the project?

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Participants were allocated in groups worked on **improvements of their IAPs based on the framework that had been previously presented.**



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## 9<sup>th</sup> transnational meeting in Corfu

### Message about circular economy at local level

**Dimitris Amvrosiadis**, President of Kapodistriaki Development S.A that is the direct network partner on behalf of Corfu island, welcomed the participants and noted the importance of the topic for the City as a whole. **Michail Chondrogiannis**, Deputy Mayor for Municipal Property and Education also addressed a welcoming speech. **Spyros Dialeto**s presented Kapodistriaki Development and finally, **Pantelis Giannoulis**, Deputy Mayor for Circular Economy and Cleaness presented the challenges of Corfu, being one of the denser islands of the Mediterranean, the barriers and the need for further financial support at the national level.

### Our ice break

A new **pin** is added to our hat that will continue its journey from city to city, until our **final event in Granada, in December 2025**. This is an amusing activity that is taking place in every transnational meeting.



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## Study visit

### Liapades Cleaning Buddies

Liapades Cleaning Buddies is **a volunteer local community group** focused on keeping Liapades village clean and environmentally friendly. They organize volunteer clean-up activities in and around the village and beaches. The group promotes recycling initiatives by setting up collection points for recyclable materials in the area. They also support environmental efforts and community projects (e.g., contributing funds to local animal welfare organizations).

They're essentially a **grassroots team of residents and helpers** (including locals and some foreigners living there) who care about environmental stewardship in Liapades and in Corfu as a whole.



### Testimonies by users of Liapades Cleaning Buddies:

*Liapades shows us what the power of community, awareness and determination can achieve. It has become a successful and growing mission against the lack of recycling management on Corfu. Please support the recycling centre whether you are a local or tourist staying locally - your small efforts really make a difference and keep this island looking beautiful!*

*We drive all the way from down south as this place is worth it!  
The team here are all volunteers helping to make the island cleaner and also raising funds for charities!!!....*

*The only place in middle Corfu where you can responsibly recycle and help environmental purposes.*



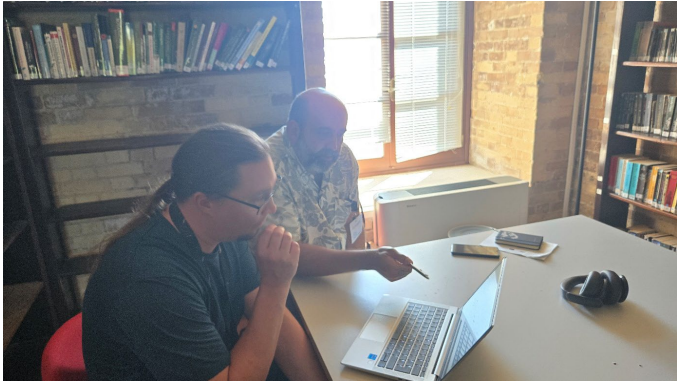
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## Highlights

### Final peer review of IAPs

Cities worked in groups, **to assess for one last time their progress** and **exchange ideas** and solutions, using a common template shared in advance.



3. INTEGRATED APPROACH			
Parameters	Score	Concerns	Suggestions
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Presentation of tools developed for participatory action planning implementation

## Communication of IAPs

Effective communication of IAPs has to consider the following foundation points:

- Difference between pitching and communicating
- Importance of having a clear idea on the audience and their needs
- Importance to stay clear, simple and focused
- Importance of using no more than 7 minutes
- Importance of having a clear structure and of breaking complex things into “threes”
- Importance of closing with the asks – normally more than three
- Importance of being well prepared, having practiced against the clock
- Importance of closing with power and passion
- Importance of staying clear about who you are, what you do and what is next if your asks are satisfied
- Importance about opening a pitch or a presentation in a strong way

### Overview of steps to build the pitch

1. Make your script to get your story straight
2. Build your slides and your graphics
3. Practice - get the body language clear and full of commitment
4. Deliver – finish on time
5. Make sure that you have a call to action

### The power of threes



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## Local progress

Almost all partners have implemented at least 10 ULG meetings since the beginning of the project. Smaller group, focused meetings have proven more effective than the plenaries.

All partners have finalized all Parts of their IAP.

All partners have designed and are currently implementing their testing actions. Some examples are depicted below:

- ❖ Textile school collection
- ❖ Circular Neighbourhoods
- ❖ Circular Tourism
- ❖ One day per week only vegetarian food served in school canteen
- ❖ Workshops for families to promote waste sorting
- ❖ Guide to sustainable procurement in the gastronomy sector in a museum
- ❖ Bike hospital
- ❖ Awareness raising through waste removal in degraded plots
- ❖ Circular area, Circular Hub

The compendium of testing actions has been shared with the partners.

All partners have planned final local meetings to finalise or communicate the IAP.

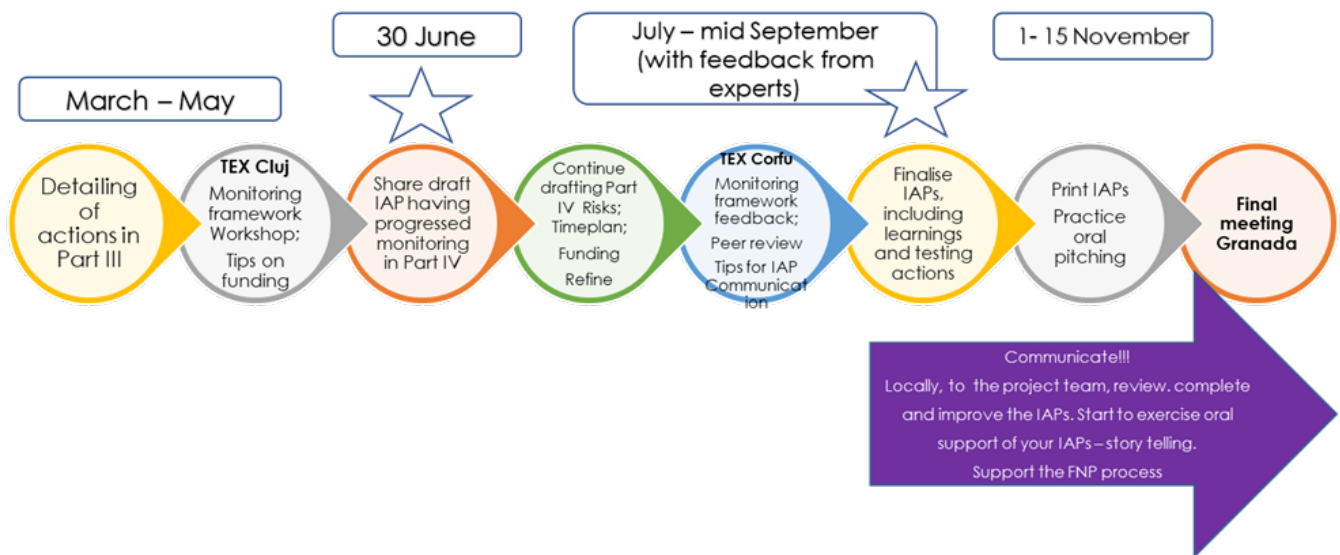
In terms of concerns, it is difficult to keep a consistent number of stakeholders attending and to keep their involvement high.

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## Next steps

- By mid October:
  - Finalise and check the whole IAP with your internal team
- By 15 November **the very latest**
  - Final improvements and finalization of IAP
- Think of ideas about future action planning networks and be open to discuss them with colleagues in the frame of the final meeting in Granada





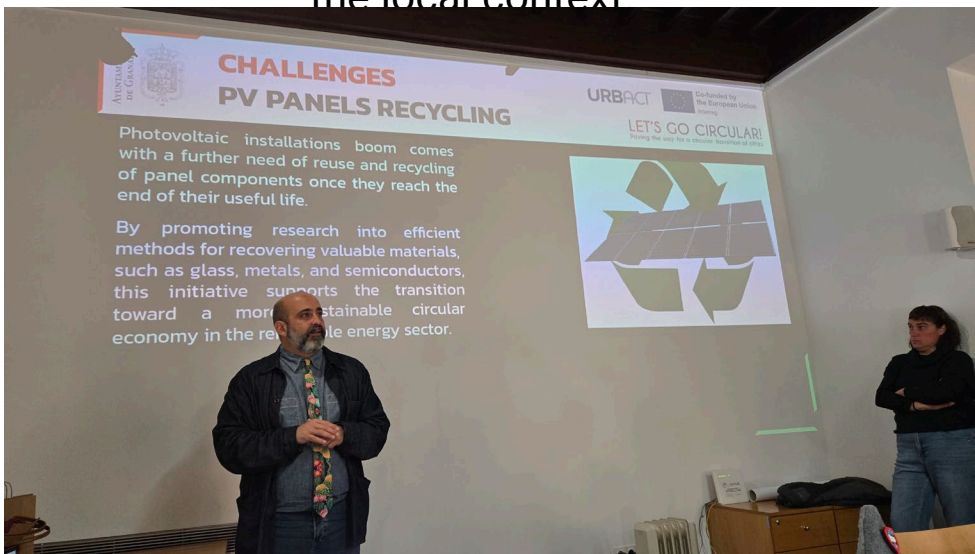
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10<sup>th</sup> transnational meeting in Granada

## Warm welcome

Silvia Ruiz, representing La Huella Verde - civil society, Isabel Ruiz Maldonado representing Hidralia / Emasagra, Leonardo González, ULG Coordinator and Ángel Luis Benito Pérez, project coordinator from the Municipality of Granada, welcomed us warmly, and introduced us to the local context



## Our ice break

The last pin is added to our hat that has eventually reached its **final destination!!!** This has been a very nice moment in our transnational meetings.



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## Progress achieved

### Overall assessment of the process/ progress/ outputs

An open discussion was held, to assess the process, the progress and the outputs of our network, as well as look forward. The discussion was facilitated by **Slido**.

Wordcloud poll



How would you like to characterise your LET'S GO CIRCULAR! journey?

017



Multiple choice poll



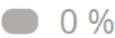
Did you manage to drive circular economy dialogue through your involvement in the network?

014

Yes



No



Not applicable



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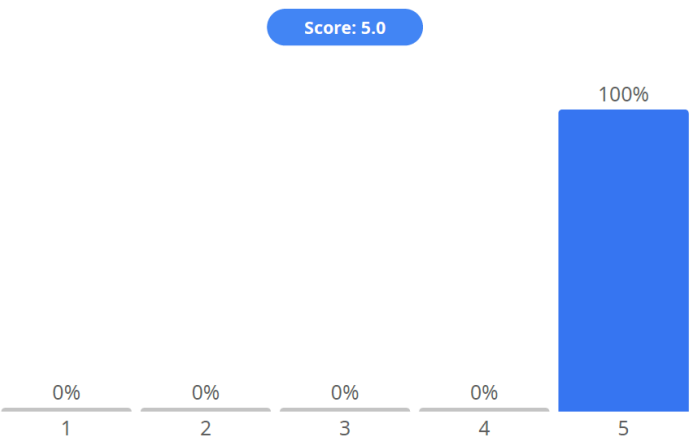
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## Progress achieved

## Assessment of resources

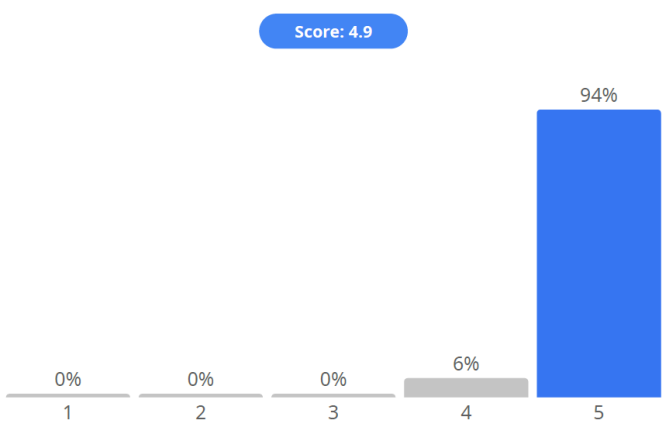
How useful has each of the following support at Network level been so far? c) Lead expert

018



How useful has each of the following support at Network level been so far? b) Lead partner support

018



## What else has been useful? (1/2)

014

- Commitment to the IAP
- Bond and advance together to other projects and applications
- Linking other cities with LGC partners
- Sauna experience in Oulu
- Share practices and pilots
- Get to know other realities and challenges
- See midnight sun
- Michelin restaurant
- Mix of countries/cities in the network, with different levels of knowledge and steps into CE.
- See and share pilots
- Seeing different initiatives in person
- Taste vegan plates
- Visiting other experiences
- Exchanging with projects at the cities
- Having the chance to see other cities plans
- See local examplea
- Visiting
- Much time to cocreate with our network partners
- Networking
- A lot of inspiration for the next steps



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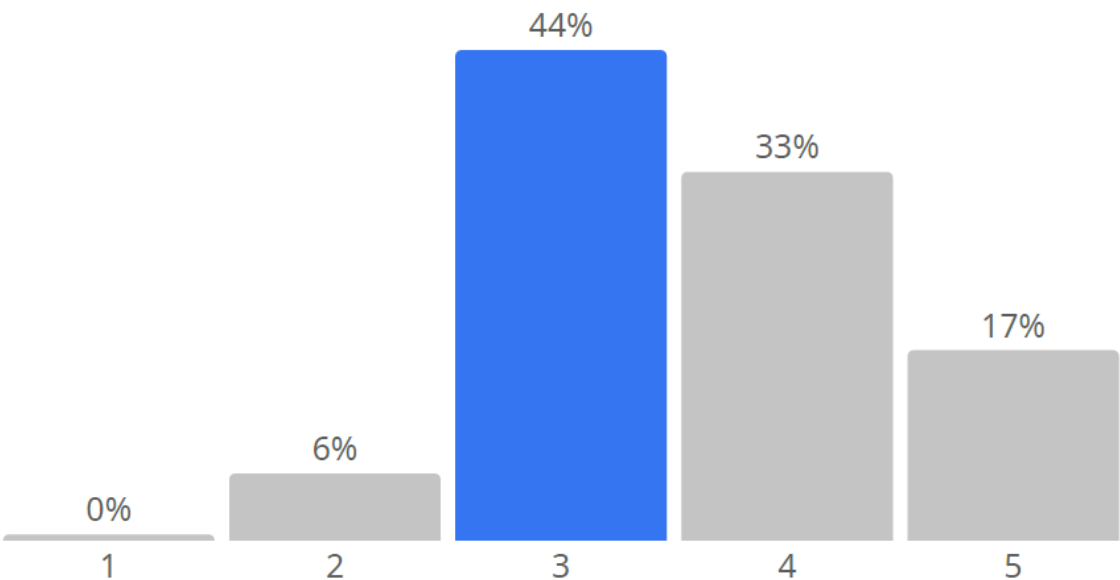
## Progress achieved

## Assessment of integration

To what extent did you manage to include the stakeholders you had initially foreseen in the process of planning the actions in your IAP (identifying priorities, potential solutions)?

018

Score: 3.6



Which type of integration was the most difficult to address either in the design of the IAP? Select the relevant ones only (1/2)

020

Sustainable urban development

5 %

Sectoral

5 %

Territorial

15 %

Multilevel governance

50 %

Stakeholder involvement in implementation

25 %

Spatial (coherence of actions at different spatial levels from site-specific, through neighbourhoods, city-wide and regional)

0 %

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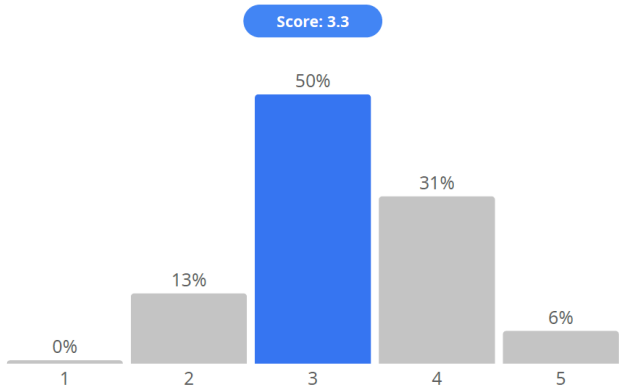
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## Progress achieved

## Challenges faced at local level

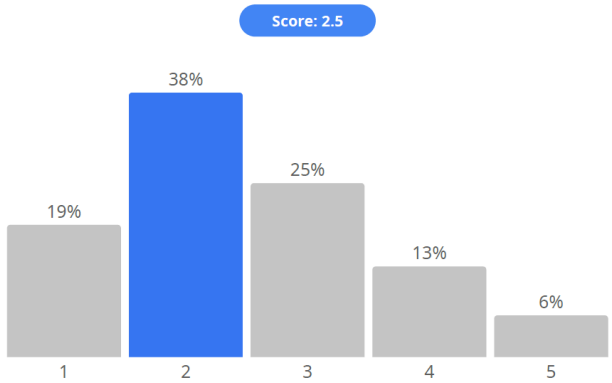
What challenges did you face at local level? a) Stakeholder have other priorities

016



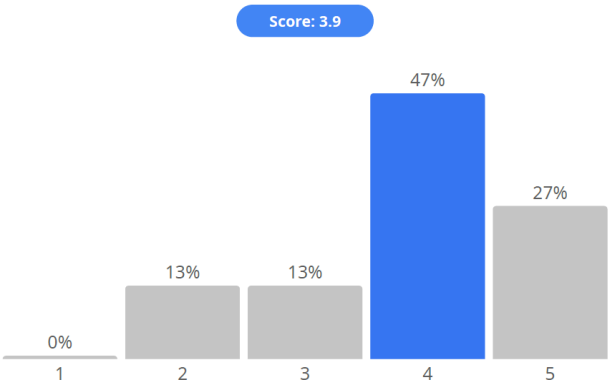
What challenges did you face at local level? b) lack of interest

016



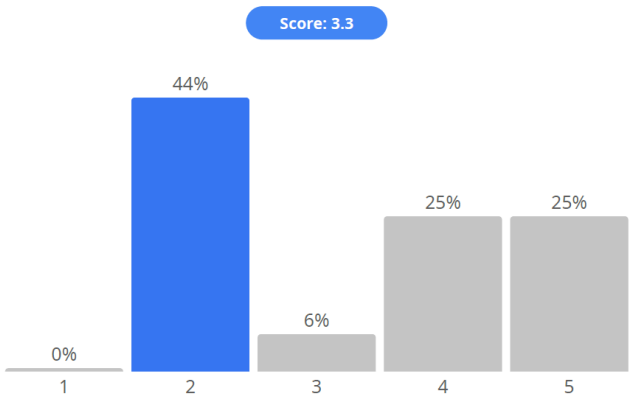
What challenges did you face at local level? c) time

015



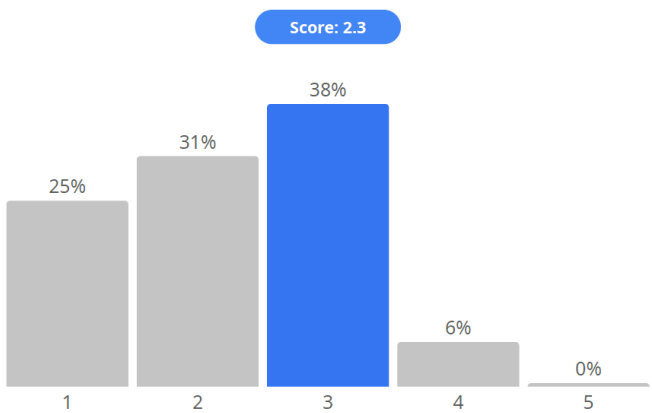
What challenges did you face at local level? d) political support

016



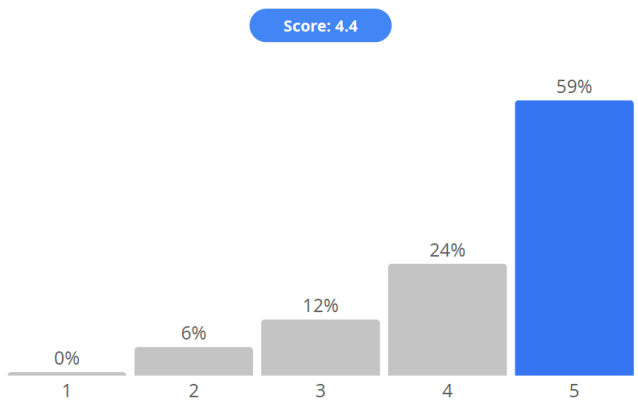
What challenges did you face at local level? e) skills

016



What challenges did you face at local level? f) funds

017



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## Looking ahead

### Capitalisation of participation in the network

Wordcloud poll



How will you capitalise your involvement in  
LET'S GO CIRCULAR!?

017



The discussion revealed several interesting ideas that could be presented in the next call that will be launched by URBACT.

The ideas revolved around the topics of environmental sustainability (i.e. air quality) but also social innovation.



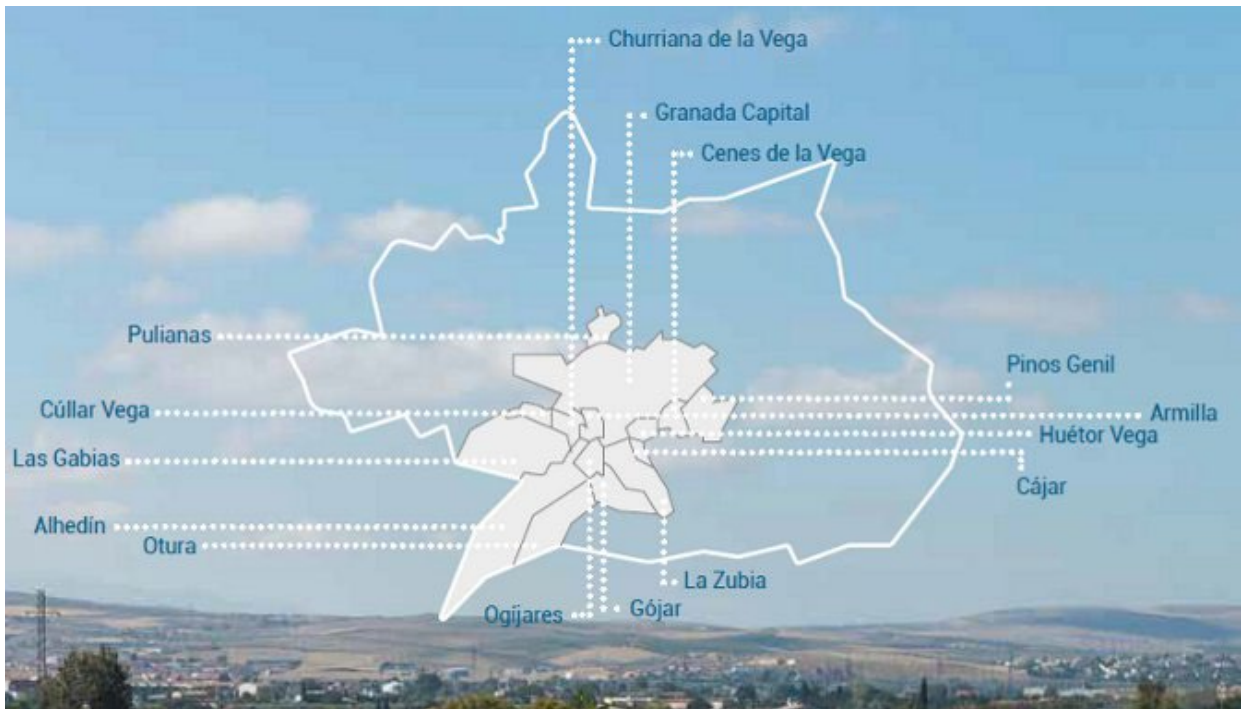
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## Study visits

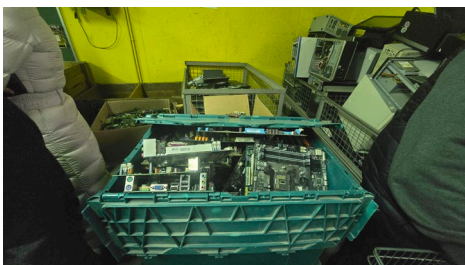
### Study visit in Emasagra

The Municipal Supply and Sanitation Company of Granada, S.A. (Emasagra) focuses its activity on the services of the **integral water cycle** in Granada and its metropolitan area, being the reference company in the province of Granada where it has been operating since 1982. Emasagra serves in 15 municipalities in the metropolitan area of Granada, with a population currently served at 391,194 inhabitants.



### Study visit in the North EcoPark

The North Ecopark of Granada It is a point that receives goods and end of life products, such as old furniture, computer and electronic appliances, cooking oils, industrial oils, clothing, glass, pruning remains, woods, debris, appliances, etc.



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## Granada Open Day

### Warm welcome

A very warm welcome was addressed by Vito Episcopo, City Councilor of Granada, Dr. Evelyne Menges, City Councilor of Munich and Sara Leiva, Treasurer on the Board of Granada Official Association of Architects.



### Supporting Granada's application for European Capital of Cultural

Bogdan Pivariu, Mayor of the Floresti commune , Dr. Evelyne Menges City councilor of Munich and Miina Anniina Heiskanen, Chairperson of the Urban Environment Board of the City of Oulu, **have signed their support for the application of Granada as a Capital of Culture for 2031.**



The Mayor of Granada, Marifrán Carazo, joined us in the very special moment.



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## Granada Open Day

### Political Panel

The Political Panel brought together representatives that exchanged ideas about how to move from plans to real, lasting transformation.

**From pilots... to policy.**

**From innovation... to implementation.**

**From inspiration... to investment.**

The Panel was composed by:

- Dr. Evelyne Menges, City Councilor, City of Munich
- Bogdan Pivariu, Mayor, Florești Commune, Cluj County, Romania
- Vito Episcopo, Deputy Mayor Granada City Council
- Miina Anniina Heiskanen, Chairperson of the Urban Environment Board, City of Oulu



### Market place of ideas

During the open day a networking space was created, featuring posters of **partners' profiles and displaying their videos** – both resources part of the final network output.





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## Granada Open Day

### Communication of the IAPs

A very special moment was when the ULG coordinators shared in 5' the achievements and highlights of their IAPs. **A memorable moment showing that hard work pays off.**





# LET'S GO CIRCULAR!

Paving the way for a circular transition of cities

## Granada Open Day

### Final network output

Our final network output has been presented in Granada by Larissa Kiesel: **An interactive Flipbook** that collects: Let's get started Quiz, Quotes and lessons learnt, City snapshots, Videos, Modules for cities to pave their way to circularity, Information and tips to climb the 10R ladder

#### Modules: You can go circular, too!

The following pages are designed as a modular set, allowing readers to employ specific modules based on their individual needs. One of the reasons for setting up the LET'S GO CIRCULAR! action planning network was the realisation that many European cities have already started taking actions to support circularity in their local urban ecosystem, but mostly in a fragmented way and with limited focal points, e.g. waste reduction. However, a holistic strategy is needed, that creates a framework for progressive evolution and provides the information and direction needed to guide local stakeholders, both within and beyond the municipal administration. It also helps stakeholders align their work with the achievement of the city's circular targets.

Our modules are based on these open access key articles from our Lead Expert Dr. Eleni Foleki, linked or available on <https://urbact.eu/networks/lets-go-circular>:

Transforming Urban Landscapes:  
Circular Economy Practices in European Cities. (2025)

Mainstreaming circular economy criteria in public procurements.  
The successful case of Lisbon (2024)

From waste to wonder The Successful Case of Guimarães in Shaping a Circular City.  
(2024)

Mainstreaming circular economy criteria in unused buildings.  
The successful case of Riga. (2024)

Oulu' alliance serving digitalization and circular economy. (2024)

Driving circular economy awareness and education across European cities. (2024)

LET'S GO CIRCULAR! Report Circular Malmö. (2024)

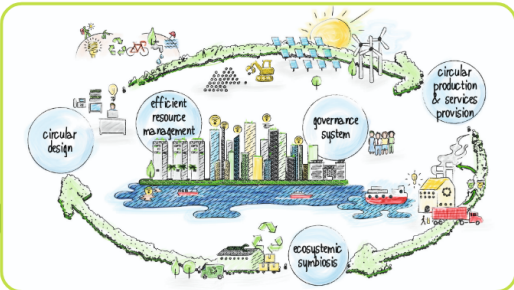
Testing Action Compendium (2025)

#### Module 1: Circular cities – our definition

According to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the circular economy is an imperative to deliver on the green transition and to mitigate the growing risks and negative impacts of climate change whilst boosting economic resilience and energy security.

In our understanding, a circular city has embedded the principles of the circular economy across the entire urban area and the important sectors and value chains. It operates within an interconnected network of systems that are designed to enable maximal use of resources, regenerate nature and decrease pollution.

In a circular city, collaboration between citizens, authorities, research facilities, and businesses is achieved. Products, services, infrastructure, buildings, and vehicles are designed to be durable, adaptable, modular, easy to maintain, share and repurpose, and locally sourced and serving consumption. A circular city is powered by renewable energy, everything can be composted, reused, or recycled while nature is flourishing, abundant, and used as design inspiration.



The Circular City model, as illustrated by LET'S GO CIRCULAR! Lead Expert Dr. Eleni Foleki

### Our final stop, a new beginning



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## Participation of the network in Conferences

### Climate Neutrality Summit 2025

The network was represented in the Climate Neutrality Summit 2025 that took place in Cluj Napoca in May 2025. Cities presented their testing actions and their achievements in the frame of the network.



### Smart Cities Expo

The network was represented by Wibke Borngesser in the Smart Cities Expo, in November 2025 in Barcelona.

The participation in the Smart city Expo was framed by the Greening Urban Economies Knowledge Hub.





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## Additional activities of the network, supporting URBACT

### Participation in the Greening Urban Economy Hub

Five URBACT networks (LET'S GO CIRCULAR!, COPE, EcoCore, In4Green and Greenplace) have been grouped together to formulate the Greening Urban Economy Knowledge Hub.

Common tasks are being held, listed below:

- Participation in the Community of Practice in the Smart Cities Expo (presented in the previous page)
- Webinar: What is a thriving urban economy?, organized and delivered by Eleni Feleki, lead expert
- Basecamp space for exchange of resources, knowledge and materials
- Collection of good practices and studies under the URBACT webpage

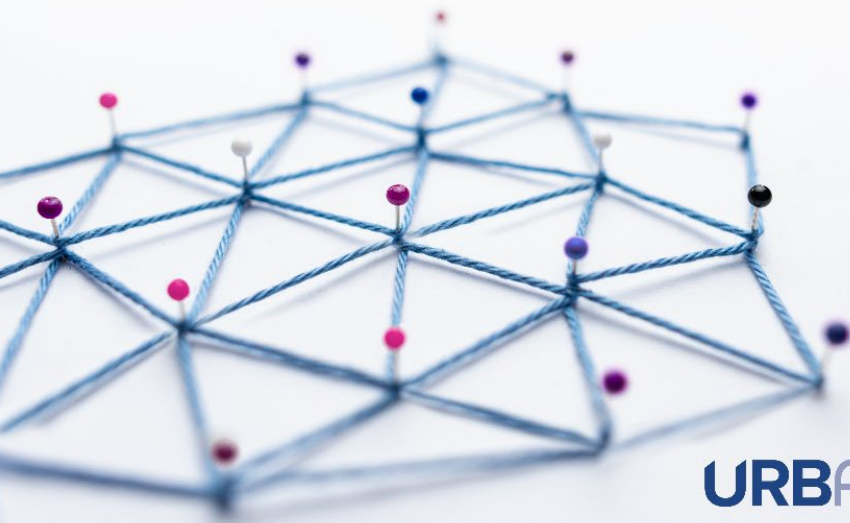
### Hosting of URBACT Pioneers in Munich

At the end of October 2025, the City of Munich, had the pleasure to host a group of cities from the Western Balkans. They are part of the URBACT learning programme designed exclusively for cities from accession countries, which is called URBACT Pioneers Accelerator. In 18 months, the programme supports 27 municipalities from the Western Balkans in transforming local governance by drawing on URBACT's expertise and real-life experiences from EU cities.



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URBACT



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Project website

<https://urbact.eu/networks/lets-go-circular>

Follow us on LinkedIn:

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/let-s-go-circular/>

For more information please contact:

Wibke Borngesser, project coordinator, City of Munich, [lgc\\_munich@muenchen.de](mailto:lgc_munich@muenchen.de)

Dr. Eleni Feleki, lead expert, URBACT, [efeleki@hotmail.com](mailto:efeleki@hotmail.com)

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