NextGen YouthWork

Developing a Hybrid and Sustainable Future for Youth Work

Baseline Study and Network Roadmap

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URBACT

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Abbreviations

AI	Artifical Intelligence
APN	Action Planning Network
CM	Core Meeting
CV	Curriculum Vitae
DDPP	Digital Decade Policy Programme
DESI	Digital Economy and Society Index
EACEA	European Education and Culture Executive Agency
ESF+	European Social Fund Plus
ESIF	European Structural and Investment Funds
EYCS	Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council
IAP	Integrated Action Plan
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
LE	Lead Expert
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, and more
LP	Lead Partner
NA	National Agency
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NGYW	NextGen YouthWork
OM	Online Meeting
PO	Policy Objectives
PP	Project Partner
REA	Research Executive Agency
SALTO	Support, Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities for Youth
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SV	Study Visit
ULG	URBACT Local Group
UN	United Nations
USU	URBACT Summer University
VR	Virtual Reality

1. EUROPEAN OVERVIEW

1.1. Introduction

Vision and strategy for hybrid and sustainable youth work

NextGen YouthWork is an URBACT Action Planning Network consisting of ten European cities: Eindhoven (the Netherlands), Aarhus (Denmark), Cartagena (Spain), Iași (Romania), Klaipėda (Lithuania), Oulu (Finland), Perugia (Italy), Tetovo (Republic of North Macedonia), Veszprém (Hungary) and Viladecans (Spain). NextGen YouthWork aims to create a long-term vision and strategy for a hybrid and sustainable youth work that effectively meets the needs of young people.

European youth spend much of their time online

With the rise of digitalisation, youth spend much of their time online, mostly in communities on social media like Instagram, Snapchat and TikTok or gaming platforms such as PlayStation, Discord and Twitch. Therefore, young people spend less time outside and in physical places like youth centres. According to the **Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Knowledge Gateway** data (2021), the percentage of teenagers spending more than 2 hours on screens at the age of 11 is between 43-67% for males and 30-66% for females. At 15, these numbers are even higher: 53-71% for males and 50-75 for females. According to estimates, young adults spend, on average, 6-7 hours per day on screens. This phenomenon was amplified during the Covid-19 outbreak when researchers saw screen time almost double during lockdowns. They suggested that screen time may decline post-covid, but not to the level we saw before. In short, the trend of spending more time online is here to stay.

Youth work starts where young people are

The fact that youth spend an increasing part of their time online and, therefore, less in physical public spaces also means that they need to be reached in the digital sphere and need digital counselling and information. The demand for digital youth work is exceptionally high among youth who experience social isolation, loneliness, anxiety, stress, depression, and digital or gaming addiction. Because of their social anxiety or less-developed social skills, they may experience many mental and physical obstacles when reaching out to youth workers or other professionals in the physical world, such as youth centres and schools.

Youth workers need to reach youth online

Youth workers are aware of behavioural change among youth and look for ways to better adapt to this phenomenon, thus using digital youth work. They want to be able to reach their target groups online and offline. However, this is challenging as it requires changes to how they work. Youth workers can use the key social media and gaming platforms to be accessible to 'their' young people, interact with them online, or promote their offline activities. In reality, most youth workers are reactive on these platforms; only a minority offer online services and create content more effectively.

Youth workers need more support to reach youth

Most youth workers need more insight into the online living environment of young people. They need to know the roles social media offers young people and what growing up in a digital environment requires regarding guidance. Nevertheless, there are many reasons for not tapping into the potential of digital youth work yet. These reasons range from a lack of funding from public authorities to a lack of education for youth workers. This leaves a gap between young people's needs and youth workers' professional development that requires to be bridged.

Tools for digital youth work are available

Plenty of tools in digital youth work need to be taken advantage of, such as providing platforms for peer-to-peer discussion on a diversity of themes, using gaming for training and learning, and reaching out to youth who are more challenging to reach offline. Moreover, digital youth work can address many areas relevant to youth, not only mental health issues. Digital tools provide an excellent opportunity for non-formal and informal learning about various specific skills and general topics, such as training, employment, mobility, gender equality and diversity, financial literacy and sexual education. Digital environments support community engagement and social and political participation. There are tools to improve low-threshold access to care or help and have an accessible way to contact professionals.

1.2. The UN-Habitat SDGs linked to the New Urban Agenda

Promoting social and environmental sustainability

UN-Habitat is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns, cities, and communities. As such, it helps countries access reliable data and information on urban conditions and trends and efficiently monitor and report on global agendas such as the **2030 Agenda** and the **New Urban Agenda**. UN-Habitat develops tools and approaches such as the urban observatory model, the **City Prosperity Initiative**, and the national sample of cities approach. It also builds the capacities of national and local governments, establishes local, regional, and global urban monitoring mechanisms, and supports urban data collection, analysis, and dissemination.

Sustainable Development Goals

The **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals, were adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity. The 17 SDGs are integrated, recognising that action in one area will affect outcomes in others and that development must balance social, economic and environmental sustainability. Countries have committed to prioritising progress for those who are furthest behind. The SDGs are designed to end poverty, hunger, AIDS, and discrimination against women and girls. The creativity, know-how, technology, and financial

resources from all parts of society are necessary to achieve the SDGs in every context.

Youth in SDGs

Youth does not have a dedicated SDG, but youth play a crucial role in achieving them. With more than half of the world's population under the age of 30, young people have the potential to be powerful agents of change. The SDGs recognise the importance of youth engagement and participation in the global development agenda. The goals specifically call for promoting youth employment, education, health, and well-being. Additionally, the SDGs encourage young people to be actively involved in decision-making processes and contribute to their communities' development. Empowering and involving young people can achieve a more sustainable, equitable, and prosperous future for all.

1.3. The European Union Policy Objectives

NextGen YouthWork is closely aligned with the **EU Cohesion Policy's objectives**, which aim to promote social inclusion, sustainable development, and the integration of all territories and local initiatives. Specifically, the project is focused on three of the five **policy objectives** (POs)

PO 4 - A more social and inclusive Europe implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights

The project's main objective is to create a long-term vision and strategy for digital youth work that will serve as a platform to bridge the digital divide and ensure that all young people have access to the same opportunities and services, regardless of their background or socio-economic status. This will contribute to the EU Cohesion Policy's objective of promoting social inclusion and equal opportunities. Moreover, the project aims to promote young people's physical and mental health by providing better access to digital youth work services.

PO 5 - A Europe closer to citizens

NextGenYouth Work is based on cooperation between government, social organisations, the business sector, knowledge institutions and, as an end-user, the youth. Including youth in the exchange of cities' experiences and good practices, as well as in small-scale actions that help create a 'Digital Youth City,' is closely linked to the EU Cohesion Policy Objective (5). This objective aims to foster sustainable and integrated development of all territories' and local initiatives. By giving youth a say in developing a more effective system of digital youth work and youth services, initiatives will be more sustainable and contribute to a more cohesive and integrated Europe.

PO 1 - A more developed and innovative Europe

NextGen YouthWork contributes to PO 1 A more developed and innovative Europe. It promotes the development and innovation of digital youth work initiatives by equipping youth workers with the skills necessary to utilise existing digital platforms and opportunities effectively. This will enable them

to provide better services and opportunities to young people, ultimately contributing to developing a more innovative Europe.

PO 2 - A greener, low-carbon transition towards a net-zero carbon economy and resilient Europe

NextGen YouthWork can contribute to this objective in several ways. Firstly, the project aims to develop digital youth work initiatives that are sustainable and environmentally friendly. By utilising digital possibilities and reducing the need for physical resources, the project can lessen its carbon footprint and contribute to the transition towards a greener Europe. Moreover, the project's focus on promoting young people's physical and mental health through digital youth work initiatives can also contribute to a more resilient Europe.

1.4. The Partnerships of the Urban Agenda for the EU

An integrated and coordinated approach

The **Urban Agenda for the EU** is an integrated and coordinated approach to dealing with the urban dimension of the EU and national policies and legislation. By focusing on concrete priority themes within dedicated Partnerships, the Urban Agenda seeks to improve the quality of life in urban areas. Based on the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality, the Urban Agenda focuses on the three pillars of EU policymaking and implementation: Better regulation, Better funding and Better knowledge.

Fourteen partnerships

Fourteen Partnerships have been defined, many on themes related to the environment and only a few on issues with a more substantial social dimension, such as culture and cultural heritage, digital transition, housing, inclusion of migrants and refugees and urban poverty. Each Partnership involves cities, Member States, the Commission on a voluntary and equal basis and stakeholders such as NGOs. Together, they work on developing and implementing concrete actions to tackle the challenges of cities successfully and contribute to green and digital transitions and other EU objectives.

New Leipzig Charter

The **New Leipzig Charter** provides a European policy framework for sustainable urban development. It considers the Urban Agenda for the EU to be the critical vehicle for its implementation. The renewal process of the Urban Agenda for the EU started in 2021, in line with the directions provided by the New Leipzig Charter and its implementing document. Still, in 2021, EU Ministers responsible for Urban Matters adopted an agreement and a **Multiannual Working Programme** that materialised the start of a new phase of the Urban Agenda for the EU, including its operational parameters, work method, and steps. The agreement also comprised four new themes, including cities of equality. Support for the Urban Agenda has been included in the **European Urban Initiative** in 2021-2027.

Digital Transition Partnership

The focus of the Digital Transition Partnership was to support European cities in exploiting the possibilities of digitalisation, empower their citizens to act in the digital age and assist European businesses in developing innovations and new business opportunities for global markets. The Partnership identified the following building blocks for a successful transition into the digital age: expanding the knowledge, competence and digital skills of EU citizens and administrations at all levels; enabling and encouraging citizen-centric e-government; fair access to and use of data; accelerated adoption of digital emerging technologies; and adopting business model thinking in cities to achieve a sustainable level of digitalisation. The Action Plan elaborated by the Partnership complements several EU-level strategies, such as the Digital Single Market Strategy for Europe, the European Commission's Digital Agenda, which forms one of the seven pillars of the Europe 2020 Strategy, and The EU eGovernment Action Plan 2016–2020. Partners of the Digital Transition Partnership were, among others, NextGen YouthWork cities Oulu (as coordinator) and Eindhoven as cities, Hungary and Romania as Member States and URBACT as an observer. The **Final Report of the Digital Transition Partnership** does not mention youth, but it contains 15 actions, some highly relevant to NextGen YouthWork cities, such as:

- The **Digital Neighbourhood Instrument**
- Capacity-building and spreading of pilots in regions and cities, including a **Digital Transition ABC**
- Helping cities develop a user-centric eGovernment model, including a **Practical Strategy towards Citizen-centered Services**
- Data standards supporting **citizen participation in urban planning**
- Strengthening the **ability for cities to act** within the digital transition.

1.5. Relevant policy frameworks, regulations, networks and initiatives at the EU level

Youth and the digital transition are at the forefront of European policies

Youth work has developed differently across Europe for historical, social, cultural and economic reasons. These differences are further nuanced by digital divergences within the EU. However, both youth work and the digital transition are at the forefront of European policies and represent a vital backstop for the development of the field. The European Commission formulated the European Youth Strategy to engage, connect and empower young people in 2018. and published the agenda to shape Europe's digital future in 2020, focusing on digital transformation for the benefit of people and an open, democratic and sustainable society. And finally, 2022 was the European Year of Youth, putting youth at the forefront and shining a light on

its importance in building a better – greener, more inclusive and digital – future.

Youth Work on a Broader European Dimension

As the project partners include non-EU countries, it is essential to consider the broader, pan-European strategic context of youth work. The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted a **Recommendation on Youth Work** in 2017, which is the foremost international policy document offering reference points, benchmarks, policy and quality standards for youth work. The recommendation formulates nine recommendations to the member states' governments, summarised below:

- ensuring the establishment or further development of quality youth work;
- establishing competency-based education and training of paid and volunteer youth workers;
- the recommendation's proposed measures and principles promoted as the norm for youth work;
- setting up a task force to elaborate a strategy for the development of European youth work;
- fostering national and European research on the different forms of youth work;
- development for the review and evaluation of the impact and outcomes of youth work;
- promoting the Council of Europe Quality Label for Youth Centres as an example of good practice;
- supporting the translation of the recommendation into other languages;
- a proposed review process five years after its approval.

European Youth Strategy 2019-2027

The EU has a two-decade-long history of running a dedicated EU Youth Policy cooperation based on active participation and equal access to opportunities. Still, there are challenges, such as involving more young people from a more diverse range of backgrounds, including those with fewer opportunities, and better outreach at the grassroots level. Thus, the Commission proposed a new **EU Youth Strategy** and aligned youth policy even more effectively with EU funding, supporting its objectives by running it until the end of the next Multiannual Financial Framework. The new strategy builds on the achievements of the previous one but improves its accessibility, visibility and impact to ensure a better participation of young people.

The Youth Strategy undertakes activities grouped around three areas of action:

- *Engage*: Fostering youth participation in democratic life.

- *Connect*: Bringing young people together across the EU and beyond to foster voluntary engagement, learning mobility, solidarity and intercultural understanding.
- *Empower*: Supporting youth empowerment through quality, innovation and recognition of youth work.

The strategy will also pay special attention to straddling global to local levels and reaching out to all young people, striving to turn EU youth policy and the Erasmus+ programme into truly inclusive. The strategy also emphasises that policies need to consider opportunities and challenges by tapping the potential of social media, equipping youth with digital skills and fostering critical thinking and media literacy.

The implementation of the Youth Strategy will promote the effective use of EU programmes and funds, such as **Erasmus+**, the **European Solidarity Corps**, **European Structural and Investment Funds**, **Horizon Europe**, **Creative Europe**.

European Youth Goals

During the Europe-wide consultation of the Youth Strategy, young people and decision-makers identified relevant topics for policy-making in the youth field and formulated **11 European Youth Goals**, as listed below.

1. Connecting EU with Youth
2. Equality of All Genders
3. Inclusive Societies
4. Information and Constructive Dialogue
5. Mental Health and Wellbeing
6. Moving Rural Youth Forward
7. Quality Employment for All
8. Quality Learning
9. Space and Participation for All
10. Sustainable Green Europe
11. Youth Organisations and European Programmes

The Digital Decade Policy Programme 2030

The **Digital Decade Policy Programme (DDPP) 2030** established an annual cooperation cycle to achieve common objectives and targets. This governance framework is based on a yearly cooperation mechanism involving the Commission and Member States. The cooperation mechanism consists of:

- A structured, transparent and shared monitoring system based on the **Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI)** to measure progress towards each of the 2030 targets.

- An annual report in which the Commission evaluates progress and provides action recommendations. The first **Report on the state of the Digital Decade** was published in September 2023.
- Biennial Digital Decade strategic roadmaps in which the Member States outline adopted or planned actions to reach the 2030 targets.
- A mechanism to support the implementation of multi-country projects, the **European Digital Infrastructure Consortium**.

DDPP defines the digital rights and principles in line with core EU values and fundamental rights. These are:

- *People at the centre:* Digital technologies should protect people's rights, support democracy, and ensure that all digital players act responsibly and safely.
- *Freedom of choice:* People should benefit from a fair online environment, be safe from illegal and harmful content, and be empowered when interacting with new and evolving technologies.
- *Safety and security:* The digital environment should be safe and secure, and all users, from childhood to old age, should be empowered and protected.
- *Solidarity and inclusion:* Technology should unite, not divide, people. Everyone should have access to the internet, digital skills, digital public services, and fair working conditions.
- *Participation:* Citizens should be able to engage in the democratic process at all levels and have control over their data.
- *Sustainability:* Digital devices should support sustainability and the green transition. People need to know about their devices' environmental impact and energy consumption.

Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council recommendations

The Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council (EYCS) brings together the EU member states ministers responsible for education, culture, youth, media, communication and sport two to four times annually. The Council usually adopts education, culture, youth and sport recommendations but can also adopt legislative acts. Many recommendations were formulated related to youth work, including digital youth work and training of youth workers. The most important youth-related recommendations since the adoption of the European Youth Strategy in 2018 are:

- Youth work in the context of **migration and refugee matters** (2018)
- Young people as **agents of democracy** in the EU (2019)
- Young people and the **Future of Work** (2019)
- **Digital Youth Work** (2019)
- Education and training of **youth workers** (2019)

- Strengthening the **multilevel governance** when promoting the participation of young people in decision-making processes (2021)
- **Equity and inclusion in education and training** to promote educational success for all (2021)
- **Safeguarding and creating civic spaces** for young people that facilitate meaningful youth participation (2021)
- **Mobility of young volunteers** across the European Union (2022)
- Fostering engagement among young people as actors of change to **protect the environment** (2022)
- **Pathways to School Success** (2022)
- A comprehensive approach to the **mental health** of young people (2023)
- Enhancing the cultural and creative dimension of the European **video games sector** (2023)

Digital Youth Work

The **recommendation on digital youth work** mentioned above recognises that youth work can allow for experiential learning in a non-formal setting and strengthen digital competencies and media literacy. It also empowers young people to be active and creative in digital society and to take responsibility for their digital identity. New developments in digital technologies (such as AI, VR, etc.) affect our societies beyond the sphere of communication and youth work should be able to address the challenges of convergence between the digital and physical environments. However, youth workers need more digital competencies and knowledge to use digital technologies. Therefore, the recommendation stresses that youth policies and strategies should be proactive regarding technological development and digitalisation, and cross-sectoral cooperation should be intensified. Youth work and youth organisations should be encouraged to use digital tools and consider, where appropriate, experimental and innovative approaches and new cooperation models to deliver digital youth work activities and services. Investment in digital capacity and setting up youth workers' guidelines are needed. Youth work policies should promote existing materials and develop new digital youth work materials and training for youth workers using the training needs list proposed by the expert group set up under the European Union Work Plan for Youth for 2016-2018 (see below). Youth need opportunities to practise and improve digital competencies, such as information and data literacy, communication and collaboration, content creation, safety, and problem-solving and learning modalities can include experiential learning. Policies must promote better access for young people, particularly those with fewer opportunities, and consider all barriers, including discrimination and gender stereotyping, that could negatively affect youth's opportunities and motivation to acquire digital competencies.

Developing digital youth work

The expert group under the European Union Work Plan for Youth for 2016-2018 (mentioned above) formulated **policy recommendations and training needs and identified good practice examples**. The document first defines digital youth work and then makes recommendations related to developing a shared understanding and the strategic development of digital youth work, as well as ensuring youth participation and youth rights and the need for knowledge and evidence. It also identifies the relevant training needs of youth workers and the available training material related to the digitalisation of society, planning and designing digital youth work, information and data literacy, communication, digital creativity safety, reflection and evaluation.

Support, Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities for Youth

SALTO-YOUTH (Support, Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities for Youth) is a network of seven Resource Centres working on European priority areas within the youth field. It provides non-formal learning resources for youth workers and youth leaders and organises training and contact-making activities to support organisations and National Agencies (NAs) within the frame of the European Commission's **Erasmus+ Youth programme**, the **European Solidarity Corps** and beyond. SALTO-YOUTH's website contains several tools, such as training and seminars run by SALTO, European Solidarity Corps Resource Centre, Erasmus+ NAs and NGOs in the youth field, and hundreds of tools and activity ideas for youth work. The **Otlas Partner Finding** tool links thousands of youth projects to build strong partnerships for Erasmus+. It also contains a directory of over 500 trainers who can deliver your international training activities.

1.6. National Youth Policies

Diverse landscape of national youth policies

National youth policies show an extremely diverse picture, showcased by **Youth Wiki**, an online platform presenting information on European countries' youth policies. The main objective of the Youth Wiki is to support evidence-based European cooperation by providing information on national policies supporting youth in a user-friendly way. The platform helps decision-makers at different levels by providing information on policies, reforms and initiatives. It also allows the exchange of information and innovative approaches and can support peer learning. Currently, 33 countries participate in the Youth Wiki, including all EU member states and North Macedonia. Policies featured on Youth Wiki include various fields besides youth work, such as voluntary activities, employment, entrepreneurship, education and training, social inclusion and participation, and health and well-being. Each city profile places links to countries' information pages on youth work policies.

1.7. Potential funding

As mentioned earlier, implementing the Youth Strategy will be carried out through programmes such as Erasmus+, the European Solidarity Corps, European Structural and Investment Funds, Horizon Europe and Creative Europe. The various funding opportunities at the EU level for financing interventions for youth are presented on the European Commission's webpage.

Education, training, youth and sport

Erasmus+ is the EU programme that aims to improve the skills and employability of young people, promote their social inclusion and well-being, and foster improvements in youth work and youth policy at local, national and international levels. Funding activities are managed centrally by the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) or by national agencies in each country.

Fellowships for researchers

Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions are open to researchers in all disciplines in a variety of fields. The activities are implemented by the Research Executive Agency (REA).

Young entrepreneurs

Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs is an exchange programme for entrepreneurs offering the opportunity to work alongside an experienced entrepreneur in another participating country for one to six months.

Young volunteers

The European Solidarity Corps aims to strengthen solidarity in European society, engaging young people in accessible and high-quality solidarity activities. It is an opportunity to learn and develop their potential and bring fresh and inspiring ideas to the organisation they are engaging with. The programme supports activities in volunteering, jobs, traineeships and local Solidarity Projects. Funding activities are managed centrally by the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), national agencies in each country, and the SALTO-YOUTH network.

Young unemployed

The Youth Employment Initiative supports unemployed young people not in education or training in regions with a youth unemployment rate above 25%. For 2021-2027, the Youth Employment Initiative was integrated into the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+), preserving the focus on youth employment. The reinforced Youth Guarantee is a commitment by all Member States to ensure that all young people under 30 receive a good quality offer of employment, continued education, apprenticeship and traineeship within four months of leaving education or becoming unemployed. The managing authorities in EU countries set up these schemes. They can provide more details on the Youth Employment Initiative and the Youth Guarantee.

National programmes and funds

At the national level, there are various funding opportunities through national operational programmes financed by ESIF, ESF+ or member states' own funds.

1.8. Cross-cutting themes

Gender Equality

Gender is an important aspect of using digital platforms and technologies because it affects access, representation, safety, privacy, and opportunities. Moreover, specific needs, challenges, and chosen platforms may vary according to gender. To create a more equitable and inclusive digital environment, gender inequalities in digital spaces must be addressed.

Ensure inclusivity in the language

NextGen YouthWork will use gender-neutral language in digital activities, published materials, and communication to ensure the inclusion of everybody regardless of gender identity and expression and to avoid perpetuating gender stereotypes. An online meeting might include training for city practitioners and youth workers on using gender-neutral language in online communication (use of social media and communication tools).

Provide equal opportunities

Network activities will be open to everyone and provide equal opportunities for all gender identities and expressions. Furthermore, a gender equality awareness plan can be developed by affected partners to attract more men to choose youth work as a career. This is because, in some countries, traditionally, a disproportionately more significant number of women are involved in this profession than men.

Educate about gender diversity

The way of looking at gender issues is changing from generation to generation. Therefore, youth workers must understand the gender identities and expressions of the current youth population to ensure that they conduct everyday operations to facilitate gender equality and inclusion. Moreover, they should promote gender-inclusive principles to young people, including the concept of gender bias and the means to identify and address it. Youth workers must create open communication by providing space for discussing gender-related issues and providing support and guidance where needed.

Create content highlighting gender diversity and inclusion

The network will create digital content that highlights gender diversity and the importance of inclusion. This content may include showcasing successful people with varying gender identities and expressions. Digital content could highlight the importance of inclusivity for LGBTQIA+ youth in youth work. This could consist of interviews with LGBTQIA+ youth about their experiences, resources, and activities to help them understand and respect different sexual orientations and gender identities and guidance for youth workers on creating safe and inclusive spaces for LGBTQIA+ youth.

Promote gender inclusive policy making

The NextGen YouthWork network may contribute to gender-inclusive policy-making by increasing awareness, promoting advocacy, building capacity and sharing good practices for gender-equal digital practices. Moreover, by bringing stakeholders together to share ideas and resources, the network will foster collaboration among young people, local organisations, and city officials. By creating an inclusive dialogue, the network may also contribute to the youth's increased social and political engagement.

Green transition

The youth inarguably play a significant role in leading the green transition in Europe through their activism, innovative initiatives and overall lifestyle choices. Since their engagement and commitment to sustainability are essential to achieving the goal of a green future, NextGen YouthWork facilitates their contribution to the green transition by empowering youth to use digital tools to advocate for environmentally sustainable causes, ensuring mutual learning between city practitioners, youth workers and members of the youth, and promoting sustainable operational practices to cultivate smart and sustainable cities locally.

Exploit thematic relevance

Green transition is an extremely relevant topic for the youth. Since climate change enormously impacts their future, Europe has witnessed the large-scale emergence of youth-led climate movements and activism for the green transition. Thus, NextGen YouthWork will deploy topics related to green transition and environmental sustainability to facilitate participation, strengthen mutual learning, and promote green digital skills among the youth.

Stimulate mutual learning

Green topics are expected to facilitate significant youth engagement. Due to young people's deep-rooted knowledge of environmental topics, the network will facilitate mutual learning between youth workers and the youth through digital tools, such as social media posts, sharing information and resources, and online games and quizzes. The network will encourage green digital skills and means to use digital technology to address environmental challenges.

Discussing green transition

The green transition can be a topic for the ULGs to be set up in cities, facilitating the discussion of green transition and climate change among youth from all partner cities. Building on the experience that youth often proactively seek to be environmentally conscious, ULGs will be tasked to tackle the challenge of reducing the network's carbon footprint. The ULGs will discuss ideas proposed by the Youth Council and incorporate the most relevant approaches into the operation of NextGen YouthWork and ULGs or into the Integrated Action Plans.

Encourage green transition of cities

NextGen YouthWork contributes to the green transition of cities. It does so by encouraging youth participation in public debates, developing sustainable

(digital) skills, fostering innovation and creativity in experimenting with sustainable solutions, advocating for green practices and policies, and fostering collaboration among members of the youth and city representatives.

Reduce carbon footprint

The network will use the **Sustainability Checklist** commissioned by the Council of Europe Youth Partnership to support choices ensuring the highest possible level of environmental sustainability. NextGen YouthWork partners are committed to implementing sustainable practices in the operation of the network to reduce its carbon footprint. For example, the network has planned fewer in-person meetings to avoid travel by encouraging virtual meetings using video conferencing tools and other digital technologies. Where travel is required, project partners will commit to reducing air travel and opting for sustainable modes of transport (i.e. train) if possible. Meeting venues and accommodations will be chosen to encourage the usage of public transport or other sustainable transport options and sustainable catering options will be preferred at meetings. During project implementation, partners will reduce waste by preferring electronic copies of the communication and other material over printing, choosing recyclable over single-use materials, and encouraging participants to opt for reusable water bottles and cutlery.

Digital transformation

Digital transformation is at the core of NextGen YouthWork; thus, it will integrate digital transformation to ensure that the project is effective, efficient, and responsive to the needs of youth workers and young people. By using digital tools and technologies, project partners will increase the reach and impact of their work and better support the development of digital skills among youth workers. NextGen YouthWork will contribute to the digital transition of cities by building a skilled workforce, creating innovative solutions for urban problems, promoting digital youth participation, building digital communities, and promoting digital literacy, thus creating more inclusive, sustainable, and innovative cities for the future.

Online learning

Project partners will use online platforms (e.g. Basecamp) and participate in online training sessions based on the methodology defined by the Network Roadmap. These activities will help youth workers to use digital tools such as online collaboration platforms.

Collaborative tools

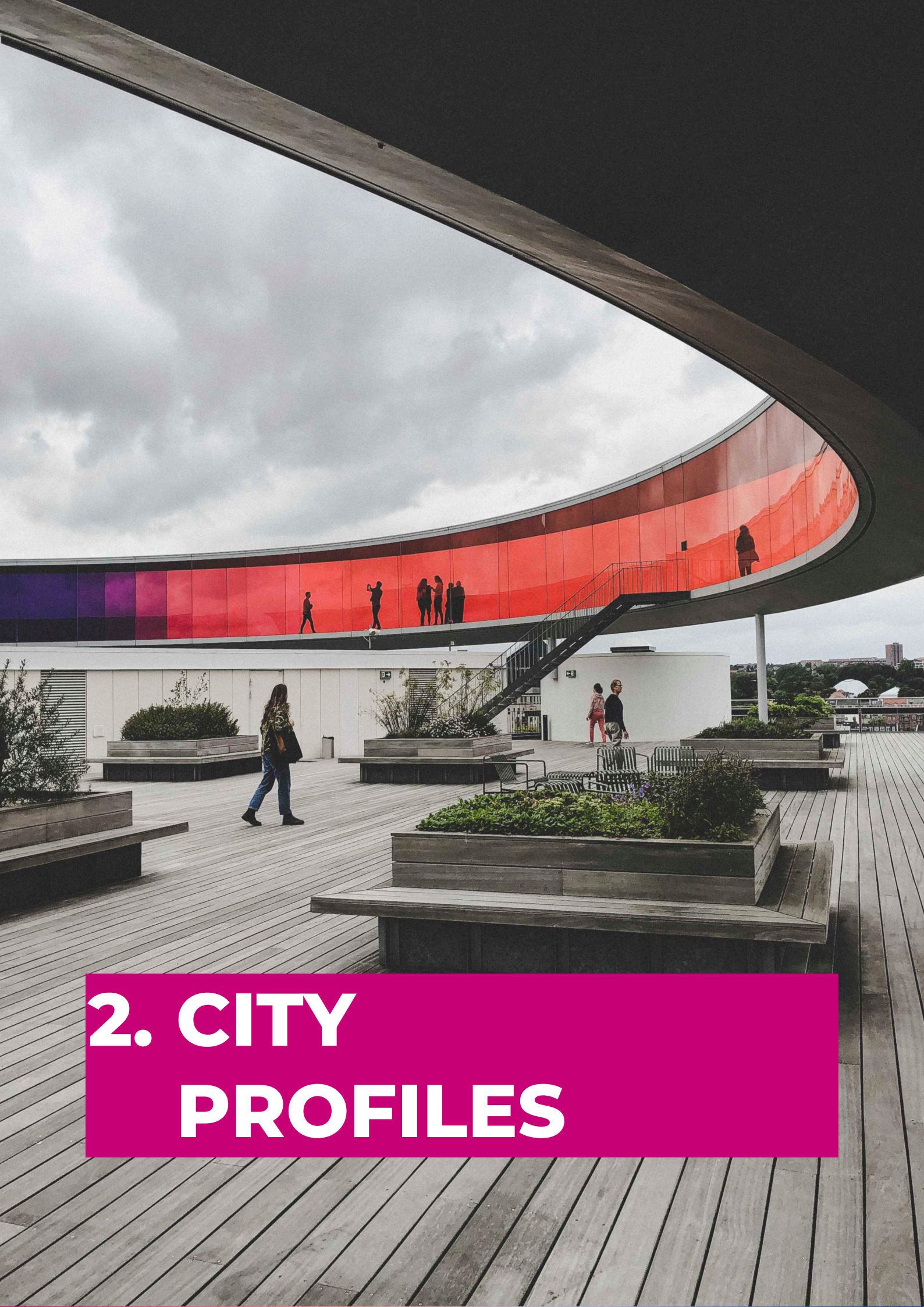
Partners will use collaborative cloud-based tools (e.g. Miro, Jamboard, Kahoot, etc.) to enable effective collaboration, communication of ideas and co-designing actions.

Digital communication

The project team will communicate using email, instant messaging (e.g. Whatsapp), and video conferencing (e.g. Teams, Zoom, GoToMeeting) to

facilitate communication among partners, youth workers and the youth. That provides efficient communication and reduces the project's carbon footprint.

Use of digital data	Project partners will collect and analyse digital data through tools such as online surveys (e.g. SurveyMonkey, Mentimeter), social media analytics, and website traffic data to measure project impact and inform project decision-making.
Co-creation	Project partners will involve city practitioners and youth workers in co-creating digital content and solutions, including developing social media campaigns, creating online learning resources, or designing new digital tools (e.g. Canva).
Cybersecurity and digital safety	It is essential for youth workers to understand cybersecurity risks to protect themselves and young people. They will be provided with know-how on the safe use of digital resources, which they will share and promote among members of the youth. The know-how will include topics such as online safety best practices, data privacy, and protection against cyberbullying.
Use of emerging technologies	Cities will explore good practices of emerging digital technologies such as artificial intelligence, virtual reality and gaming platforms to develop innovative solutions meeting the needs of young people. Such good practices to build on are already available in Aarhus, Oulu, and Iași.
Digital skills for city practitioners	The project contributes to building a skilled workforce that can contribute to the digital transition via skills such as using collaborative tools, digital co-creation, social media management, and data analysis.
Innovative solutions for urban problems	City employees with digital skills can help create innovative solutions for urban challenges by integrating digital technologies into various fields. Using their digital skills, they can design and implement action plans and programmes that address urban issues in other policy areas, such as social innovation and inclusion, urban mobility, and environmental sustainability.
Digital youth participation	The project promotes the participation of young people in urban decision-making processes by using digital technologies, ensuring that the voices and perspectives of young people are heard and integrated into urban planning and development processes.
Building digital communities	NextGen YouthWork can contribute to building digital communities of young people using digital technologies to connect, collaborate, and engage in civic activities. This can promote digital inclusion and social cohesion in cities.



2. CITY PROFILES

2.1. Aarhus

330,000 inhabitants, on the eastern coast of Jutland.

Aarhus is Denmark's second biggest city, located on the eastern coast of the Danish mainland Jutland. It is 307 km from Copenhagen. Billund and Aarhus Airport are within a one-hour drive from the city. The city's population is 330,000 inhabitants, 149,000 (45%) of them aged below 18.

Youth work in Denmark

Youth policy in Demark is cross-sectoral and coordinated by several ministries. The Danish parliament establishes the legal framework for the national youth policy. At the same time, regions and municipalities are responsible for implementing youth policies and defining local strategies and targets. As municipalities fix and levy local taxes, they have various options in adjusting their social services to local conditions, which explains differences in the service level from one local authority to the other. Youth work is a shared responsibility of different national and local authorities and youth organisations receiving funding from the government. The Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Social Affairs, Housing and Senior Citizens are the central responsible bodies for policies and financing various activities related to youth work. Such activities are non-formal general education, voluntary activities in associations, day folk high schools, but also youth clubs and special youth clubs for young people with special needs. One of the main actors nationwide is the Danish Youth Council (DUF), an umbrella organisation for 80 organisations working with children and young people. DUF's members range from scouts to political, social, cultural, and environmental organisations or associations for youth with disabilities. DUF

organises and coordinates various courses, workshops and other training programmes for young people who work professionally or voluntarily with young people in DUF's member associations. For more information on youth work in Denmark, see the country's **Youth Wiki page**.

Local policy challenges

Digital divide

The local problem/challenge to be addressed regarding the digital transition of youth work in Aarhus is the digital divide, the gap between young people with access to digital technologies and those without access. In Aarhus, this divide is particularly pronounced between young people from different socioeconomic backgrounds. A 2021 survey by the Danish Youth Council found that 15% of young people in Aarhus do not have access to a computer at home. Therefore, they cannot participate in digital activities like online gaming, social media, and distance learning. They are also disadvantaged when applying for jobs and further education, as many employers now require applicants to have a digital portfolio.

Engaging vulnerable young people through digital media

Another challenge is that Aarhus Municipality needs to explore the full potential of engaging with vulnerable young people through digital media. In addition, some employees need to gain the right skills to take advantage of digital opportunities.

Youth's mental health

The Municipality of Aarhus has identified youth's mental health as one of the city's Seven Wicked Problems. The document acknowledges that the increasing unhappiness among children and young people is one of the biggest challenges of our time. Children and young people often struggle, facing challenges or diagnoses that affect their life opportunities differently. The problem manifests itself in a differentiated picture and with different symptoms in young people, such as loneliness, absenteeism, dropping out of education programmes, anxiety, depression and other symptoms that indicate that young people are not thriving. It can have far-reaching consequences for one's well-being and health if young people don't get a good grip on adulthood and perhaps don't get an education, job, friendships and networks.

Culture of perfection

The cause of these challenges is far-fetching. The culture of perfection demands to get an education and a job quickly, and having to make the "right" choices probably has an impact. There may be no room for young people to search and travel; they need space to learn to be in the difficult. The National Board of Health points out an increase in the number of children and young people who receive a diagnosis and that 15 per cent of children receive a diagnosis during their school years. Fragile interdisciplinary collaboration hampers the work around children and young people with challenges. Finally, several complex structures affect the problem, such as the lack of

associations and community life for youth or the fact that youth start living alone in their flats early but often struggle with loneliness.

Existing policies and action plans

Smart Aarhus

Smart Aarhus is the Aarhus Municipality's strategy for digital transformation, the link between the public and the private sector as well as citizens and knowledge institutions regarding digital solutions that make Aarhus greener, better and generally smarter. Smart Aarhus aims to create better, cheaper, and more sustainable solutions that benefit citizens and businesses in collaboration between the municipality, companies, citizens and knowledge institutions. Therefore, a vital tasks for Smart Aarhus is to facilitate and create these kinds of collaborations, consisting of classic smart city solutions in the urban space, digitalisation in the municipality and business development. Such solutions can be data and sensors, the Internet of Things, Big Data, AI, drones and robots, all contributing to better lives for the citizens. Smart Aarhus can help by creating solutions that can save lives, secure a healthy population and better quality of life for citizens. For example, the strategy addresses the challenge of creating more coherent solutions in employment and youth work.

Seven Wicked Problems

The Seven Wicked Problems mentioned earlier identifies the need to engage and work with young people as they are the ones who know how they feel and what affects their mental well-being. Therefore, the city must hear from young people who have made it through difficult periods and what has made a positive difference. Aarhus must collaborate with various actors who interact with and engage young people. These organisations are associations and volunteers, such as the Danish Youth Council, the Danish Red Cross, Save the Child Youth, sports associations, youth education and higher education programmes, the Centre for Youth Research of Aarhus University, youth mental health professionals and municipal programmes for young people.

The possible focus of the URBACT Integrated Action Plan

Framework for digital transformation in the youth sector

The overall goal of Aarhus is to create a framework for local and international dialogues on digital transformation in the youth sector by involving leaders and employees from various municipal and external organisations.

Comprehensive overview of projects and activities

The theme of the Integrated Action Plan has yet to be identified. Still, the IAP should focus on creating a comprehensive overview of relevant projects and activities in Aarhus on digital transformation in the youth sector.

The key results of the Integrated Action Plan are expected to be:

- Ensuring that all young people have access to digital opportunities and resources, including access to technology and the skills to use the technology.
- Using technology to improve the quality of municipal services to young people, including personalising services, making them more efficient, and creating new and innovative services.
- Using technology to strengthen young people's participation in society, including technology to give young people the opportunity to engage in political processes, learn about their rights, and network with other young people.
- Using technology to prevent social exclusion and crime, including identifying young people at risk, providing them with support, and preventing them from getting into trouble.

Learning needs

The learning needs identified by Aarhus are

- *Understanding the impact* of digitalisation on young people. Digitalisation is having a profound effect on young people's lives, both positive and negative. Aarhus must understand these impacts to develop effective youth work programs.
- *Developing new digital skills* for youth workers. Youth workers must be equipped with the digital skills they need to engage with youth in the digital age. Aarhus must provide training and development opportunities for youth workers in this area.
- *Creating safe and inclusive digital spaces* for young people. The internet can be dangerous for young people, especially those who are vulnerable. Aarhus needs to create safe and inclusive digital spaces for young people where they can learn and grow without fear of harm.
- *Using technology to improve the quality of youth work*. Technology can enhance the quality of youth work in several ways, such as providing access to resources, facilitating communication, and delivering training and development. Aarhus needs to explore how technology can be used to serve young people better.

2.2. Cartagena

220,000 inhabitants, located on the Mediterranean coast

Cartagena, the twenty-fourth largest city in Spain, lies on the Mediterranean coast. It is 450 km from Madrid and 50 km from Murcia, to which a motorway connects. The city is served by the Alicante airport, situated 110 km North of the city. The city's population is 220,000 inhabitants, 49,000 (22%) of them aged 15-34 years old.

Youth work in Spain and Murcia

Youth and youth work policies are designed and implemented primarily at a regional and local level, usually through regional youth institutes, youth councils and municipalities. The leading youth work public actors, besides The Ministry of Social Rights and 2030 Agenda are the **Youth Institute** (INJUVE), the **Youth Council** and the **Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces**. In the Region of Murcia, the **General Directorate of the Youth** assumes the competencies related to the youth, aiming to promote and develop youth policies. **Murcia Region's Youth Plan** 2019-2023 aims to create a regional framework for youth workers. See the country's **Youth Wiki page** for more information on youth work in Spain.

Local policy challenges

Youth - a transversal approach

The current health and economic crisis has had a significant impact on young people, with youth unemployment levels soaring to around 40% in Cartagena. As a response, the Youth Department is taking a transversal approach to include young people (aged 14 to 30) in all plans and

programmes implemented by different municipality departments. Additionally, they are adapting initiatives to new formats that allow for maximum outreach, including efficient digital tools.

Lack of youth engagement

One major challenge identified by the city council is the lack of youth engagement in public life, particularly in marginalised neighbourhoods and districts. The local public administration of Cartagena acknowledges the need to improve its digital and face-to-face connection with its citizens, including young people.

Need for emancipation, transformation and well-being

The Cartagena Social Services department assessed several challenges related to youth, including youth emancipation, social transformation, and a holistic view of well-being. The department emphasises that all individuals should have access to a life with autonomy and a complete educational and employment trajectory. They also believe that teenagers and young adults should be empowered as active participants in the city, with complete freedom to make their voices heard and participate in shaping their community.

Need for a holistic and relational approach

Furthermore, caring for young people requires a global, holistic, and relational approach to well-being. The city addressed the issues affecting young people through various programmes and initiatives. These efforts reflect the city's commitment to addressing the challenges faced by young people and improving their overall well-being.

Existing policies and action plans

Youth Strategy

The **Youth Strategy**'s goal is to give young people a leading role as an engine of social change, integrating their priorities at all levels of decision-making and designing policies that respond to their needs and demands. The Department of Youth of Cartagena works on youth matters in a transversal way, integrated into various policies and collaborating with other local programs.

Plan for Children and Adolescents

The **Municipal Plan for Children and Adolescents of Cartagena** 2018-2022 is the result of analysis and reflection on the situation of children and adolescents in the municipality, carried out through the statistical study, as well as the contributions and data obtained from the target group, the different public systems and entities involved with children.

Municipal Addictions Plan

The **Municipal Addictions Plan** is the frame of reference that gathers all actions aimed at reducing and preventing the damage caused by drug use and those caused by behavioural addictions through awareness and prevention. The main axis of this plan is the promotion of healthy lifestyles, encouraging citizen participation to work continuously for a healthier city. Work is carried out at the community level, carrying out actions for health promotion and education, addiction prevention and risk reduction with

different groups and in areas of preferential action. Some programs, workshops, and training sessions are aimed at primary and secondary education pupils, and some are carried out in the family environment.

Municipal Disability Plan

The **Municipal Disability Plan** aims to improve the living conditions of people with disabilities, especially regarding universal accessibility, employment, leisure, culture, sports and social services.

Equality Plan

The **Equality Plan** is a working document defining the criteria, actions and policies of equality in every municipal area to eliminate any discrimination that prevents achieving equality. The plan has the following objectives:

- Reducing inequalities that may persist in Cartagena.
- Supporting the reconciliation of personal, family, work and co-responsibility of its citizens
- Paying particular attention to women in social exclusion and / or discriminated against by socioeconomic factors, race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation or other religious or cultural causes.

The possible focus of the URBACT Integrated Action Plan

Foster a thriving and resilient youth community

Cartagena's overarching goal in youth work within the broader context of adapting to environmental, social, economic, and digital challenges is to foster a thriving and resilient youth community. The city aims to create an inclusive and dynamic environment that empowers young individuals to actively engage in shaping the city's future. This prospect involves addressing current challenges and proactively preparing the youth for the evolving landscape. The Integrated Action Plan aims to be dynamic, inclusive, and results-driven, ensuring that Cartagena's youth are well-prepared to face the challenges of the modern era.

Empowerment, Skills Development, Inclusion

The focus of Cartagena's Integrated Action Plan could be multi-faceted, aiming to address various dimensions of youth work comprehensively:

- *Youth Empowerment and Participation*: Develop strategies that encourage the active involvement of young people in decision-making processes and civic activities, including initiatives like youth councils, forums, and programs that amplify their voices in local governance.
- *Skill Development*: Implement programs focused on enhancing the skills of the youth, aligning with the digital and economic challenges, involving training opportunities, workshops, and mentorship programs related to developing skills.

- *Social Inclusion and Diversity*: Promote inclusivity by creating spaces and initiatives celebrating diversity, including events, campaigns, and activities that foster understanding and appreciation of different cultures, backgrounds, and perspectives among the youth.
- *Environmental Awareness and Sustainability*: Incorporate environmental education into youth programs, fostering a sense of responsibility and awareness, including projects related to sustainable practices led by young people.

Key Results of the IAP

The envisaged outcomes of Cartagena's Integrated Action Plan could include:

- *Strategy for Youth Engagement*: Develop a comprehensive, flexible, and responsive strategy outlining specific actions and initiatives that ensure effective intervention in youth-related matters.
- *Agile Intervention with Youth Workers*: Facilitate direct and meaningful engagement with youth workers, ensuring they have the necessary resources and support, strengthening channels for ongoing communication, feedback mechanisms, and professional development opportunities for those working directly with young people.
- *Measurable Impact on Youth Development*: Implement mechanisms to track and measure the impact of the Integrated Action Plan on youth development, including regular assessments, surveys, and feedback loops to gauge the effectiveness of various initiatives and make data-driven adjustments.

Learning needs

Through collaboration with the NextGen YouthWork network, Cartagena needs to learn about digital technologies to improve youth engagement and acquire new skills and digital actions for participatory processes to involve youth in decision-making, creating a sense of civic engagement and good governance among the younger generation.

The Youth Department understands the needs and challenges young people face due to its regular interactions with youth and their involvement in developing a communication style appropriate to the needs of the city's young people. The staff of the Youth Department also has a strong network of partners, including NGOs and youth associations, which allows them to gather insights from various stakeholders.

The Youth Department takes an integrated approach to planning its programs and activities, holistically considering young people's needs and developing programmes that address their educational, social, and economic needs.

Cartagena relies on active listening, respect, and empathy to do this. The learning needs that can help the city to improve its youth services are:

- Strengthening the capacities of youth workers in using digital tools and citizen participation.
- Creating effective communication with youth through reinforcing digital skills, participation plans, and the Urban Agenda Observatory.
- Advocating a positive attitude towards digitalisation, glimpsing the potential and possible benefits for young people.
- Obtaining new methodologies for the involvement of young people with the local public administration, innovative approaches for youth workers to engage youth and implementing digital strategies for open government.

2.3. Eindhoven

245,000 inhabitants, in the southern part of the Netherlands

Eindhoven, the fifth largest city in the Netherlands, lies in the southern part of the country in North Brabant. It is 125 km from Amsterdam and 135 km from Brussels, Belgium. The city is served by the Eindhoven airport, situated 8 km West of the city. Eindhoven's population is 245,000 inhabitants, 67,500 (28%) of them aged 14-29 years old.

Youth Work in the Netherlands

Youth work falls under the authority of municipalities, and there is no national youth work policy. It is part of the basic educational framework as an independent provision next to school, child daycare, playgroups and organisations for sports and cultural activities. It bridges the gap between pedagogical civil society (parents/carers and family, neighbours and informal community networks) and other basic services. The decentralisation of the Child and Youth Act (2015), Social Support Act (2015) and the Participation Act (2014), which took effect on 1 January 2015, made municipalities responsible for the finances and organisation of a large part of the social domain. Municipalities are supported in their activity by The **Netherlands Youth Institute**, a national knowledge centre collecting, enriching, explaining and sharing topical knowledge, funded by The Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport. For more information on youth work in the Netherlands, see the country's **Youth Wiki page**.

Local policy challenges

Youth in Eindhoven spend much of their time online

Eindhoven's key challenge is the declining participation of vulnerable youth in outdoor activities and physical youth centres. Like in other cities, the youth in Eindhoven spend much of their time online, mostly on social media or gaming platforms. The fact that young people are spending an increasing part of their time online and thus less in physical public spaces means that vulnerable youngsters can no longer be reached in the traditional ways and that youth work needs to innovate as young people need digital activities, counselling and information.

Youth workers looking for ways to adapt better

Most youth workers are aware of the behavioural change among young people. They are, therefore, looking for ways to better adapt to it and use the possibilities of digital youth work. They often also experience this as a big challenge because it is new and requires change and amendment of the work they are used to. There is, although a small group, some youth workers that are still focused on youth work in the physical world or see digital youth work as a temporary necessity during lockdown, so helping them understand the necessity of digitalisation is also a challenge.

Many opportunities to take advantage of

Although many examples of youth workers' online presence exist, youths' demands for online services, platforms, and tools still need to be fully met. There are still youth workers who need more insight into the online living environment of young people, the role that social media plays in young people growing up, and what growing up in the online living environment requires in terms of guidance. There are still a lot of opportunities in digital youth work that still need to be taken advantage of, and many youth workers barely use digital resources in their work. These opportunities are not taken advantage of for many reasons, ranging from no funding from the municipality for online work to no education of youth workers on how to work online.

Existing policies and action plans

Preventive Youth Policy

The **Eindhoven Preventive Youth Policy 2022-2026** targets all residents of -9 months to 23 years and their immediate living environment. The policy plan describes what Eindhoven wants to achieve by 2026. It has been defined through a co-creation process with youth, professionals from the youth domain, knowledge institutes and various domains within the local authority. The policy plan is based on three social ambitions:

- A good start for every young person.
- Towards an inclusive society: all young people participate.
- Every young person grows up safely.

There is also a fourth ambition, aimed at further development of municipal commissioning and steering in the preventive youth domain, namely creating a new vision on commissioning, with more focus on and more intensive partnership.

Course Document Youth Work

The accompanying **Course Document Youth Work** 2023-2026 includes as substantial focus points:

- Young people are increasingly online (on the internet and social media), and youth networks are increasingly being formed online.
- Eindhoven wants to develop youth work further to fit in even better with the opportunities and challenges the online environment brings.
- The city works toward a future-oriented vision and method of online youth work and a proactive attitude to respond to rapid changes concerning the online living world.

Lumens Strategy

The central organisation for providing youth work is **Lumens**, an NGO working with the municipality of Eindhoven based on a long-term contract. **Lumens Strategy 2020-2022** aims to build a socially resilient society together. It is based on four core values:

- Resiliency. Lumens's employees show resilience by being unbiased and curious to build social resilience. It is their mission to make people in our society more resilient. By that, they want to increase someone's ability to save themselves.
- Connectedness. Lumens is outward-looking towards residents and partners. They inspire and learn, take responsibility and work together as a network organisation with residents, clients and partners.
- Resourcefulness. Both internally and externally, Lumens wants to be able to deploy expertise with attention to the social demands of residents.
- Trust. Residents must be able to rely on themselves, their network and the community. They can trust that social issues will be addressed and answered collectively. Professionals must be able to trust that they are working together on sustainable solutions for social problems. Clients must be able to trust that these professionals offer a good social basis in the form of a society in which everyone can participate.

The possible focus of the URBACT Integrated Action Plan

Eindhoven wants good services that meet young people's needs and aims to create a long-term vision and strategy for digital/online youth work. The digital youth work strategy will be elaborated based on sharing and exchanging knowledge with the cities of NextGen YouthWork.

The possible focus of the Integrated Action Plan is adapting youth work to the new challenges posed by digitalisation, building youth workers' digital skills and creating a long-term and sustainable vision and organisational background for youth work.

- The expected key results of the Integrated Action Plan are:
- The definition of the role of online youth workers.
- Defining the youth work's online position.
- Defining which tools, channels and activities youth work should entail and defining a straightforward working method with clear expectations for all youth workers.
- Having a long-term and sustainable vision of a hybrid (online and offline) youth work.

Learning needs

Adapting to the new challenges posed by digitalisation

Youth workers need to adapt to the new challenges posed by digitalisation to remain relevant in the future. With technological advancements, youth work must embrace digital tools and platforms to engage with young people meaningfully.

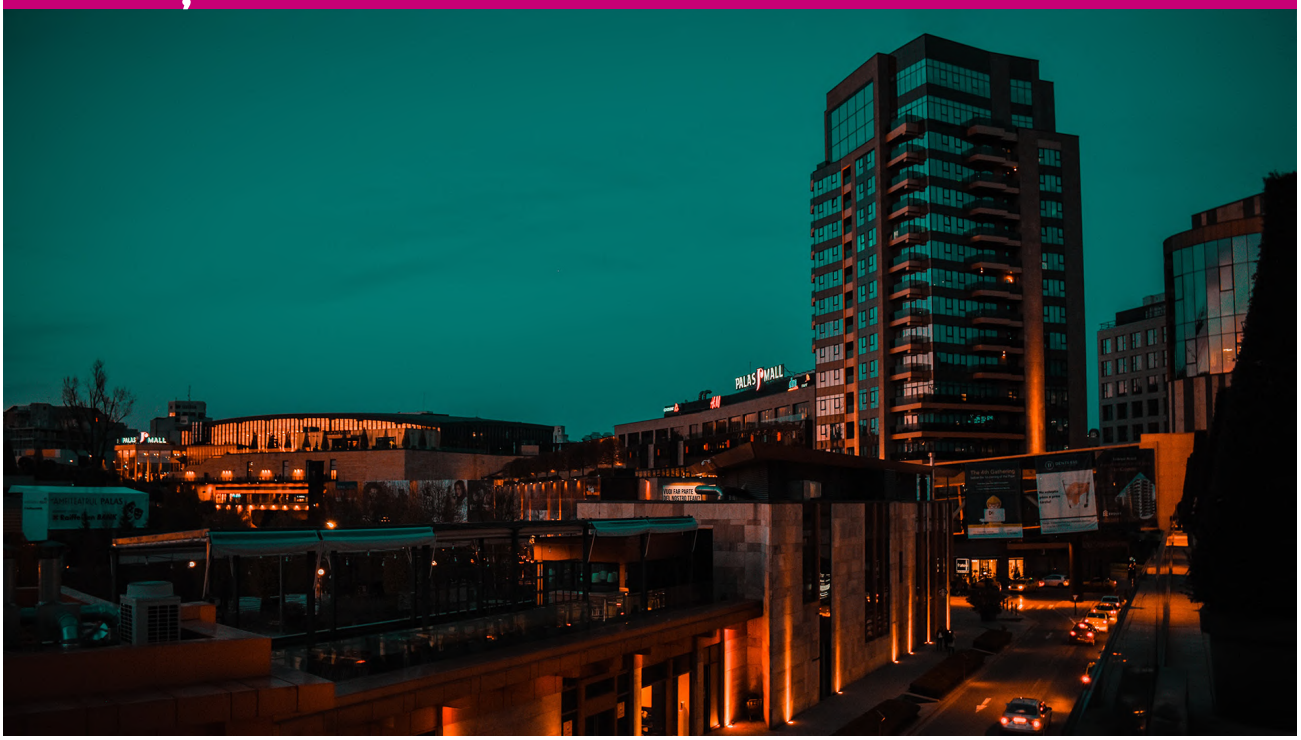
Building youth workers' digital skills

Youth workers need to develop digital skills to engage with young people effectively. Thus, building the digital skills of youth workers is an essential learning need for them to harness the power of digital tools to connect with and support young people.

Creating a long-term and sustainable vision for youth work

To create a long-term and sustainable vision and organisational background for youth work, youth workers must set clear goals and develop strategies to achieve them. They must also build a solid organisational culture supporting their growth and development. Additionally, investing in the necessary resources and infrastructure, such as funding, technology, and training, should be prioritised.

2.4. Iași



395,000 inhabitants, in the northeastern part of Romania.

Iași, the third largest city in Romania, lies in the northeastern part of Romania. It is 390 km from Bucharest and only 20 km from the frontier with the Republic of Moldova. The city is served by the Iași airport, situated in the city's outskirts. A total of 395,000 people live in the city, of whom 118,000 (30%) are younger than 29.

Youth work in Romania

Romania does not have a long-standing tradition of youth work; there is neither a governmental authority directly responsible for youth work nor a national policy or strategy dedicated to youth work. Youth work has been coupled primarily with creating new opportunities for learning, employment and entrepreneurship. The Youth Strategy 2015 built learning structures developed with the support of non-formal education methodologies and formulated 'Employment and Entrepreneurship' as one of the main areas of intervention. Within the strategy, the role of the youth worker resided in providing support to groups of young people when transitioning from school to the labour market, to those dealing with social exclusion, or to boosting youth participation. These activities are to be organised by the national and local authorities with responsibilities for youth or by NGOs working with and for young people. The role of local urban authorities is limited to providing youth and leisure centres, supporting the NGOs' work, and cooperating with county directorates for youth and students' cultural centres. For more information on youth work in Romania, see the country's **Youth Wiki page**.

Local policy challenges

Lack of youth workers and an appropriate legal framework

Consequently, the main problem of Iași Municipality is the lack of youth workers, an appropriate legal framework, and the lack of experience in dealing with this issue. However, Iași provides activities and services for young people, mostly related to career orientation in partnership with high schools and universities and job fairs with local and regional companies. Moreover, it provides municipal funding and venues for various - civic, sports, social, arts, etc - youth projects and works extensively with youth organisations and volunteers in these fields.

Partnerships and initiatives

Iași has been the Romanian Capital of Youth from 2019 to 2020, developing several partnerships and initiatives based on municipal and business joint support. The same mechanism was used to organise the **World Esports Championship in 2022**. The city is an active member of the **European Campus of City-Universities (E2CU)**, tackling various subjects from youth education and youth work to youth wellbeing.

Existing policies and action plans

Integrated Strategy for Urban Development

The Iași sets the municipality's priorities for 2015-2030, including creating a strong community and diversified services for social care covering the needs of all categories in the Metropolitan Area of Iași. The strategy proposes an extensive portfolio of various projects.

Digital Transformation Strategy

The **Digital Transformation Strategy of the Municipality of Iași**, i.e., the Smart City concept, is implemented along the six strategic pillars: smart governance, living, mobility, people, economy, and environment. These pillars are strongly interconnected to impact social inclusion.

Strategies at the county or regional level

To achieve the SDGs, the **Local Agenda 2030 for Iași County** aims to provide an integrated view on building a peace-oriented society, safety, citizen safety, citizen participation in decision-making, and social inclusion of disadvantaged groups. These actions consider the implementation of digital technologies. The Development Strategy of Iași County 2021-2027 is oriented to upgrade the educational infrastructure and to increase the digitisation of administrative services, amongst other objectives. The **North-East Regional Development Plan (North-East RDP) 2021-2027** and **Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation of the North-East Region** 2021-2027 are aligned with the strategic documents and linked to the national and EU-level objectives. Their objectives reflect the importance of innovation, digitalisation, sustainability, and social inclusion.

The possible focus of the URBACT Integrated Action Plan

Youth in decision-making

Youth work in Iași can address various aspects of youth development. One of the key objectives is to ensure a more substantial presence of youth in decision-making structures by providing them with opportunities to engage in civic initiatives, volunteerism, and other forms of civic engagement. By doing so, young people can develop their leadership skills and become more active participants in decision-making that affects their lives.

Empowering young people

Another essential objective is to empower young people to take charge of their lives and futures by providing them with access to education, employment, and entrepreneurship opportunities. That way, young people can build their skills and become more self-sufficient.

Connection with the business community

Youth work in Iași aims to ensure that young people have a greater sense of belonging and can work more closely with businesses by providing them mentorship, networking opportunities, and other forms of support that foster their connection with the business community.

Encouraging youth initiatives

Finally, Iași seeks to support and encourage youth initiatives, startups, civic involvement, and volunteerism. This objective is achieved by providing young people with access to resources, funding, and other forms of support that enable them to pursue their goals and aspirations.

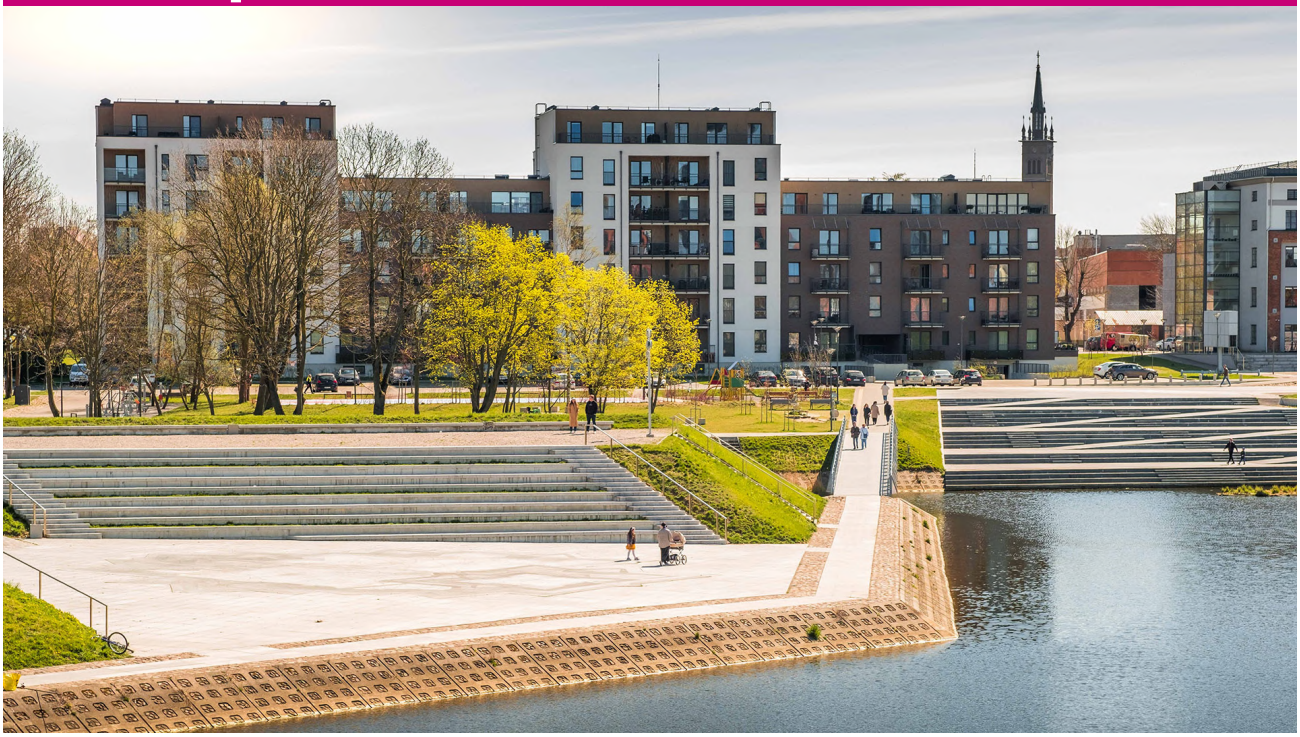
Creating a youth municipal centre

Creating a community of youth workers based on the good practices learned from the project partners is paramount. The city seeks to provide non-formal and informal education in digital skills and new capacities to youth, volunteers and youth workers in a dedicated municipal centre. The main result of the IAP could be creating a youth community around a dedicated youth municipal centre.

Learning needs

The city has no significant previous experience in digital youth work; all good practices of partner cities will be an essential asset for Iași Municipality. Questions of the city revolve around how youth work is organised in other cities and what can be learned from them to organise Digital Youth Work, how to strengthen the organisational background and build on volunteers and NGOs or private actors, and what policies could strengthen digital youth work.

2.5. Klaipėda



160,000 inhabitants, in the western part of Lithuania.

Klaipėda, the third largest city in Lithuania, lies on the Baltic Sea coast. It is situated 312 km from Vilnius and 224 km from Kaunas, to which a motorway connects it. The city is served by the Palanga airport, situated 34 km North of the city. The city's population is 160,000, of which 25,500 (16%) are aged 14-29 years old.

Youth work in Lithuania

The role of open youth work in Lithuanian youth policy has increased over the last 15 years, starting to take effect with the elaboration of the Concept of Open Youth Centers and Spaces. The Youth Policy Framework Law recently established the basic principles of youth work and quality requirements for youth workers and defined new forms of work with youth. The law stipulates that work with youth is carried out by youth organisations and organisations working with youth. It also defines the forms of youth work, such as open work, street work, mobile work, development of practical skills, informing and counselling and other forms. When working with youth, non-formal youth education must be carried out, and smart methods of working with youth must be applied. The **Agency of Youth Affairs**, based on the partnership of state institutions and the Lithuanian Youth Council, has a collegial advisory function and ensures the development of international youth cooperation and the successful participation of Lithuanian youth in EU programmes for young people. The **Lithuanian Youth Council**, the most significant non-governmental, non-profit umbrella structure for national youth organisations and regional unions of youth organisations, provides suggestions to

governmental institutions which work with youth problems and youth organisations. The Youth Work Council under the Ministry of Social Security and Labor analyses and monitors the implementation of youth work and disseminates information to the public about the significance of youth work. For more information on youth work in Lithuania, see the country's Youth Wiki page.

Local policy challenges

At the beginning of 2023, Klaipėda City Municipality surveyed digital youth work. The target group of this survey was youth organizations and organizations that work with youth. Most organizations answered that to use more digital tools in their work; they need more methodological and technological support, ready-to-use teaching and learning material, the ability to afford the equipment, and shadowing to learn how to apply technologies in their work. Organizations are now using these digital tools: social media, meeting platforms (Zoom, Microsoft Teams, etc.), and online games.

One problem is that the Klaipėda city NGO sector cannot implement digital youth work because they don't have digital tools skills (don't know how to use, for example, Discord, Canva, and AI programs).

Another problem is that Klaipėda's young people don't attend local activities. They spend more time at home and even don't interact with friends. Klaipėda's youth workers lack knowledge of which platforms to use to attract young people to Youth centres or other activities.

Existing policies and action plans

Klaipėda Strategic Plan

The Klaipėda Strategic Plan for 2021-2030 defines Klaipėda as a city where the coherence and sustainability of technology development and use is a way of thinking and a tool to achieve a higher quality of life. Technologies are installed smartly for process management, starting from traffic management and energy production to smart local government and high-value-creating businesses. Relevant measures:

- Raise youth workers' competencies and skills and apply new methods in youth work.
- Install digital services and similar tools to effective municipality public services.

Focus on Blue Economy Strategy

One strategic direction of the Focus on Blue Economy 2030 Klaipėda strategy is innovation and meeting the needs of the future economy education and science system. Relevant measure:

- Initiate inter-institutional agreement on retraining and qualification for workers in Klaipėda city institutions based on specific skills, education programs, and training oriented to the city's economic needs and priority city development areas.

The possible focus of the URBACT Integrated Action Plan

The goal is to create an action plan for digital youth work, identify the SWOT analysis, and strengthen youth workers in digital youth work. We want every youth worker to use at least 3-4 innovative digital youth work methods. Also, the Youth NGO sector will implement projects about digital youth work. To develop digital youth work in Klaipėda, we need to raise competencies and create a methodology with specific digital youth work methods available for all stakeholders working with young people. While elaborating on the IAP, Klaipėda will build on the experience gained in the **Global Goals for Cities URBACT Network**.

The IAP could cover several topics:

- Good practices of digital youth work
- Digital youth work tools and methodologies guidebook
- Youth worker's skills development plan
- Analysis of different digital youth work possibilities and adaptability in open youth centres
- Set up online youth worker position.

Key results of the IAP:

- Concrete measures and methodologies of digital youth work
- Digital youth work concept in open youth centres
- Analysis of existing digital youth work methods and possible development
- SWOT analysis of Klaipėda digital youth work capacity

Learning needs

Klaipėda needs to clarify the definition of digital youth work, identify the needs of the youngsters (tools, programs, and digital services), collect information about youth workers' digital tool skills, and elaborate an IAP to move forward with digital transformation in the youth sector.

2.6. Oulu

210,000 inhabitants, the 'capital' of Northern Finland.

Oulu, the fifth most populous city in the country, is situated by the Gulf of Bothnia, 675 km from Helsinki. It is served by the Oulu airport, located 16 km South of the city. The city's population is 210,000, of which 81,000 (38%) are aged below 27.

Youth work in Finland

Finland rewards youth work with a robust statutory position, which is rare in other European nations. Youth work offers targeted youth work, such as outreach youth work, youth workshops, or peer support groups. It also provides youth work services to everyone so they may have a positive life and support their well-being. Youth work operates through open access services in free-time facilities, mobile spaces (such as youth work vans) and web spaces as part of one-stop guidance centres. Youth work is also provided outdoors outside a school area or on school premises after school hours or during the school day. Youth activities and youth work are arranged by municipalities, non-governmental youth and youth work associations, and national youth centres and parishes based on funding regulations such as those in the Youth Act. Young people themselves need to have an active role in planning, realising and evaluating these activities. The Non-Discrimination Act obligates the municipalities to organise an equality mapping to develop the accessibility of the services, which puts emphasis on making youth work services more accessible. For more information on youth work in Finland, see the country's **Youth Wiki page**.

Local policy challenges

Services accessible to all

Oulu is a large city - one of the world's largest cities for its latitude - where providing local services for everyone is challenging. With the help of digital services, the city's services become accessible to all. The challenge is to make the services up-to-date and exciting from the perspective of young people.

Socio-economic inequality

Socio-economic inequality has increased among young people in recent years, leading to several challenges for this demographic. One of the significant issues is the increased need for leisure activities that can enhance their well-being and reduce feelings of loneliness. This is particularly important given the rise in gang involvement among young people, which requires the development of effective ways to intervene in the phenomenon.

National online youth space

To address these challenges, Oulu is committed to developing a national online youth space that can serve as a platform for young people nationwide. Through this initiative, which is being carried out in partnership with 10 municipalities and **Kanuuna**, the city aims to highlight what it means from the point of view of an individual city, thereby promoting a sense of local community and engagement.

Educational package for digital youth work

In addition, the city is also working to create an educational package for digital youth work, which will help equip youth workers with the necessary skills and knowledge to support young people in the digital age.

Gaming industry

Furthermore, Oulu provides opportunities for young people interested in the gaming industry to learn how games are made and connect with others with similar interests.

Committed to improving youth workers' skills

Overall, Oulu recognises the importance of improving youth workers' skills and knowledge of all digital youth work possibilities. The city is committed to addressing these challenges head-on to help young people achieve their full potential and create a brighter future for themselves and their communities.

Existing policies and action plans

Oulu City Strategy for 2030

The Oulu City Strategy for 2030 aims to utilise the opportunities of digitalisation. A city-level implementation program called **Digital Oulu** has been developed to achieve this goal, which will be renewed as **Smart City Oulu** at the beginning of 2024. The objectives of the city strategy are concretised in the education program, where digitalisation is defined as one of the program's strategic priorities. Digitalisation also enables the achievement of the objectives of several industry action programs. Digitalisation in education and culture services is guided by the sector's digital development plan, which consists of interactive Digikompassi workshops and formally maintained responsibility and target area digital

development plans. The digital development plan forms a roadmap for the sector's future, guiding actions and choices towards the vision and service promise set in the education program.

Reporting development focuses on developing metrics that can provide more real-time information to support everyday management. Artificial intelligence will be used and developed in collaboration with, among others, the **Generation AI** project at the University of Oulu in 2024. In addition, research and development projects of the University of Oulu and other research organisations, which implement various uses of artificial intelligence, work skills, education, data visualisation, anticipation, and various scenario analyses, will be launched in 2024.

Digitalisation in Oulu Youth Services

Digitalisation is a defining aspect of developing operations in Oulu's youth services. Digitalisation is seen as a renewal of work practices, which means the digitalisation of some work methods and tasks and a more comprehensive offering of services in digital form in different operating environments. Digital youth work has already been utilised extensively in the everyday lives of young people and workers in Oulu. Digitalisation is evident in various group activities, electronic elections for the youth council, and, among other things, online information and counselling services for young people. Digikompassi is a development program for Oulu's education and cultural services, whose goal is to create new ways of operating, automating and digitising the service network and producing more comprehensive services in digital form or digital service channels. The program's objective for youth services is to create a strategy for developing digital youth work through experimentation, focusing mainly on the opportunities offered by media and technology.

Oulu Youth Services

The core idea behind the **Oulu's Youth Services** is to offer preventive, long-term support for children and young people. The aim is to promote well-balanced growth and support parents in raising children. The work of trained youth instructors improves the living conditions and welfare of the young and encourages them to take the initiative and become active members of society. The youth workers' working methods emphasise commonality and flexibility and are based on networking and modern technology.

The possible focus of the URBACT Integrated Action Plan

Oulu's main goal

Oulu aims to foster responsible young adults who care about their own lives, other people, and the environment by

- Promoting social, emotional, and environmental awareness.
- Supporting healthy lifestyles and equal opportunities, including physical and mental health services and educational opportunities.

- Encouraging young people to participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives and the lives of others

Oulu believes it is crucial to provide youth with high-quality digital services that are functional but also intuitive and user-friendly. To achieve this goal, the city will leverage its extensive national and local networks to identify the most effective channels for delivering these services. Working closely with schools, educational institutions, and community organisations can ensure that digital services are accessible to all young people in Oulu and Finland, regardless of their background or location.

The possible focus of the IAP

Oulu's Integrated Action Plan involves a comprehensive approach that includes assessing its service structure to identify which parts can be produced digitally. This is a critical step towards digitising their services. Additionally, they are actively involved in the national online youth work development project, which is focused on providing digital solutions for youth work. By participating in this project, Oulu is staying up-to-date with the latest developments in the field and is contributing to the growth of online youth services in the country. Finally, Oulu also considers its municipality's needs when developing its action plan, ensuring that digital tools are tailored to meet the community's specific needs and are aligned with the overall vision for the future.

The key result of the IAP

The key result of the IAP would be that young people get easily accessible and easy-to-use services tailored to their needs by engaging the youth and integrating their feedback into the development of these digital services.

Learning needs

Oulu would like to learn good practices and how to use better digital tools in youth work and find new ways to do or think about digital youth work:

- Explore the best digital tools available for youth work and learn how to use them effectively.
- Understanding the best practices for using digital tools in youth work, including strategies for engaging youth online, maintaining privacy and security, and developing relationships with youth.
- New ways of thinking, including developing new approaches to online learning, exploring ways to use technology to promote social and emotional learning, and leveraging virtual reality and other emerging technologies to engage youth.
- New ways of doing, including developing new models incorporating digital tools, exploring new ways to collaborate and communicate online, and building partnerships with other organisations to leverage technology and resources.

2.7. Perugia

160,000 inhabitants, located in the central part of Italy.

Perugia, the twenty-third largest city in Italy, lies in the country's centre in Umbria region at 170 km from Rome. The city is served by the Perugia airport, situated 14 km East of the city, but the airports of Rome and Florence are also within a 200 km reach. The city's population is 160,000 inhabitants, 33,000 (20%) of them aged 15-34 years old.

Youth work in Italy

In Italy, there is no legislative framework for youth work as a professional or voluntary activity aimed at young people. Still, some youth work practices carried out mainly at the local level by civil organisations can fit the definition of youth work. Recently, there has been a discussion on preparing a national law to recognise youth work and youth workers, translating the term 'youth worker' into a socio-educational instructor for youth. The youth work practices supported by the central Government mainly include centre-based youth work, such as open-access youth centres, youth information centres, outreach youth work, summer camps, and non-formal education provided to volunteers. Without a regulatory framework at a national level, youth work policies fall mainly within regional administrations' competencies. One of the main actors related to youth work is the National Civic Service, which promotes voluntary experience among young people as a non-formal education opportunity. Other vital bodies are the Italian Youth Agency, the National Council for Universal Civic Service, and the National Youth Council. The Italian Youth Agency promotes the development of youth worker competencies and the quality of youth work through projects

supported by Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps, training events, and participation in project partnerships. For more information on youth work in Italy, see the country's Youth Wiki page.

Local policy challenges

Lack of a model for youth policy

One of the challenges of Perugia is building a model that allows youth policy operators to overcome the communication gap and know how to valorise young people's potential. Young people often feel disconnected from decision-making; they may not know that their voices are heard or that their opinions matter. This leads to a lack of engagement and participation in civic activities and hinders their ability to contribute to the development of their community.

Lack of skills and knowledge

Another challenge is that youth policy operators need more skills or knowledge to communicate with young people effectively. They may need help understanding the unique challenges that young people face or may need to be made aware of the opportunities to support and promote youth development.

Need to develop resources and infrastructure

Further resources and infrastructure are needed to support youth engagement and participation, even though some centres, cultural events, and other initiatives provide young people with opportunities to develop their skills and talents.

Need for a multi-pronged approach

Addressing these challenges will require a multi-pronged approach involving collaboration between youth policy operators, community leaders, and young people. It requires a more robust dedication and commitment to listen to young people's voices, support their development, and create opportunities for them to contribute to the development of their communities.

Existing policies and action plans

Territorial Strategic Document

The Territorial Strategic Document is a complex action plan to carry out interventions in various fields relating to digital transition and youth, such as:

- Strengthening digital networks to increase accessibility to telematic services and to stimulate entrepreneurship among young people;
- Enhancing the networking of the municipal library system and its multifunctionality as welcoming and protected places for study, co-working and social activities
- Strengthening and consolidating the university's role as a reference for developing innovative services

- Promoting the development of start-up incubators and co-working spaces in innovative and excellent economic and research sectors for students in collaboration with Universities and the ITS Umbria.
- Developing public and privately owned buildings as student residences and cultural facilities for students to develop their skills, also with the support and the leading of youth workers.
- Enhancing the historic centre as a network of public spaces and buildings dedicated to contemporary arts and the hospitality of young artists worldwide.

Youth Information Service

The Municipality of Perugia has many services related to youth. The **Youth Information Service** coordinates activities and projects with and for young people. It was created to inform young people about the city's study, work and cultural life opportunities. With the advent of the digital age, it has experienced an evolution that is still ongoing today and which sees it transform into a centre for the development and promotion of associations, youth and innovative projects.

Youth Service Center

The **Youth Services Center** is a place for meeting, socialising, informal education and information, and a reference point for teenagers and young people living, studying and working in Perugia. The multifunctional space allows youth to cultivate their passions and interests; it's a place where ideas meet. It is managed in collaboration with youth associations and some civil cooperatives that support young beneficiaries with their youth workers.

Switch On

Switch On is a place for youth, a multifunctional aggregation space for cultural promotion and social generativity. Open spaces for training activities in the field of cultural events, music, digital literacy, partnerships with artists and local associations for the development of modern artistic ateliers

conNEETiamo

ConNEETiamo aims at enhancing the talents, motivations, interests and ideas of NEETs with the involvement of institutions, youth associations, territories, businesses and citizens by inviting young people to speak, using the methodologies of participatory planning, peer education and learning by doing.

Urban regeneration project

Thanks to a collaboration agreement between the Municipality of Perugia and the Umbria Innovation Technology and Development Foundation, a building near the railway station will be converted into a Center for Advanced Graphic Arts, with the creation of laboratories for teaching and developing activities related to computer graphics, video games and stop motion.

Further services

The Municipality of Perugia offers free psychological counselling (for youth aged 14 to 27), a network of libraries and public reading rooms and study rooms for university students spread throughout the city, self-managed and created in collaboration with the University of Perugia, open 24 hours a day.

The possible focus of the URBACT Integrated Action Plan

Improve the model of providing youth work

The ambition of Perugia is to improve the model of providing youth work by building on the potential of the Switch On project carried on by young people. The municipality's youth work is linked with all the public policies and strategies for young people and is axed on Youth Service Centre and Youth Information Centre. Still, the Switch On project is a grassroots movement that is very well connected to the youth of Perugia. Their excellent skills in connecting, engaging and communicating with youth could be used to develop a multi-pronged approach to youth work.

Music and the digital world

The focus of the Integrated Action Plan could be the creative sector as an answer for inclusion and a tool for overcoming the limits of youth work and regaining young people's confidence. Therefore, the focus could be the music and the digital world, which are youth-led fields and can link different targets.

Key result of the IAP

The key result of the Integrated Action Plan would be the IAP itself, a reasoned action plan co-designed with the stakeholders indicating the strategic actions to develop the city's youth policies based on a structured, effective collaboration with the academic world, schools and services. The main protagonists of the IAP must remain the young people helping Perugia plan services, supporting their growth and inclusion based on their needs. Perugia also wants to improve the work of youth workers and support associations of young people carrying out activities with the same purpose.

Learning needs

In the NextGen Youth Work project, Perugia aims to learn good practices from other European cities to enhance its youth policies. Some of the primary learning needs the city focuses on are:

- *Digital skills training*: Perugia can learn from other cities how to train young people effectively in digital skills, including skills related to using digital tools and platforms and more advanced skills.
- *Youth engagement*: Learning better to engage young people in developing youth policies, creating opportunities for youth participation and input, and building partnerships with youth organisations and groups.
- *Innovation and creativity*: Learning to foster innovation and creativity among young people, and offering support and resources for implementing innovative youth-led initiatives.
- *Artificial intelligence*: Exploring AI-powered tools and platforms to provide better services to young people and ensuring ethical and responsible guidelines are in place.

2.8. Tetovo

85,000 inhabitants, located in the northern part of North Macedonia.

Tetovo, the fifth largest city in North Macedonia, lies in the northern part of the country, close to the Sharr Mountains. It is 44 km from Skopje, to which a motorway connects. It is easy to reach Tetovo from the Skopje Airport, which is located 73 km away. There are 85,000 residents in the city, two-thirds of them Albanians. The number of youth aged 15-24 is 11,000 (15% of the population).

Youth work in its infancy

The youth work profession is in its infancy in North Macedonia. As part of Yugoslavia, youth work was present through the pioneer homes and alliances of the Communist and Socialist youth; however, this form of youth work disappeared in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Since then, some progress has been reached in youth work, which is now guided mainly by NGOs learning from Western countries' best practices. Several Macedonian associations have attempted to introduce different approaches to youth work based on models from other European countries, with financial support from foreign and international organisations. The Agency of Youth and Sport is the foremost governmental authority involved in policy-making on youth work. The leading non-public actor who is taking part in the development of policies in the field of youth work is the **Union for Youth Work**, a network of youth organisations and organisations working with and for youth whose mission is to regulate and standardise youth work, support youth workers and raise public awareness of the importance of youth work. For more

information on youth work in the Republic of North Macedonia, see the country's Youth Wiki page.

Local policy challenges

Isolation and health issues exacerbated by the pandemic

As in many cities, youth in Tetovo have been strongly challenged these last few years, primarily due to Covid-19. Online schooling, isolation from society, lack of different activities (sports activities, parties, and social activities), and health issues are considered to be affecting the well-being of today's youth. The whole situation contributed to self-isolation and increased the addiction to the digital sphere. The youth, as impacted by social media, has been seen to spend less and less time with outdoor activities and in physical youth centres. At the same time, cyberbullying is at a high level.

Local structures

A Local Youth Council was established with nine members of different ethnicities, organisations, and high schools with a Work Strategy for 2018-2024. The council organises various voluntary actions and is involved in many events aimed at youth, such as organising health day, ecology day, celebration of various national holidays, Culture Nights in Tetovo with sports, cultural and entertainment activities and different entertainment for young people. The responsibility for youth-related tasks lies within the Education and Youth Unit of the Department of Public Affairs. The department provides institutional and financial support for cultural entities and essential projects for the municipality of Tetovo, performs work in social protection and child protection under the municipality's jurisdiction, and prepares a program for institutional and financial support of cultural entities.

Existing policies and action plans

Law on Youth Participation and Youth Policies

The Law on Youth Participation and Youth Policies defines youth work and youth workers. Youth workers still need to be recognised in the Macedonian national classification as an occupation. However, it is expected to enter the national qualifications framework once youth work becomes part of the higher education program. The law establishes youth centres where youth workers are responsible for working with youth in cooperation between the municipalities and the youth organisations.

National Youth Strategy

The National Youth Strategy 2016-2025 contains a chapter on Local Youth Work. The strategy provides long-term objectives, such as the recognition of youth work, the formal recognition and regulation of the use and availability of youth work as an integral part of the education system, and the assurance of the quality and availability of youth work in each municipality. Some of the measures envisaged for these objectives are promoting the concept and use of youth work (including positive examples from other countries), educating professionals and introducing them to the idea and potential use of youth work, integrating youth work in the study programmes for professions

involved in youth development, ensuring adequate human resources for youth work in each municipality; and involving youth as active partners in youth work. The most common tasks of youth work are supporting youth's personal and social development by providing organised and structured support and facilitating their active participation in community life. Youth work also contributes to developing young people's self-confidence and socialisation, sustainable independence and the strengthening of their abilities, as well as the development of their tolerance and responsibility.

Work Strategy of the Local Youth Council

The Work Strategy of the Local Youth Council in the Municipality of Tetovo 2020-2024 is a strategic document which, following the national strategy for youth, defines medium-term goals and priorities for developing youth policies and promoting the interests of young people at the local level. The local strategy also contains an action plan for realisation with defined activities, dynamics, holders of activities and projections of budget funds, as well as conditions and evaluation indicators for implementing the local youth strategy.

Strategic Plan for Local Economic Development

Strategic Plan for Local Economic Development of the Municipality of Tetovo 2023-2027 Strategic Plan for local economic development of the Municipality of Tetovo 2023-2027 Strategic Plan for local economic development of the Municipality of Tetovo 2023-2027 Strategic Plan for local economic development of the Municipality of Tetovo 2023-2027 Strategic Plan for local economic development of the Municipality of Tetovo 2023-2027 Strategic Plan for local economic development of the Municipality of Tetovo 2023-2027 Strategic Plan for local economic development of the Municipality of Tetovo 2023-2027.

The possible focus of the URBACT Integrated Action Plan

Tetovo's main objective is to enhance the participation of young people in both online and offline activities and to ensure that their voices are heard in developing youth policies. Additionally, Tetovo aims to improve the skills of young people at the local level, with the ultimate goal of fostering an ambitious and dynamic youth population. By investing in the potential of young people, Tetovo hopes to prevent youth migration and promote sustainable development in the region.

The focus of the Integrated Action Plan would be:

- Setting up regular cooperation among the municipality, local youth council and NGOs, following the needs and interests of the youth.
- Ensuring the quality and availability of youth work in Tetovo.

- Improving secondary schools' curricula, teaching techniques, and digital tools, including practical teaching and adequate inclusion in the education process of children with special needs and interests.
- Creating low-threshold opportunities for all young people to acquire digital competencies demanded in the labour market.
- Improving the quality of cultural, sports and leisure activities, supporting mental health.

Learning needs

Tetovo's learning needs centre around creating a platform for youth and developing their digital skills.

Resource centre for youth

Tetovo is interested in learning about creating a platform where youth organisations, civil society organisations, informal movements, groups, or young individuals could find partners for joint activities, exchange initiatives for youth projects, discuss cooperation ideas, build up joint activities, get advice, have debate and panel discussion and implement those projects together.

Developing youth skills

Another learning need of the city is related to digital tools and how these could help engage with youth in the city and support their involvement in decision-making, social engagement and collaboration at the local level.

2.9. Veszprém

56,000 inhabitants, in the western part of Hungary

Veszprém is a medium-sized Hungarian city near Lake Balaton, with 56,000 inhabitants, of whom about 20,000 are under age 35. It is an important centre for the settlements on Lake Balaton's northern shore, and therefore, its services extend beyond its administrative boundaries.

Youth work in Hungary

Youth work in Hungary, similar to that of countries in the Eastern bloc, observed many disruptions, marked by its foundation based on Christian youth organisations, its replacement by the pioneer movement after World War II, and the establishment of youth organisations based on communities of these roots after 1989. The **National Youth Strategy** refers to youth work as one of the youth services that play a crucial role in youth development. As of 2023, youth work in Hungary has three pillars. Specific 'grassroots' youth communities at the local level, several NGOs and civil organisations, typically project-funded by the Government or EU grants, and the public infrastructure, coordinated by the Deputy State Secretariat for Youth Affairs in the **Ministry for Culture and Innovation**. There is no independent national strategy for youth work. Still, the National Youth Strategy calls for better recognition of youth work, developing a catalogue of criteria for youth work at the local level and strengthening the educational goals of youth work. One of the prominent organisations in youth work is the **Elisabeth Youth Foundation Nonprofit Ltd.**, which implemented and managed EU-funded youth projects between 2014 and 2020. Another key public stakeholder is **Tempus Public Foundation**, the Erasmus+ Programme Office, which

manages international cooperation programmes and special projects in education, training, and EU-related issues. The Digital Welfare Nonprofit Ltd manages Hungary's Digital Welfare Strategy, which deals with some of the digital aspects of youth work (such as digital competence development, supporting intergenerational knowledge transfers, and digital sport). The organisation also coordinates the implementation of the Digital Child Protection Strategy. Key non-public actors are umbrella organisations such as the National Youth Council, the Hungarian Association of Youth Service Providers and the Federation of Children's and Youth Municipal Councils. See the country's Youth Wiki page for more information on youth work in Hungary.

Local policy challenges

Digital youth work is a new topic

Digital youth work is a relatively new topic in Hungary and still needs to be clearly defined. Digital youth work methods were not included in youth workers' basic education, and they need access to detailed information about them. Some youth workers feel that the digital space deteriorates personal relationships and non-verbal communication skills, making youth work more difficult. Also, digital platforms and channels have not been developed for digital youth work, the working time frame is not always compatible with regular working hours, youth workers often do not have digital devices, and the numerous online platforms are not well known to them.

Lack of youth-related information

Specific challenges in the city include the lack of easily accessible information for youth on topics such as mental health support, civic participation, citizenship, sports, arts and other leisure time activities and venues, career-related services and services and activities of local youth-related organisations.

Engaging young people

Reaching young people, especially those working or living outside the city centre, is challenging. Youth services provided by social workers at educational institutions are facing many obstacles. Additionally, there is a digital divide, as young people with fewer opportunities have limited access to digital resources and tools. Young people with fewer opportunities or who are unemployed also need more intensive outreach youth work and low-threshold services that help them become community members, find jobs, and build a positive vision of the future. Several organisations are working at the city level to represent people with disabilities, but most of them have difficulties with successfully reaching out to and engaging young disabled people. They would also need more intensive and institutionalised communication and cooperation with the municipality.

Lack or inefficient use of resources

Another challenge is maintaining a sufficient long-term workforce for youth-related tasks at the municipality or city-run institutions. The city's sports officer has recently started working part-time as a youth officer. The Youth

Round Table is open to individual young people as members. Still, this option needs to be fully exploited, and online Round Table sessions may be an excellent way to widen membership. The new Youth Community Space, 'Zug', has yet to be well known among the youth, and more intense social youth services are needed to improve social coping skills (problem-solving, initiatives, planning their future).

Existing policies and action plans

Youth Strategy of Veszprém

The recently developed **Youth Strategy of Veszprém** includes five main areas, related strategic goals, and concrete actions, highlighting the need to develop youth work in the digital and physical space. Digital youth work is mentioned as youth workers needing to acquire new skills and knowledge and an open attitude to reach young people effectively in the digital space. Another area of the strategy is the more conceptual use of the existing and new community spaces and the development of more community spaces, including digital ones. One of the actions to be implemented in the future is setting up a youth information centre, which could also be used for digital and social competencies training for youth. Another action focuses on digital youth work and using digital tools that allow youth workers to understand and address the needs of youth more effectively.

Veszprém Drugs Strategy

The **Veszprém Drugs Strategy** (2022-2025) lists behavioural addictions among the problems to tackle and identifies internet and online gaming addiction as the most significant behavioural addiction. Actions planned include the development of a rapid addiction test and a counselling methodology.

Local Equal Opportunities Plan

The **Local Equal Opportunities Plan** (2023-2028) emphasises the need to create opportunities to acquire and access digital skills in the education system, especially for people with fewer opportunities.

Veszprém 2030 City Development Strategy

Veszprém 2030 City Development Strategy suggests the development of digital competency training available to all public service staff and similar training for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, school drop-outs and NEETs.

Sustainable Urban Development Strategy

Sustainable Urban Development Strategy 2021-2027 sets out five development areas. One such area is the digital city and the development of smart life, governance, mobility, environment and people. However, digital youth work is not explicitly included. According to the document, a digital transition action plan will be developed by 2024.

The possible focus of the URBACT Integrated Action Plan

Digital youth work serving Youth Strategy

The overall goal of Veszprém is to set up digital youth work that effectively contributes to reaching the goals of the Youth Strategy of Veszprém. The ambitions related to this goal include:

- Improving cooperation.
- Digital and professional skills of youth workers.
- Engaging with youth, especially with young people with disabilities and fewer opportunities.
- Empower youth organisations.

Building on Global Goals for Cities URBACT Network

Building on the experience with Global Goals for Cities URBACT Network, Veszprém's approach to the IAP will be the integration of relevant SDGs and targets, connecting them to the actions planned and looking for cross-sectoral links and solutions.

Focus of the IAP

The likely focus of the IAP will be:

- Planning and developing digital tools and services involving youth and youth workers and service providers. Such a service could be a central, youth-friendly, easily accessible, widely known information platform and possibly a digital youth community space and a platform where the youth can express their opinion related to youth services and local youth strategy.
- Improving digital skills of youth workers, youth with fewer opportunities and relevant Municipality staff.
- Transforming certain youth services and participatory schemes by exploiting digital solutions efficiently connecting youth, youth workers, youth organisations, and the municipality. These solutions should enhance cooperation, local youth work and the participation of young people in local communities.
- Enhancing outreach youth work in the city, especially for the young people with fewer opportunities and disabled people.
- Improving cooperation of municipal decision-makers, youth-related officers and youth, possibly with the help of the free online tool Democracy Reloading Toolkit.

Learning needs

Veszprém's primary learning needs are related to

- The design of digital tools, platforms and services that complement non-digital youth community spaces and youth services.

- Improving digital communication skills and English language skills of youth workers and youth
- Raising awareness of digital youth work to gain an open attitude towards youth work in the digital space.
- Creating a cooperation platform for youth workers and sharing online resources on digital and offline youth work methods, translating them into Hungarian and adapting them to the local environment.
- Strengthening the role of youth workers and combining digital and non-digital youth work depending on the youth worker's profile and the needs of youth.
- Engaging youth in local decision-making and shaping the attitude of decision-makers, possibly using the Democracy Reloading Toolkit.
- Supporting citizens (including youth) who are less open or skilled to use digital public services effectively, also exploring the possibility of generations helping each other.

2.10. Viladecans

67,000 inhabitants, located in Catalonia, Spain.

Viladecans lies on the shore of the Balearic Sea, very close to Barcelona, and is part of the Barcelona Metropolitan Area. The Barcelona Airport is only 7 km from the centre of Viladecans. The city's population is 67,000 inhabitants, 17,500 (26%) of them aged 12-35 years old.

Youth work in Spain and Catalonia

Youth and youth work policies are designed and implemented primarily at a regional and local level, usually through regional youth institutes, youth councils and municipalities. Besides The Ministry of Social Rights and 2030 Agenda, the leading public actors in the youth work are the Youth Institute (INJUVE), the Youth Council, and the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces. The Catalan Agency for the Youth is the official body overseeing youth programmes, managing administrative services and advising local entities in Catalonia. It cooperates with the Catalan General Directorate of the Youth. The Catalan Observatory of the Youth is a valuable tool for youth workers and researchers to improve their analyses of the youth situation in Catalonia. See the country's Youth Wiki page for more information on youth work in Spain.

Local policy challenges

New ways of socialisation and leisure

Viladecans - just like many similar-sized cities - struggle to adapt to new youth challenges, such as new ways of socialisation and leisure brought by a hybrid virtual and physical space and recent technologies. The main

challenge is to engage and connect with the youth who normally see the City Council and its services as something distant. Even if Viladecans Youth Services are very active and have a big demand, they do not reach all young people in the city, especially some minority communities. The feeling of anxiety towards an uncertain future, together with an increase in mental health issues and gaps between educational programs and new professions needed in the 21st century, are some of the concerns young people face nowadays.

Engaging youth

These issues became more prominent after the Covid-19 pandemic, affecting young people by increasing the distance between them and their communities to local authorities, services and institutions. Viladecans faces difficulty attracting young people, who rarely participate in urban matters. Public services lack the means to innovate and offer alternatives for young people to develop solutions and overcome their challenges. One specific challenge is to turn the Youth Services into a reference point for young people when they look for support and information, whatever their field (educational, work, cultural, leisure and leisure, etc.). Turning **Viladecans Youth Services** not only into a point of reference but into a bidirectional communication channel promoting socialisation, engagement, and participation in the public space and the community is vital.

Lack of trust

The main difficulty in achieving this goal is the disconnection between the young population and the public administration since the latter is usually not considered an ally or a channel for resolving their conflicts, doubts or concerns. There is a perceived sense of rejection, prejudice and lack of trust that is difficult to break.

Lack of communication skills

On top of that, Viladecans Youth Services does not employ a professional communication expert. Youth professionals generate content through social networks but are most often reactive to the reality of the youth using the services. Still, there is a sector of the youth population that is not reached precisely because of the lack of connection with public administration, as well as the lack of knowledge of which are the optimal methods of communication. This is also caused by the youth's rapidly changing communication channels, and the local authority is slow in detecting and adapting.

Adapting communication to different needs

Another serious challenge is providing relevant messages adapted to youngsters with different backgrounds, needs and interests. Young people belonging to some communities (e.g. Chinese, Arab or Gypsy communities) are challenging to reach.

Existing policies and action plans

Viladecans 2030 Strategy and Local Urban Agenda

The city approved its strategic framework, including the **Viladecans 2030 Strategy and the Viladecans Local Urban Agenda** as well as sectoral plans, that will guide the work of the local government while ensuring the coherence of local policies in 2021. The Strategy sets six thematic axes: economic development, ecological transition, educational innovation, city resilience, healthy lifestyle, and urban regeneration. Above these, it defines social inclusion, gender equality and green and digital transition as transversal concepts to all strategic axes. It sets 25 challenges to which the NextGen YouthWork can contribute directly to at least three. It also sets two missions, one of them being "Make the city a school, where all urban spaces, citizens and actors educate, learn and collaborate in building an equitable, innovative and prepared education for uncertain and changing scenarios, which responds to the diversity of needs of young people and children, which works to achieve 0 school dropouts by 2030, and where 100% of Viladecans residents born after 2015 achieve at least post-compulsory education". NextGen YouthWork can actively contribute to achieving this mission. The Urban Agenda focuses on sustainable urban development and defines 121 actions, and NextGen YouthWork is aligned with at least six. One of the 10 objectives of the Urban Agenda is to lead and promote digital innovation, integrated within the Smart City Plan, and in the Plan of Transparency and Good Governance. Both plans point to the development of a smart city where the use of new technologies facilitates and makes the management of municipal services more efficient, next to the improvement of participation channels, information, transparency and accountability by the public administration towards the citizens of Viladecans.

Viladecans Local Plan for Youth

More specifically, in terms of youth, the Youth Plan for Catalonia have marked the objectives of Viladecans Local Plan for Youth (2020-2023)

- Promoting healthy life among young people,
- The universalisation of culture among the youth population as an instrument of social cohesion
- Promoting a new model of society based on participation, sustainability and social innovation.

Viladecans Local Plan for Youth will be updated in 2024. The NextGen YouthWork project will be an opportunity to redefine Youth policies with exchange and learning.

Inclusivity and Gender Equality Plans

Equal opportunities are a cross-cutting element of Viladecans 2030 Strategy that must be present in all project policies. In addition to this, two relevant documents have been recently approved. One is The Local Plan for Inclusive Community Action (2023-2026), which aims to ensure an inclusive approach in all municipal plans, projects and actions. The other is the Plan for Gender

Equality in Viladecans (2023-2026), recently approved by the City Council Plenary and aligned with the Local Plan for Inclusive Community Action. It sets a series of objectives to incorporate the intersectional gender perspective in a transversal way in all the City Council's plans, programs and projects. Therefore, social inclusion and gender equality are compulsory for any municipal initiative.

The possible focus of the URBACT Integrated Action Plan

Reach more young people

Viladecans aims to reach more young people, especially those disconnected from the administration through the existing municipal services and promote social inclusion, participation in public life and associationism. Therefore, it is necessary to review the professional profiles and the tasks that must be carried out by the Youth Service so that it responds to the current reality of youth in the municipality.

Redefining roles and training needed

The possible focus of the Integrated Action Plan is redefining functions and training needed for the Youth Service staff to ensure the support provided is adapted and responds to the needs of all the young people in the city. Reaching young people who usually do not use Youth Services is essential. Additionally, the NextGen Youthwork project can help Viladecans analyse the youth's situation and needs and adapt the Youth Service and youth worker profiles. The digital/hybrid component will be a crucial element.

Key results

The key results of the Integrated Action Plan are expected to be:

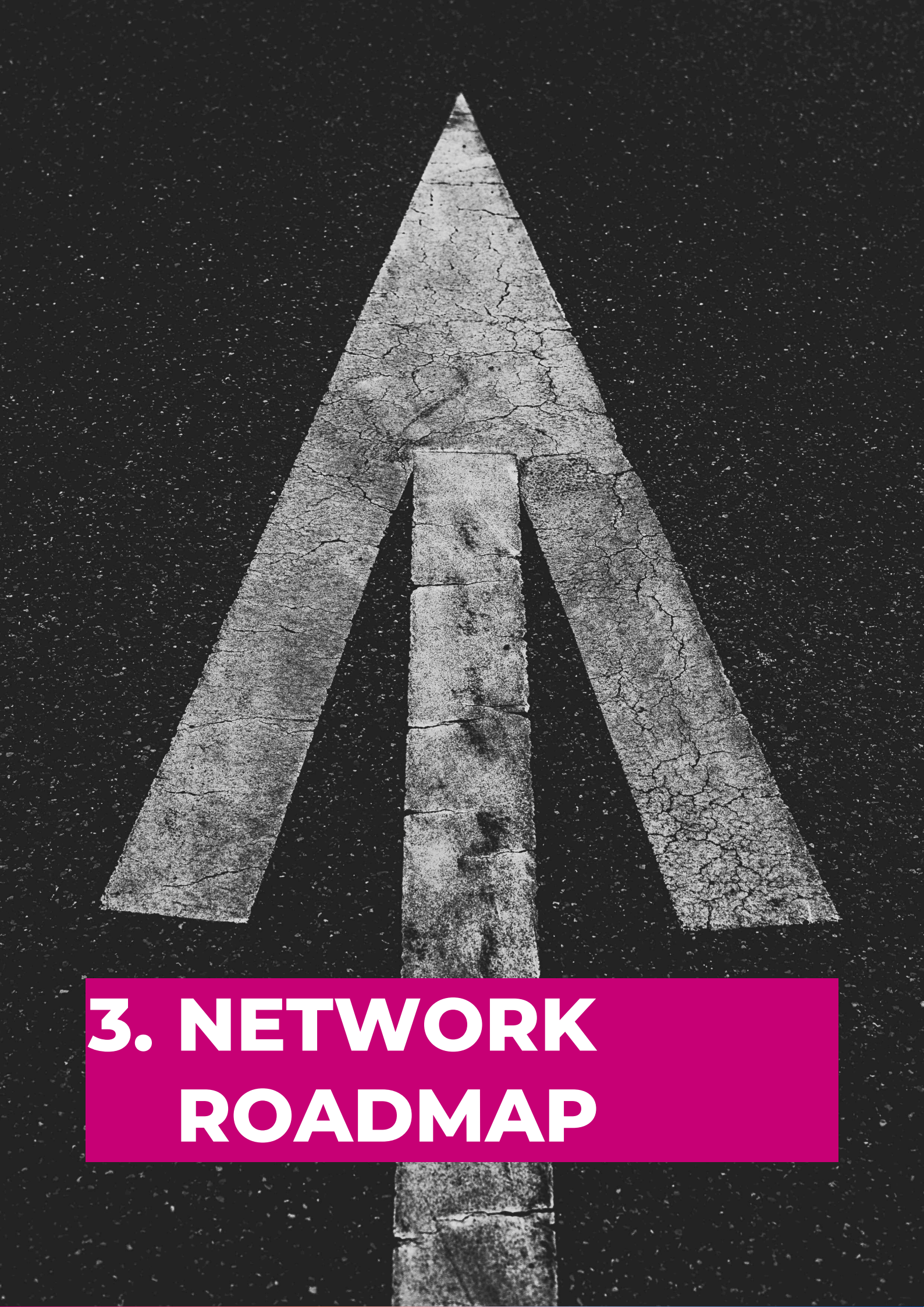
- Developing a hybrid strategy that speaks the youth's language, reaches, attracts, engages them, and helps the city change how they interact with the city administration and the community.
- Defining the necessary roles and training of youth workers in the relevant skills and competencies to access young people and respond to their needs and challenges in a hybrid context.

Learning needs

Young people demand more immediate and agile access to certain services and information, and often, the administrative language used in digital services does not favour empathy. Therefore, NextGen YouthWork cities can provide valuable insights and examples for addressing Viladecans's learning needs in youth work. Such good practices could be:

- *Digital Literacy Best Practices*: Exchange experiences with cities that have successfully implemented digital literacy programs for youth workers, and learn about effective training methodologies, tools, and resources used in different contexts.

- *User-Centric Design Success Stories*: Learn from cities that have excelled in user-centric design for digital services. Explore case studies of user-centric design for digital services, understand the challenges faced, and learn from the strategies employed.
- *Communication and Empathy Strategies*: Learn about best practices, materials, and feedback on the impact of such initiatives.
- *Online Youth Engagement Models*: Exchange ideas on effective strategies, platforms, and methods to involve youth in decision-making processes at the local level.
- *Language Sensitivity in Digital Communications*: Share guidelines, examples, and lessons learned in creating inclusive and easily understandable content.
- *Data Privacy and Security Best Practices*: Learn from cities that have successfully addressed data privacy and security concerns in youth-related digital services. Learn about compliance measures and effective communication practices regarding data handling.



3. NETWORK ROADMAP

3.1. Synthesis

Diversity in tradition, funding and implementation of youth work

There are significant differences between countries regarding the traditions, funding and implementation of youth policies and youth work, as well as the role of cities in these and the political support for youth work. In Northern and Western Europe, the role of youth work has been steadily growing and developing organically during the century. In Eastern Europe, especially in the former Eastern Bloc countries, there have been several ruptures with the political regime changes. In the cities of Northern and Western Europe (Oulu, Aarhus, Eindhoven), the role of the cities is decisive, with significant budgets allocated to youth work. Municipalities in Southern Europe (Cartagena, Viladecans, Perugia) fund youth work with well-developed institutions. Still, this funding is lower than in more developed cities, and funding through projects plays a significant role. In Eastern European cities, the lack of resources means that the role of the municipalities is more of a coordinating one. The structure of the implementers is fragmented, with the more prominent role of NGOs and public institutions, and funding relies greatly on project (and EU) funding. However, in Klaipeda and Veszprém, significant development was achieved with extra funding and investments in physical infrastructure. In addition to the above, political support for youth work is not even; political support is solid in countries with a strong tradition but much weaker in Eastern European countries.

Diversity in definition and scope of youth work

The very definition and scope of youth work are very diverse. The definition of youth work and youth workers varies in almost all countries (if there is one at all), and the structure of youth worker training varies. The diversity of youth work is illustrated by the fact that the European Youth Goals set out 11 objectives. Still, specific youth work activities can serve several objectives at the same time.

Diversity in digital transition status quo

The digital transition also varies considerably from one country to another. Oulu and Eindhoven are members of the consortium of the Urban Agenda for the EU Digital Agenda Partnership (with Oulu as coordinator), which shows how advanced they are. The Digital Agenda is also a central priority in Aarhus, and the city is taking significant steps. However, digital transition is also a central issue for the less developed cities in the NextGen YouthWork network, and significant local (or national) development initiatives can be identified. The Hungarian and the Romanian states are members of the Digital Transition Partnership. The Hungarian state's central initiative role is dominant; in Iasi, the local government addresses it as a key area, building on a robust and booming IT sector.

Digital transition in youth work challenging

For several reasons, the digital transition in youth work is challenging for cities. On the one hand, cities are trying to go after young people and focus on the tools and digital spaces where young people can be reached. At the

same time, these devices, apps, and young people are changing flexibly, while municipalities are finding it challenging to keep up. Cities often do not know where their young people can be reached and cannot identify and prepare for future trends. On the other hand, youth workers have limited knowledge of effectively using digital solutions for youth work. This limited knowledge can be explained by an inevitable digital divide between youth workers and young people due to age on the one hand and the lack of training on digital tools of youth workers on the other. This also implies that youth workers typically transfer methods used in the traditional offline environment to the digital environment with varying degrees of success. Encouragingly, however, Oulu is experimenting with developing new methods specifically designed for the digital environment. Thirdly, the challenge is how to integrate the use of new digital tools into existing youth work institutions. In this respect, more developed cities are in a more difficult position, as their youth workers may have difficulties in adapting or even be reluctant to the transition. For less developed cities, the absence of old structures creates opportunities for faster adaptation.

Diversity in social media and tools used

Interestingly, there are also significant differences in using different social media sites. Facebook is the most widely used social media within the total population in Europe. It has a share of over 90% in Eastern European countries and is, therefore, the dominant one (see Statcounter data). Facebook shares are lower but above 50% in Western European and North European countries, and X (Twitter), Instagram, YouTube and Pinterest have a higher share than in East-European countries. However, some data (for Western Europe) show that young people use different channels: YouTube and WhatsApp lead, ahead of Instagram, TikTok and Facebook. But even within that, there are differences between the Millennial and Gen Z generations. The former generation still uses Facebook and Facebook Messenger at a high rate. For Gen Z members, these two social media channels barely make the top ten, while TikTok and Snapchat are much more popular.

No clear stratification or clustering

Based on the above, no clear stratification or clustering is currently emerging among the cities in the NextGen YouthWork network that would impact the organisation of the knowledge exchange. Of course, it is clear that some cities are more advanced in this field; Oulu, Eindhoven, and Aarhus have significant knowledge in youth work and digital transition and can, therefore, provide valuable support to less experienced partners, sharing their extensive knowledge and previous experience. However, experienced cities can benefit significantly from each other's experience. There are signs that these cities could also develop deeper cooperation in developing an NGYW knowledge-sharing platform, which would be open to cities in the whole network. Other cities (Veszprém, Klaipeda, Viladecans, Aarhus and Eindhoven) could share their practical experience from URBACT and other EU projects.

Roadmap flexibility is crucial

It is essential to underline that both the methodology and the timetable are flexible, allowing the network to respond to the changing needs of cities as they will acquire more knowledge in the upcoming months. Reviewing the planned methodology and the network roadmap will be an ongoing process, and the Mid-Term Meeting will also provide an opportunity to adapt the roadmap.

Based on the city profiles and the discussions during the city visits, the learning needs of NextGen YouthWork are centred around the following questions:

- How do we engage with youth?
- How can the organisation adapt to digital youth work?
- What skills are needed from youth workers?
- What tools and technologies should be used to ensure safety and inclusion?

Engagement

Cities need help with engaging youth in general. Identifying their needs, setting up a clear strategy, and finding ways to engage them is challenging.

- *Identifying the needs of the youth:* What are the best practices for identifying the needs of the youth population in a city? How can a municipality gather insights and data to better understand the needs of young people living in the area?
- *Communication strategy and platform:* How can a city develop a communication strategy to communicate with the youth effectively? What are the critical elements of creating a communication platform for the youth in a city? What strategies can be used to reach out to communities of young people not connected to youth services? How can cities communicate effectively with youth?
- *Engaging youth:* How can a city improve relationships with the youth and engage more young people? How can a municipality involve young people in local decision-making processes??

Organisation

Transition to hybrid youth work is challenging for municipalities and the organisations involved. Finding a sustainable and long-term vision and a balance between digital and physical activities, motivating youth workers and adapting the organisation to these changes are essential.

- *Integrating online and offline youth work:* How to balance and effectively combine online/digital and offline/physical youth work to support each other?
- *Long-term and sustainable vision for youth work:* How to create a long-term and sustainable vision and organisational background for

youth work? How to strengthen the organisational background and make people interested?

- *Developing digital youth work:* How to motivate youth workers to learn new tools and technologies? How can shadowing help teach new skills to youth workers? How to organise digital youth work in less developed cities? How to develop a common online platform and communication channel for local organisations working with youth?
- *Organising youth work:* How is youth work organised in other cities? How to optimise available services and build partnerships with bottom-up initiatives in youth work? How to improve street youth work? How to involve other departments of a municipality in cross-cutting youth work?

Skills

Developing the skills of youth workers is paramount for all cities. These skills include digital, language, and communication skills and special techniques to engage with youth.

- *Digital skills of youth workers:* What digital skills do youth workers need to develop? How can youth workers be trained to use digital tools efficiently? What kind of methodological and technological support can be provided to youth workers? Is there ready-to-use teaching and learning material available for youth workers? How can the digital gap among youth workers be narrowed, and specific individuals be motivated to learn more?
- *Language and communication skills:* How can youth workers learn the language of the youth? How can the communication skills of youth workers be improved? How can youth programs be communicated online using appropriate channels and concise language? How can cities use sensitive language when communicating with youth?
- *Engaging youth:* How can youth workers engage with youth through online games? What practical ways can break the ice in the digital world of youth work?

Tools

Tools and technologies for youth work are pivotal topics for all municipalities and youth workers. The question is what tools can be used and how organisations keep fit for innovation while ensuring inclusion and the safety of youth and youth workers.

Digital tools and activities for engaging youth: What tools, online platforms and channels effectively activate youth in digitalised youth work? How can passive encounters be transformed into active engagement? What types of activities are suitable for the digital sphere in youth work? What was Oulu's

experience developing a youth app, including preparation, involvement of young people, and promotion?

Innovation in youth work: How can cities ensure that youth workers explore new ways and technologies in youth work? What technologies can be utilised to enhance the quality of youth work? What new technologies can support youth work, including examples like artificial intelligence? How can cities learn about digital tools, and are there any success stories using user-centric design?

Safe and inclusive digital spaces: How can safe and inclusive digital spaces be created for young people? What considerations are involved in data protection and data usage? How can privacy and security be maintained in the context of data privacy? What measures should be taken to ensure data security? Are there specific guidelines for addressing data privacy and security concerns in the mentioned context?

This set of topics of common interests for all cities provides the thematic backbone of knowledge exchange. Cities will learn about each other's good practices during the Core Meetings, Online Meetings and Study Visits.

3.2. Methodology

The proposed framework for network-level activities aligns with the **Action Planning Networks 2023-2025 Guide for Applicants**. The planned meetings are explained below, complying with the Guide and ensuring that planned activities fit the tight budget.

Core Meetings (CM)

Ten transnational meetings are planned for the whole project's duration, one each quarter. Six of them are Core Meetings (i.e., physical meetings), where attendance is compulsory for all partners. These are vital for successfully carrying out all network activities and producing the planned outputs.

Core Meetings are always coupled with Study Visits, envisaged to ensure the possibility of visiting all cities, maximising knowledge exchange among all partners, and learning about cities' good practices.

The Core Meetings will last two days (10-16 hours), dedicating one day to discussing past and upcoming network milestones and activities, methodologies for producing the planned outputs, etc. The other day of the Core Meetings will be dedicated to the Study Visit. If the agenda of a Core Meeting becomes too crowded, an additional online session can be scheduled around that meeting's date.

The URBACT Programme defines four Core Meetings (Ready for Action Meeting, Focus on Integrated Approach Meeting, IAP Draft Peer Review Meeting, and Final IAP Meeting), as mentioned in the Action Planning Networks 2023-2025 Guide for Applicants. These meetings will be designed according to the Guide, adding network-specific sessions. The network defined two further CMs: the Kick-Off and the Mid-Term Meeting.

Core Meetings are open to all project partners, their stakeholders (ULG members), and youth workers.

CM1: Kick-Off Meeting

Date	11-12 July 2023
Location	Eindhoven
Aim	Kick-Off the project; Learning about Good Practices of Eindhoven
Topics	Presentation on URBACT and Activation Stage, Presentation of Cities, Discussion on Youth Work, Presentation on Management, Exercise on Stakeholder Mapping, Visit of Good Practices

Tools used	Stakeholder Ecosystem Map; Stakeholders Power/Interest Matrix
Main outputs	-

CM2: Ready to Action Meeting

Date	28-29 November 2023
Location	Aarhus
Aim	Discuss the Baseline Study and Network Roadmap; Learning about Good Practices of Aarhus
Topics	Presentation of Baseline Study, Presentation on Management and Communication, Presentation on Network Roadmap, Workshop with Aarhus Test Cards, Workshop on NGYW Hackathon, Visit of Good Practices
Tools used	Aarhus Test Card methodology
Main outputs	Network Roadmap discussed

CM3: Integrated Approach Meeting

Date	20-21 February 2024
Location	Oulu
Aim	Ensuring the Integrated Approach; Learning about Good Practices of Oulu
Topics	Presentation of Oulu, Presentation on NGYW Hackathon, Feedback from ULG meetings, Exercise on Integrated Approach, Exercise on Impact Navigator, Visit of Good Practices
Tools used	Integration Assessment Grid, Impact Navigator
Main outputs	Integration Assessment Grid filled in, NGYW platform set up, Impact Navigator ready to be used (print + miro), Book of Ideas

CM4: Mid-Term Meeting

Date	24-25 October 2024
Location	Viladecans
Aim	Mid-Term Reflection; Learning about Good Practices of Viladecans
Topics	Presentation of Viladecans, Presentation on Management and Communication, Feedback from ULG meetings, Session on Mid-Term Reflection, Exercise on Four C, Visit of Good Practices

Tools used	Survey (Methodology provided by URBACT) + Exercise/Discussion, Four C
Main outputs	Mid-Term Report, Four C ready to be used, Book of Ideas

CM5: IAP Draft Peer Review Meeting

Date	25-26 March 2025
Location	Klaipėda
Aim	Peer-reviewing the Draft IAPs; Discussion of the Final Network Product; Preparing for the Implementation 1; Learning about Good Practices of Klaipėda
Topics	Presentation of Klaipėda, Presentation on funding/resources 1, Feedback from ULG meetings, Peer Review Session of Draft IAPs, Exercise on Performance in Policy Making Tool and Post-mortem Worksheet, Discussion on the Final Network Product, Visit of Good Practices
Tools used	Peer Review Session, Performance in Policy Making Tool and Post-mortem Worksheet
Main outputs	Peer Reviewed Draft IAPs, Indicators Table and Post-mortem Worksheet ready to use (print + miro), Quick Scan of Funding Sources 1, Concept of Final Network Product elaborated, Book of Ideas

CM6: Final Meeting

Date	28-29 October 2025
Location	Perugia
Aim	Presenting the Final IAPs; Discussing the future of the Network, Learning about Good Practices of Perugia
Topics	Presentation of Perugia, Presentation on Management and Communication, Feedback from ULG meetings, Presentation of Final Network Product, Preparation for the City Festival, Discussion on Future of NGYW, Visit of Good Practices
Tools used	
Main outputs	Future project idea(s) elaborated, Book of Ideas

Online Meetings (OM)

Four of the ten transnational meetings will be Online Meetings (OM), where attendance is compulsory for all partners. Like Core Meetings, these are vital for successfully carrying out all network activities and producing the planned outputs.

Online Meetings will address past and upcoming network milestones and activities, methodologies for producing the planned outputs, etc. Each online meeting will have a virtual host, the city organising the upcoming Study Visit (see below).

The network defined the four Online Meetings. These are the Planning Testing Actions Meeting, Capacity Building Meeting, Testing Actions Lessons Meeting, and IAP Final Peer Review Meeting.

Online Meetings are open to all project partners, their stakeholders (ULG members), and youth workers.

OM1: Planning Testing Actions Meeting

Date	21-22 May 2024
Location / host	Online / Cartagena
Aim	Discussing the Testing Actions
Topics	Discussion of Testing Actions, Feedback from ULG meetings, Exercise on Actions Table
Tools used	Pitching Testing Actions by all cities, Actions Table
Main outputs	List of Testing Actions to be carried out, Action Table ready to be used (print + miro)

OM2: Capacity Building Meeting

Date	10-11 September 2024
Location	Online / Veszprém
Aim	Capacity Building, Discussion of Cross-Cutting Topics
Topics	Feedback from ULG meetings, Exercise on Refining Actions Table, tbd.
Tools used	Refining Actions Table
Main outputs	Refining Actions Table ready to use (print + miro)

OM3: Testing Actions Lessons Meeting

Date	13/14 May 2025
Location	Online / Iași
Aim	Discussing lessons learned during the implementation of testing actions; Preparing for the Implementation 2; Presentation of the Draft of the Final Network Product
Topics	Presentation of the Draft of the Final Network Product, Presentation on funding/resources 2, Exercise on lessons learned during Testing Actions, Feedback from ULG meetings
Tools used	Pitch exercise and exchange of experience for the Testing Actions
Main outputs	Key Learnings Table from the Testing Actions, Quick Scan of funding sources 2, Draft of Final Network Product

OM4: IAP Final Peer Review Meeting

Date	16-17 September 2025
Location	Online / Tetovo
Aim	Peer Reviewing of Final IAPs; Presentation of the Final Network Product
Topics	Peer Review Session (Near-Final IAPs), Feedback from ULG meetings, Presentation of the Final Network Product
Tools used	Peer Review Session
Main outputs	Peer Reviewed Near-Final IAPs

Study Visits (SV)

Online Meetings are also coupled with Study Visits; still, they will be organised one or two weeks after Online Meetings. However, attendance at all Study Visits is not compulsory. Each city will choose two or three Study Visits to attend. Study Visits are envisaged to maximise knowledge exchange and learn about hosting cities' good practices. These meetings can contain a deep-dive session, where project partners' representatives and stakeholders can address the challenges and problems of hosting cities in a joint meeting with local stakeholders. Study Visits are always marked with SV, followed by the number of the quarter (1-10).

SV1: Study Visit in Cartagena

Date	4/5 June 2024
Location	Cartagena
Aim	Learning about Good Practices of Cartagena
Topics	Visit of Good Practices, Deep Dive Session
Tools used	-
Main outputs	Book of Ideas

SV2: Study Visit in Veszprém

Date	17/18 September 2024
Location	Veszprém
Aim	Learning about Good Practices of Veszprém
Topics	Visit of Good Practices, Deep Dive Session
Tools used	-
Main outputs	Book of Ideas

SV3: Study Visit in Iași

Date	20/21 May 2025
Location	Iași
Aim	Learning about Good Practices of Iași
Topics	Visit of Good Practices, Deep Dive Session
Tools used	-
Main outputs	Book of Ideas

SV4: Planning Testing Actions Meeting

Date	23/24 September 2025
Location	Tetovo
Aim	Learning about Good Practices of Tetovo
Topics	Visit of Good Practices, Deep Dive Session
Tools used	-
Main outputs	Book of Ideas

ULG Meetings

URBACT Local Group (ULG) meetings will use the lessons learnt at the transnational level and apply them locally.

Each city will organise at least 8 ULG meetings, but that number can be increased based on the needs at the local level. The ULG Meetings will be in sync with the project start and the schedule of Core and Online Meetings. As a rule of thumb, ULG Meetings will follow each transnational meeting. The first ULG meetings took place during the autumn of 2023. Cities will build on the knowledge acquired at the Urbact Summer University, and they will get methodological support during the Core Meetings to set up their ULGs and to use innovative ways of working at the local level.

Cities can design and organise their ULGs according to local needs. However, to ensure that exchange and learning are strongly linked with activities at the local level, especially with the production of the Integrated Action Plans (and vice versa), an ideal script for ULGs is presented below.

ULG1: Setting up the ULG

Suggested date	Sep-Oct 2023
Aim	Setting up the URBACT Local Group
Methodology tools	-
Main outcomes	ULG set up

ULG2: Understanding the problem

Suggested date	Jan-Feb 2024
Aim	Understanding the problem
Methodology tools	The **Problem Tree** is a graphical representation of an existing problem, its causes and effects, and aims to get a clear and shared understanding of the issue. It can be used for brainstorming and exchanging ideas and knowledge with the ULG. It should be used at the beginning of the project to get a clear understanding of the problem and can be repeated several times during the project cycle if needed. The tool was presented during the URBACT Summer University (USU2023) in Malmö.
Main outcomes	Problem tree defined

ULG3: Creating a shared vision

Suggested date	Mar 2024
Aim	Creating a shared vision
Methodology tools	The **Newspaper of Tomorrow** tool gives the opportunity to project into the future to create a shared vision with the ULG. When different stakeholders come together, they bring different perspectives. This is of great value for participatory and collaborative work. However, there is a risk that objectives and goals are different and difficult to combine. Creating a shared vision in the ULG becomes then an essential part of a project. This tool can be very helpful to reach this objective in a creative way. It should be used at the beginning of the project to create a shared vision among stakeholders. The tool was presented during the USU2023 in Malmö.
Main outcomes	Shared vision created

ULG4: Ideating actions

Suggested date	Apr-May 2024
Aim	Ideating actions; Designing a Testing Action
Methodology tools	The Impact Navigator helps searching broadly on action to turn a shared vision into actions. It involves a brainstorming session, followed by assessing the attractiveness of the ideas and then jointly prioritise the actions, helping to focus the strategy. The tool was presented during the online URBACT Summer University 2020. A guide for using it will be prepared and presented by the LE in CM3, based on the USUS2020's miro board. The Aarhus Test Card can be used to design a Testing Action by setting up the hypothesis, defining the research questions, define test actions and setting up indicators. The idea for the Testing Action should be presented in OM4 and cities should start carrying it out in time to finish it by April 2025. The tool was presented by the **Aarhus Centre for Innovation** (CFIA) during CM2 in Aarhus.
Main outcomes	Identification of main actions; Idea for the Testing Action

ULG5: Defining actions

Suggested date	Sep-Oct 2024
Aim	Defining actions
Methodology tools	The **Action Table** tool defines activities and outputs to achieve a given objective. It can be used during the Action Planning process to add further details (Action / Intended Result / Resources, Assets / Lead Agency / Key partners / Timescale) to the actions defined with the help of Impact Navigator. The LE will present the tool during a dedicated session in OM1. Cities can add the action tables to the Draft IAP.
Main outcomes	Action tables filled in for the main actions

ULG6: Compiling the Draft IAP

Suggested date	Jan-Feb 2025
Aim	Refining actions; Compiling the Draft IAP
Methodology tools	The **Refining an Action Table** helps develop concrete actions by planning them in detail and thinking about activities, timescale, outputs, resources and obstacles. Refining an action and reflecting on the details can help to turn a vision into reality, in an efficient way. This tool can be used to prepare the implementation of your IAP. The LE will present the tool during a dedicated session in OM2. The Refined Action Table on all the actions should be included in the Final IAP.
Main outcomes	Refined Actions Table filled in for the main actions; Draft IAP ready for Peer Review by other PPs in CM5.

ULG7: Summarising the Testing Action

Suggested date	Apr 2025
Aim	Summarising the Testing Action; Refining further actions; Overviewing the IAP
Methodology tools	Summary of the Testing Action: By now, cities should have finished their Testing Action and present it to their ULG and include it in the IAP. Also, prepare to present it to other PPs in OM3. The Testing Acton should also be presented in detail in your Final IAP. By using the **Refining an Action Table**, cities can add further actions to their IAPs during these sessions. The **Four C Review** sheet helps assess the Coherence, Completeness, Concerns and Continuation of the action plan to make sure that it doesn't omit any crucial information. This tool is a necessary step to

	track and measure the effectiveness of your initiatives. The tool will be presented by the LE during a dedicated session in CM4.
Main outcomes	By using the **Refining an Action Table**, cities can add further actions to their IAPs during these sessions.

ULG8: Compiling the Near-Final IAP

Suggested date	Jun-Jul 2025
Aim	Preparing for the implementation; Compiling the Near-Final IAP for peer review
Methodology tools	The **Performance in Policy-Making** tool explains the intervention logic to support stakeholders in defining measurable policy objectives in a results framework. It supports creating a sound system for monitoring and evaluating the progress of action plans. The Post-mortem Worksheet tool can help assess the risks of the IAP and take preventive actions. The tool was presented during the online USU2020. The LE will prepare a guide for using both tools based on the USU2020's miro board and present it in CM5.
Main outcomes	Results Framework filled in; 'Near-Final' IAP ready for Peer Review by other PPs in OM4.

ULG9: Finalising the IAP

Suggested date	Sep-Oct 2025
Aim	Finalising the IAP
Methodology tools	Based on the 'Near-Final' IAP and the feedback from the other PPs received during the Final Peer Review Meeting cities can finalise their IAP.
Main outcomes	Final Integrated Action Plan

Staff Exchanges

Staff exchanges can be organised parallel to CMs or SVs. Some partners' civil servants or youth workers will travel to CMs or SVs but will not participate in the meeting's sessions. Instead, they will meet civil servants or youth workers of hosting cities based on a separate schedule previously agreed upon by the sending and hosting cities. As not all partners were aware of all cities' good practices at the beginning of the project, some cities (e.g. Eindhoven, Aarhus, Oulu, Perugia) might organise separate staff exchanges.

3.3. Network Roadmap

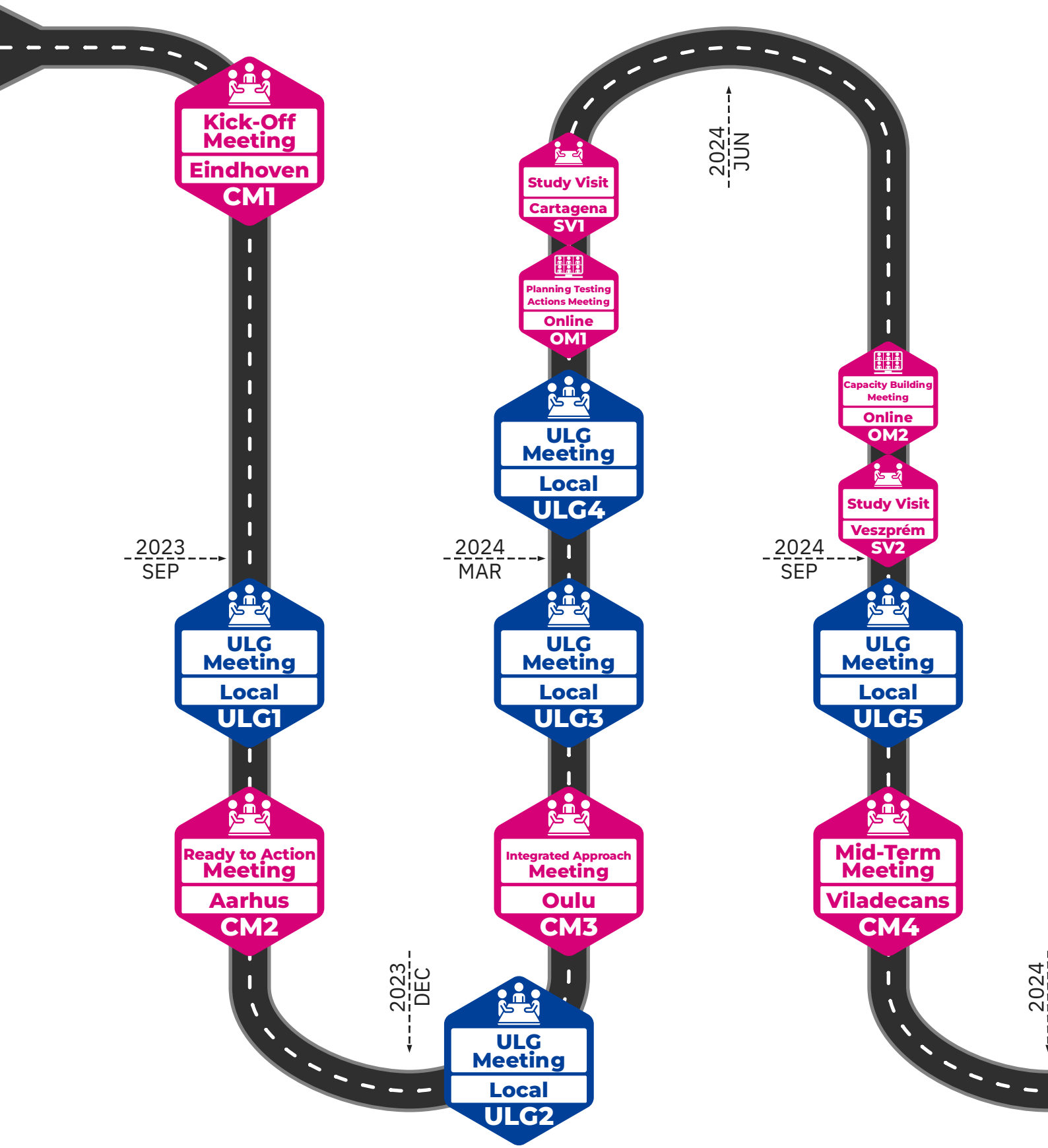
The previous chapter described the steps and events for exchanging experience and knowledge transfer between cities, specifying the location and expected date of each meeting, the detailed themes, the tools and methodologies used and the expected outcomes. This chapter, therefore, presents the information presented in the previous chapters from a different perspective.

The Network Itinerary illustrates the path the whole network intends to follow, summarising everything in an easy-to-understand visual guide. This guide indicates how the partnership is progressing to achieve the project's objectives at the network level.

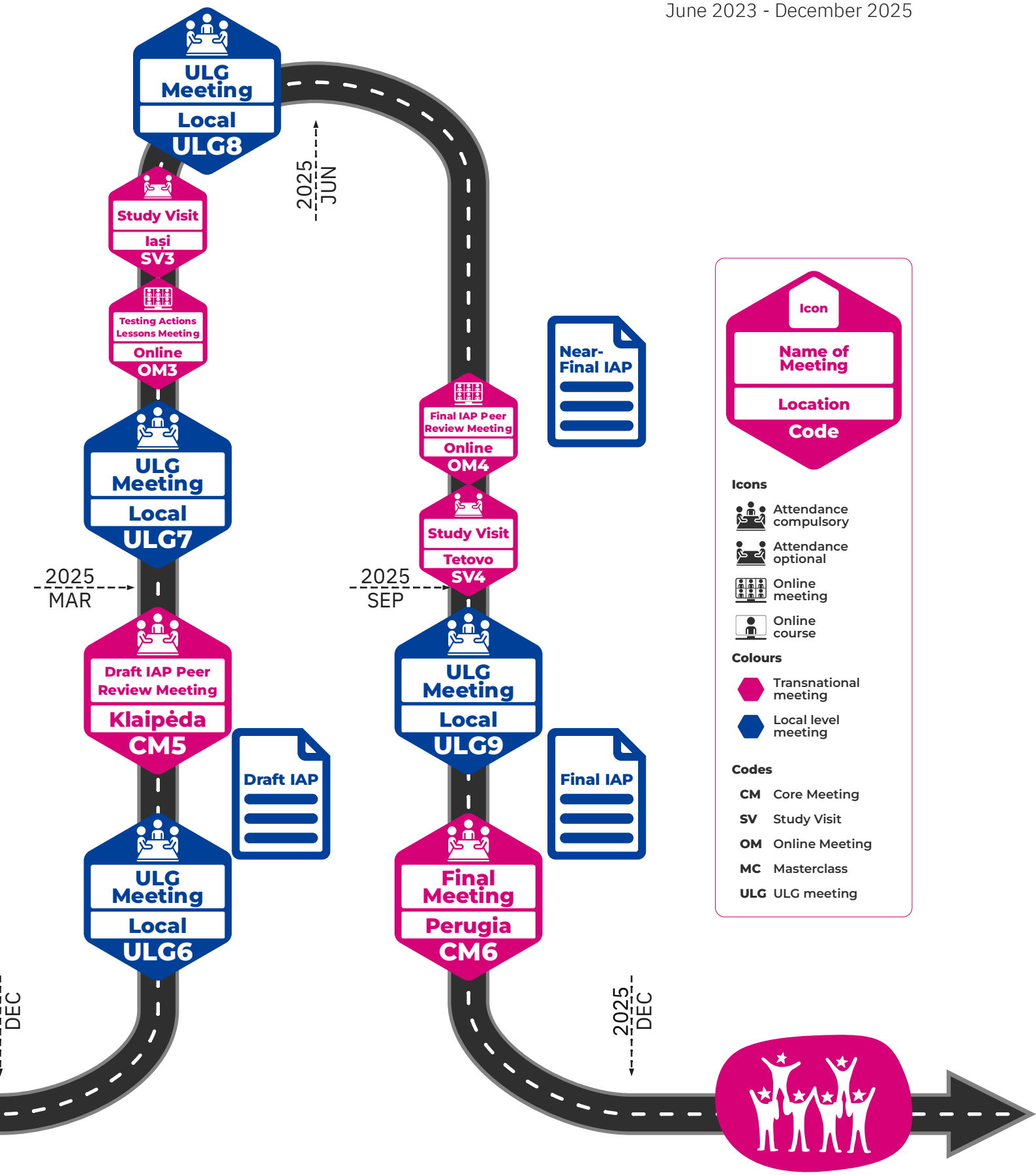
The Cities' Itinerary summarises the proposed learning paths of the cities and the methodological steps for the production of the Integrated Action Plan. It demonstrates how lessons learnt at the network level feed the activities at the local level and vice versa. This visual aid can help each municipality and ULG plan the process and follow the progress at the local level.

Finally, a Network Calendar summarises the meetings, activities and main deadlines related tot he production of the IAP. It also includes the expected dates of the Lead Expert publishing the Network Articles and Quarterly Network Reports. This calendar will help to accurately schedule the activities of each partner so that they can produce their inputs on time to help feed the learning process at the network level.

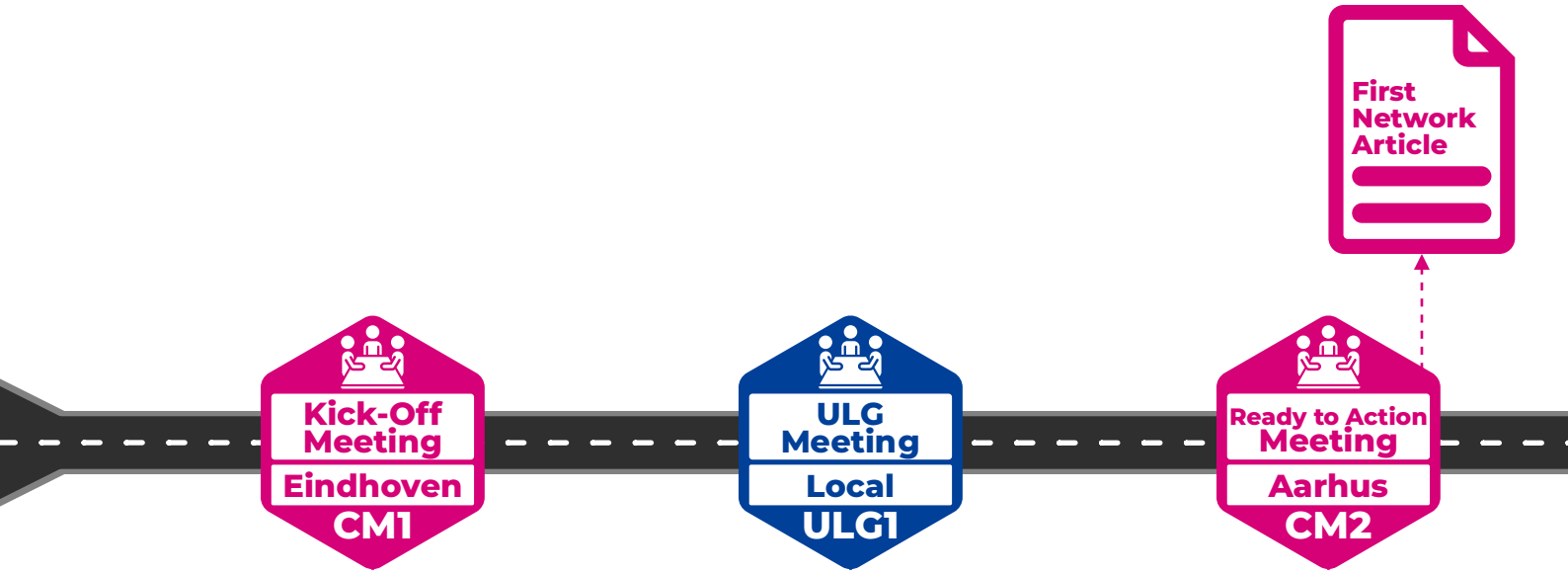
The NextGen YouthWork Itinerary



June 2023 - December 2025



Cities' Itinerary



DATE
11-12 July 2023

AIM
Kick-Off the project; Learning about Good Practices of Eindhoven

TOPICS
Presentation on tasks related to the Activation Stage; Presentation of Cities; Discussion on Youth Work topic; Visiting Good Practices of Eindhoven; Presentation on Setting up ULGs and Exercise on Stakeholder Mapping

TOOLS
Stakeholder Ecosystem Map; Stakeholders Power/Interest Matrix

OUTPUTS
-

DATE
September-October 2023

TOPICS
Setting up of the URBACT Local Groups

TOOLS
-

OUTPUTS
-

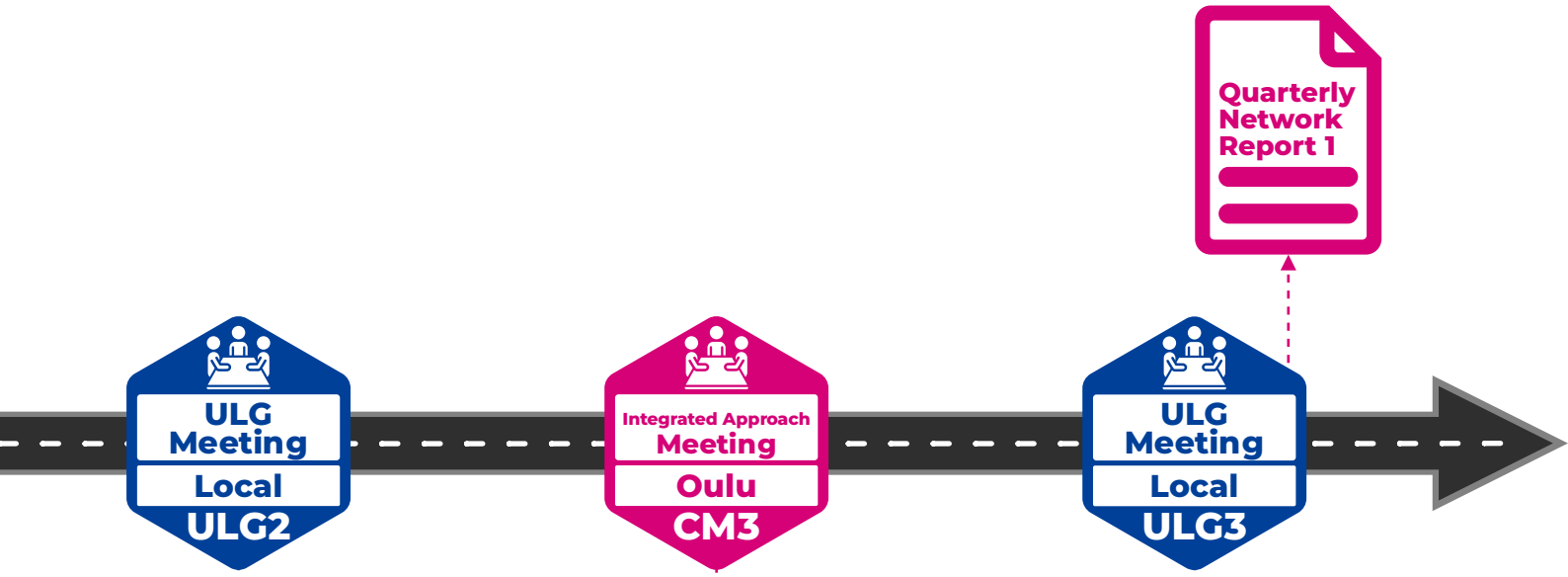
DATE
28-29 November 2023

AIM
Discuss the Baseline Study and Network Roadmap; Learning about Good Practices of Aarhus

TOPICS
Presentation of Baseline Study, Presentation on Management and Communication, Presentation on Network Roadmap, Workshop with Aarhus Test Cards, Workshop on NGYW Hackathon, Visit of Good Practices

TOOLS
Aarhus Test Card methodology

OUTPUTS
Network Roadmap discussed

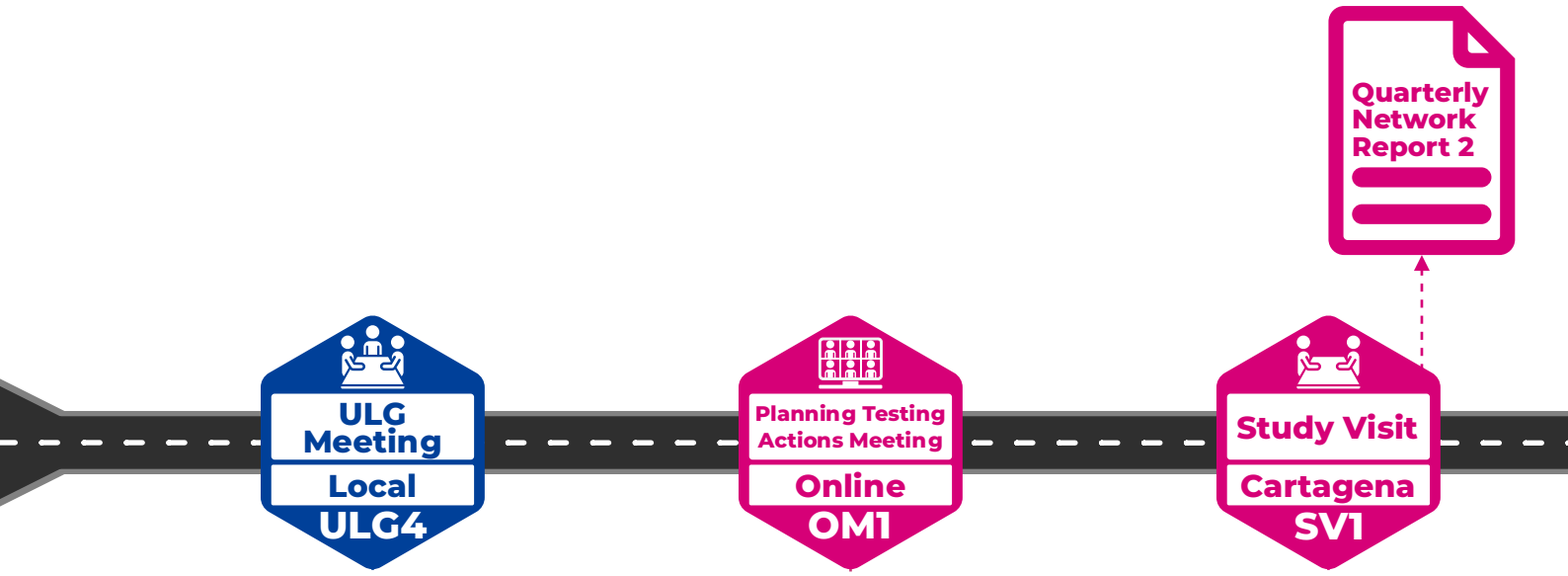


DATE
January-February 2024
AIM
Understanding the problem
TOOLS
Problem Tree
OUTPUTS
Problem Tree defined

DATE
20-21 February 2024
AIM
Ensuring the Integrated Approach; Learning about Good Practices of Oulu
TOPICS
Presentation of Oulu, Presentation on NGYW Hackathon, Feedback from ULG meetings, Exercise on Integrated Approach, Exercise on Impact Navigator, Visit of Good Practices
TOOLS
Integration Assessment Grid, Impact Navigatory
OUTPUTS
Integration Assessment Grid filled in, NGYW platform set up, Impact Navigator ready to be used (print + miro), Book of Ideas / Learning Grid

DATE
March 2024
AIM
Creating a shared vision
TOOLS
Newspaper of Tomorrow
OUTPUTS
Shared vision created

Cities' Itinerary



DATE
April-May 2024

AIM
Ideating actions; Designing a Testing Action

TOOLS
Impact Navigator, Aarhus Test Card

OUTPUTS
Identification of main actions; Idea for the Testing Action

DATE
21-22 May 2024

AIM
Discussing the Testing Actions

TOPICS
Discussion of Testing Actions, Feedback from ULG meetings, Exercise on Actions Table

TOOLS
Pitching Testing Actions by all cities, Actions Table

OUTPUTS
List of Testing Actions to be carried out, Action Table ready to be used (print + miro)

DATE
4/5 June 2024

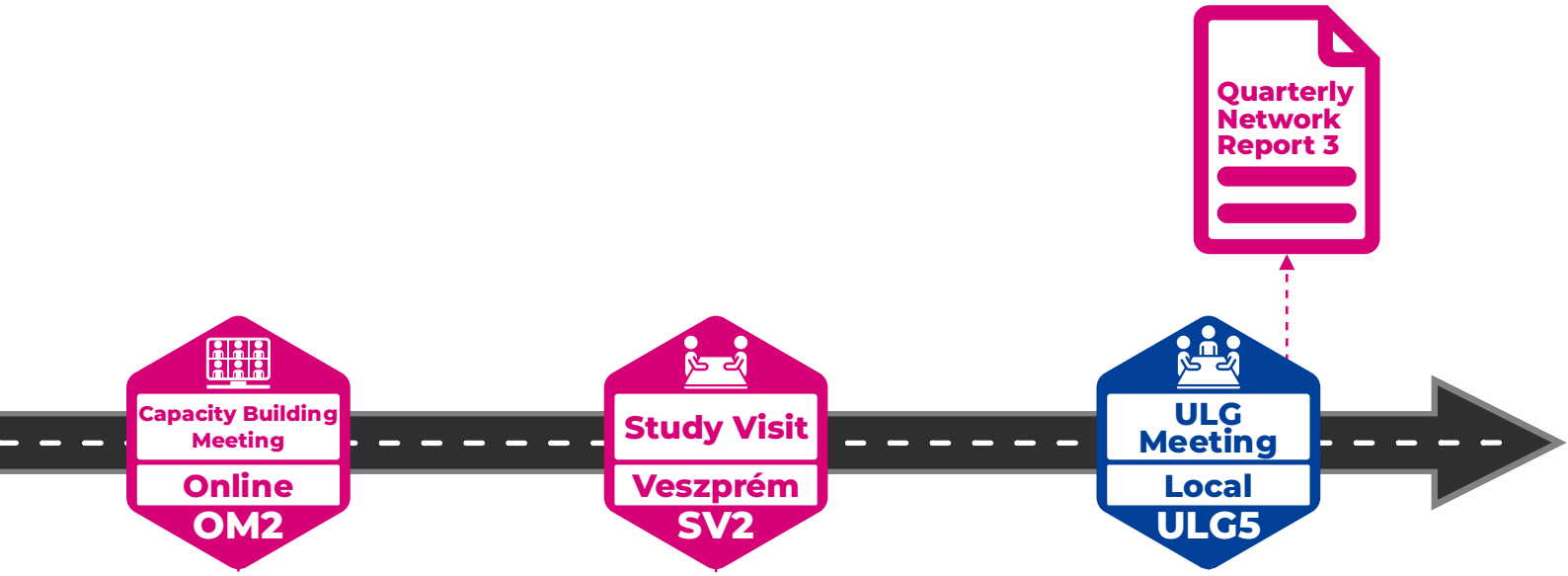
AIM
Learning about Good Practices of Cartagena

TOPICS
Presentation of Cartagena, Visit of Good Practices, Deep Dive Session

TOOLS
-

OUTPUTS
Book of Ideas

April 2024 - October 2024



DATE
10/11 September 2024

AIM
Capacity Building, Discussion of Cross-Cutting Topics

TOPICS
Feedback from ULG meetings, Exercise on Refining Actions Table, tbd.

TOOLS
Refining Actions Table

OUTPUTS
Refining Actions Table ready to use (print + miro)

DATE
17/18 September 2024

AIM
Learning about Good Practices of Veszprém

TOPICS
Presentation of Veszprém, Visit of Good Practices, Deep Dive Session

TOOLS
-

OUTPUTS
Book of Ideas

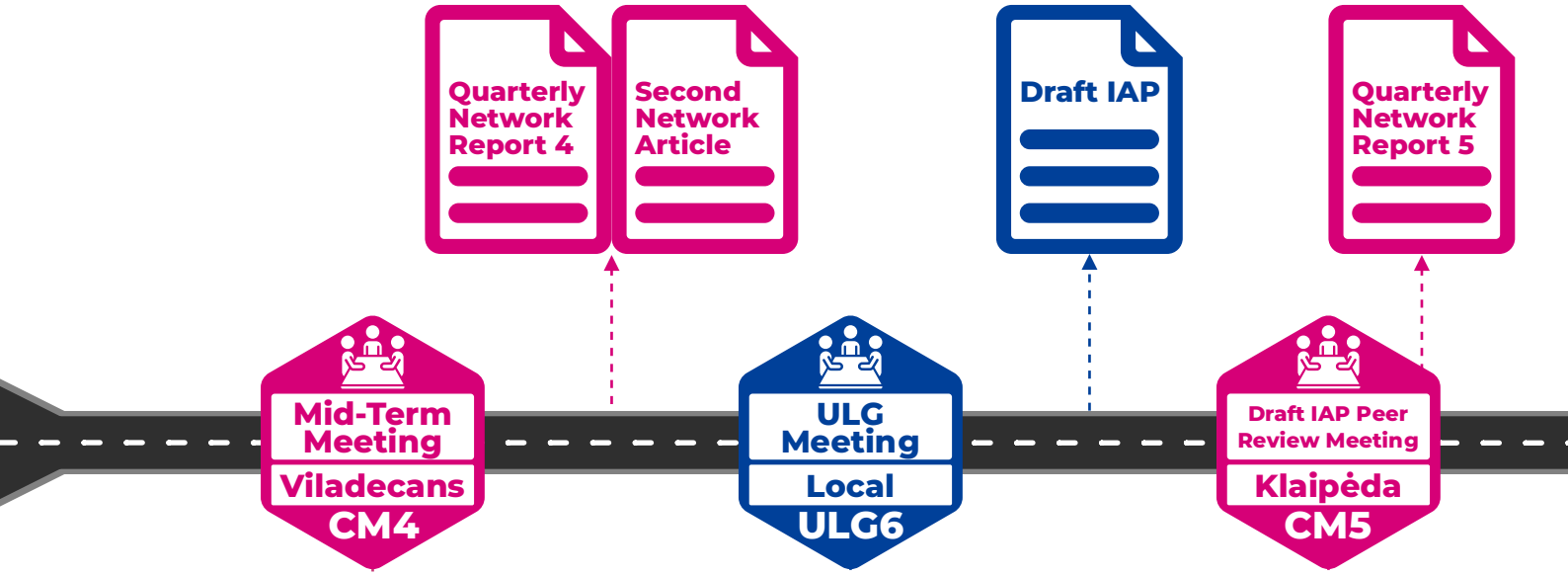
DATE
September-October 2024

AIM
Defining actions

TOOLS
Action Table

OUTPUTS
Action tables filled in

Cities' Itinerary



DATE
24-25 October 2024

AIM
Mid-Term Reflection; Learning about Good Practices of Viladecans

TOPICS
Presentation of Viladecans, Presentation on Management and Communication, Feedback from ULG meetings, Session on Mid-Term Reflection, Exercise on Four Cs, Visit of Good Practices

TOOLS
Survey (Methodology provided by URBACT) + Exercise/ Discussion, Four C

OUTPUTS
Mid-Term Report, Four C ready to be used, Book of Ideas / Learning Grid

DATE
January-February 2025

AIM
Refining actions; Compiling the Draft IAP

TOOLS
Refining Actions Table

OUTPUTS
Refined Actions Table filled in for the main actions; Draft IAP ready for Peer Review

DATE
25-26 March 2025

AIM
Peer-reviewing the Draft IAPs; Preparing for the Implementation 1; Learning about Good Practices of Klaipėda

TOPICS
Presentation of Klaipėda, Presentation on funding and resources 1, Feedback from ULG meetings, Peer Review Session of Draft IAPs, Exercise on Performance in Policy Making Tool and Post-mortem Worksheet, Visit of Good Practices

TOOLS
Peer Review Session, Performance in Policy Making Tool and Post-mortem Worksheet

OUTPUTS
Peer Reviewed Draft IAPs, Indicators Table and Post-mortem Worksheet ready to use (print + miro), Quick Scan of Funding Sources 1, Book of Ideas / Learning Grid

DATE
April 2025

AIM
Summarising the Testing Action; Refining further actions; Overviewing the IAP

TOOLS
Refining Actions Table; Four C Review

OUTPUTS
Refining Actions Table

DATE
13/14 May 2025

AIM
Discussing lessons learned during the implementation of testing actions; Preparing for the Implementation 2; Presentation of the Draft of the Final Network Product

TOPICS
Presentation of the Draft of the Final Network Product, Presentation on funding and resources 2, Exercise on lessons learned during Testing Actions, Feedback from ULG meetings

TOOLS
Pitch exercise and exchange of experience for the Testing Actions

OUTPUTS
Key Learnings Table from the Testing Actions, Quick Scan of funding sources 2, Draft of Final Network Product

DATE
20/21 May 2025

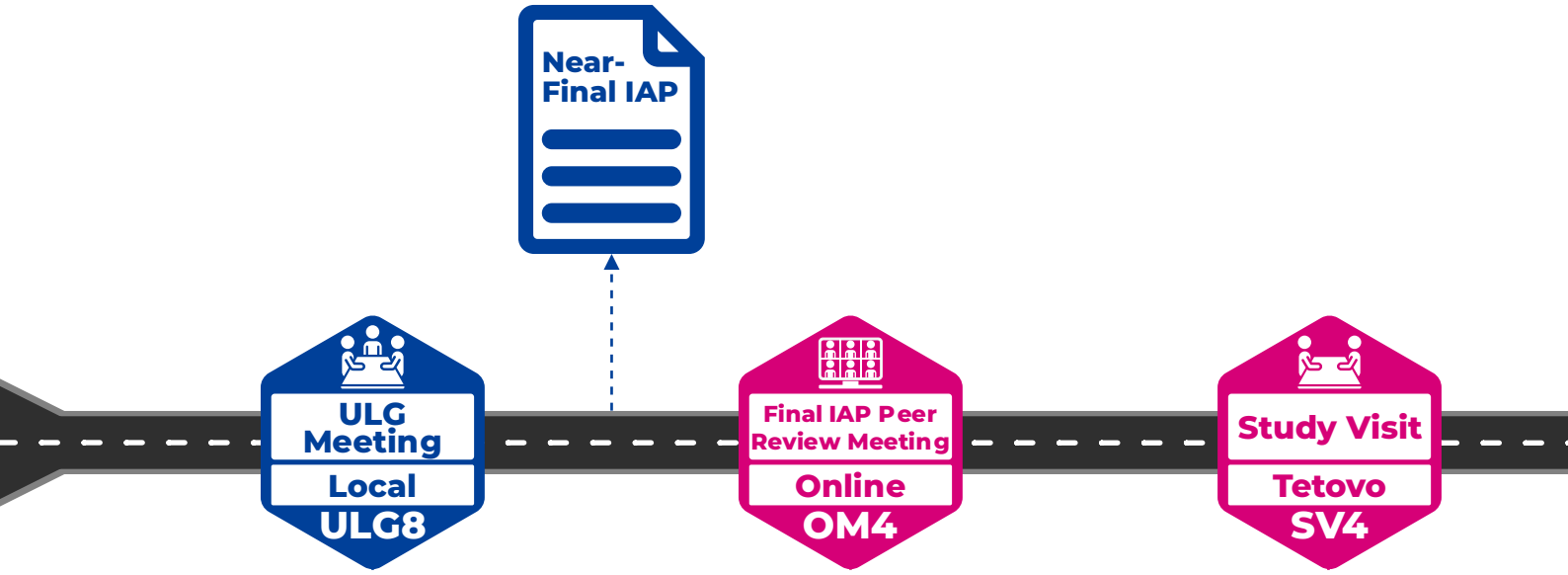
AIM
Presentation of Iași, Visit of Good Practices

TOPICS
Presentation of Iași, Visit of Good Practices, Deep Dive Session

TOOLS
-

OUTPUTS
Book of Ideas

Cities' Itinerary



DATE
June-July 2025

AIM
Compiling the Near-Final IAP for Peer Review

TOOLS
Performance in Policy-Making; Post-Mortem Worksheet

OUTPUTS
Results Framework filled in; 'Near-Final' IAP ready for Peer Review

DATE
16-17 September 2025

AIM
Peer Reviewing of Final IAPs; Presentation of the Final Network Product

TOPICS
Peer Review Session (Near-Final IAPs), Feedback from ULG meetings, Presentation of the Final Network Product

TOOLS
Peer Review Session

OUTPUTS
Peer Reviewed Near-Final IAPs

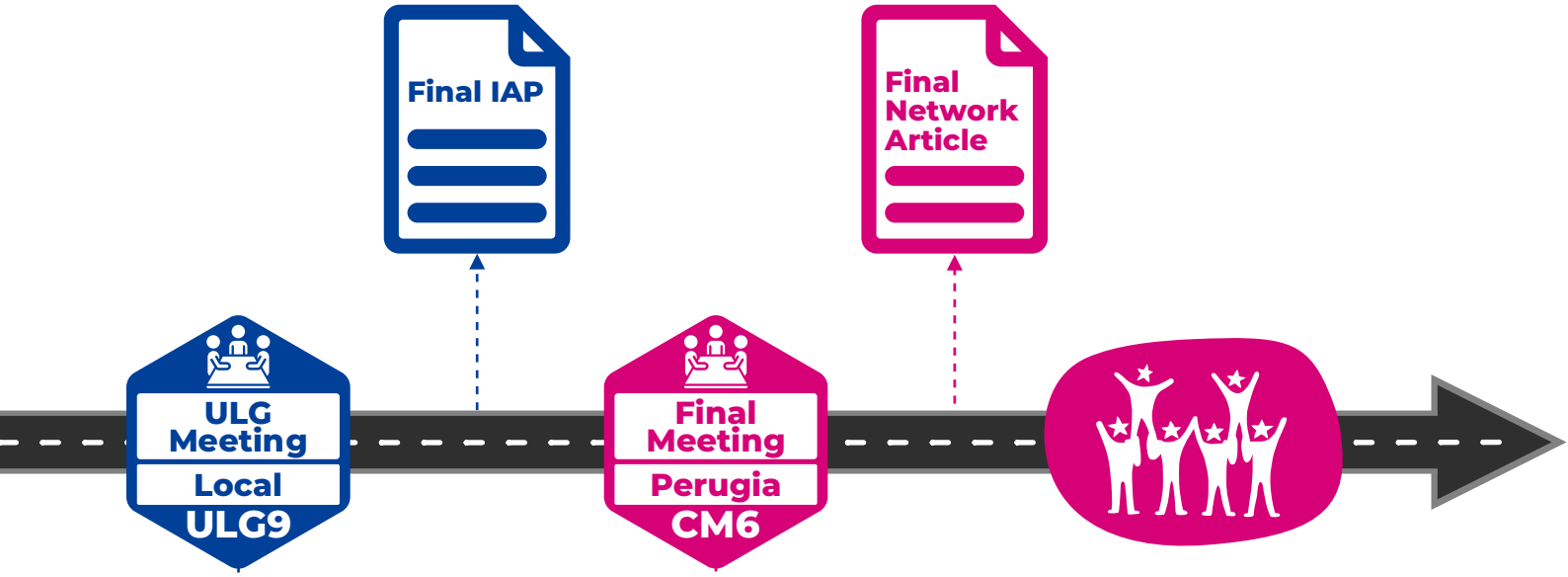
DATE
23/24 September 2025

AIM
Learning about Good Practices of Tetovo

TOPICS
Presentation of Tetovo, Visit of Good Practices, Deep Dive Session

TOOLS
-

OUTPUTS
Book of Ideas



DATE
September-October 2025

AIM
Finalising the IAP

TOOLS
-

OUTPUTS
Final Integrated Action Plan

DATE
28-29 October 2025

AIM
Presenting the Final IAPs; Discussing the future of the Network, Learning about Good Practices of Perugia

TOPICS
Presentation of Perugia, Presentation on Management and Communication, Feedback from ULG meetings, Presentation of Final Network Product, Preparation for the City Festival, Discussion on Future of NGYW, Visit of Good Practices

TOOLS
-

OUTPUTS
Future project idea(s) elaborated, Book of Ideas / Learning Grid

Network Calendar

Date / Deadline	Meeting / Task	Location / Host / Responsible
11-12 July 2023	CM1: Kick-Off Meeting	Eindhoven
28-30 August 2023	URBACT Summer Festival 2023	Malmö
September - October 2023	*ULG1: Setting up the ULG*	*Local*
28-29 November 2023	CM2: Ready to Action Meeting	Aarhus
6 December 2023	First Network Article	LE
January-February 2024	*ULG2: Understanding the problem*	*Local*
20-21 February 2024	CM3: Integrated Approach Meeting	Oulu
March 2024	*ULG3: Creating a shared vision*	*Local*
31 March 2024	Quarterly Network Report 1	LE
April-May 2024	*ULG4: Ideating actions; Designing a Testing Action*	*Local*
21-22 May 2024	OM1: Planning Testing Actions Meeting	Online / Cartagena
4/5 June 2024	SV1: Study Visit	Cartagena
30 June 2024	Quarterly Network Report 2	LE
10/11 September 2024	OM2: Capacity Building Meeting	Online / Veszprém
17/18 September 2024	SV2: Study Visit	Veszprém
30 September 2024	Quarterly Network Report 3	LE
September - October 2024	*ULG5: Defining actions*	*Local*
24-25 October 2024	CM4: Mid-Term Meeting	Viladecans
1 December 2024	Quarterly Network Report 4	LE
15 December 2024	Second Network Article	LE
January - February 2025	*ULG6: Refining actions; Compiling the Draft IAP*	*Local*
4 March 2025	Submission of the Draft IAPs for Peer Review	All cities
25-26 March 2025	CM5: IAP Draft Peer Review Meeting	Klaipėda
31 March 2025	Quarterly Network Report 5	LE
April 2025	*ULG7: Summarising the Testing Action; Refining further actions; Overviewing the IAP*	*Local*
13/14 May 2025	OM3: Testing Actions Lessons Meeting	Online / Iași
20/21 May 2025	SV3: Study Visit	Iași
June - July 2025	*ULG8: Preparing for the implementation; Compiling the Near-Final IAP for peer review*	*Local*

30 June 2025	Quarterly Network Report 6	LE
27 August 2025	Submission of the Near-Final IAPs for Peer Review	All cities
16-17 September 2025	OM4: IAP Final Peer Review Meeting	Online / Tetovo
23/24 September 2025	SV4: Study Visit	Tetovo
September - October 2025	*ULG9: Finalising the IAP*	*Local*
21 October 2025	Submission of the Final IAP to Basecamp	All cities
28-29 October 2025	CM6: Final Meeting	Perugia?
October - November 2025	*Dissemination of the Integrated Action Plan*	*Local*
tbd	URBACT City Festival	Unknown
15 December 2025	Final Network Article	LE

4. ANNEX: GOOD PRACTICES

4.1. Aarhus

Support for Children and Youth in Families with Addiction (BRUS)

Target age group: 0-25

Number of young people involved: over 1,000 children and young people in 2023

More information: **website**

BRUS is a support program for children and young people who live in families with addiction. The program is offered by 11 municipalities in Midtjylland, Denmark. BRUS provides various support services, such as individual, family and group counselling, anonymous chat and SMS counselling. BRUS aims to provide children and young people with a safe and supportive space to discuss their experiences. The program also aims to help children and young people develop coping mechanisms and resilience. BRUS is a free service and does not require a referral. Specific examples of how BRUS can help children and young people:

- Individual counselling can help children and young people process their emotions and experiences, develop coping mechanisms, and build self-esteem.
- Family counselling can help families communicate more effectively, develop healthy boundaries, and build trust.
- Group counselling can help children and young people to feel less alone, learn from each other's experiences and develop social skills.

Plan for digital inclusion in Aarhus

Target age group: 0-100

Number of young people involved: n.a.

More information: **website**

Aarhus Municipality is committed to ensuring that all citizens, regardless of their digital skills or resources, can access the services they need from the municipality. The municipality's Plan for Digital Inclusion outlines the municipality's approach to digital inclusion and sets out the following three principles:

- A user-friendly and accessible digital offer for those who can do it themselves

- Help for those who struggle with digital communication.
- Help for those who help.

The municipality will work to achieve these goals through a combination of the following:

- User-centred design: Aarhus Municipality will involve citizens in the design of its digital services to ensure that they are user-friendly and accessible.
- Information and outreach: Aarhus Municipality will provide information and outreach to citizens about its digital services, including how to use them and where to get help.
- Collaboration: Aarhus Municipality will collaborate with other organizations, including civil society organizations and the private sector, to provide support and services to citizens who need help with digital inclusion.

The municipality works with citizens to ensure the plan meets their needs. The plan is a living document that will be updated as needed.

The Plan for Digital Inclusion's target group is citizens who experience challenges in digital contact with Aarhus Municipality. This includes citizens who:

- Do not have the skills or resources to use digital services
- Have difficulty understanding or using digital services
- Are not comfortable using digital services

The target group is further divided into four subgroups: elderly citizens, citizens with disabilities, citizens with other challenges, such as language barriers or low socioeconomic status (including young people), and citizens who need help from a relative or volunteer.

4.2. Cartagena

Youth Space (Informajoven)

Target age group: 12-35

People involved: 2,600 young people in 2023

More information: **website**

Through its youth department, the City Council of Cartagena has extensive experience working with young people between the ages of 12 and 35,

identifying new issues of their interest and offering specialised and personalised attention.

The Youth Space is a free public service for young people, inspired by the idea of a comprehensive action towards the demands and needs of the youth population from employment to housing, health, education, social care, rights as citizens, tourism and the European voluntary service, among others. It includes the Youth programme "Leisure, participation and creation". This programme encourages youth participation as an open and dynamic process, adapting to the changing reality of our times.

Cartagena promotes a vision of leisure and free time as a non-formal educational space in which permanent learning, democratic values, access to culture and knowledge and healthy lifestyle habits can be promoted.

The youth department has spaces available for young people in general and youth associations, in particular, to encourage their participation, promote the development of their concerns and launch their initiatives, such as the youth hostel, camping area, music rehearsal spaces, classrooms with free Internet access and a utility room.

Youth Associations Meeting (Encuentro Interasociativo)

Target age group: 14-35

Number of young people involved: 1,200 persons approximately

More information: **website** and **video**

The Youth Associations Meeting is a project that takes place over a weekend in which the youth groups and associations in the municipality of Cartagena exhibit their work, run workshops, and offer a wide range of activities open to all local youth in one of the city's most important squares. The goal is to raise awareness of their work among other young people and the city.

The Encuentro Interasociativo has become a must-attend event for the city's youth associations, with Cartagena having the region's most extensive youth association movement. The event aims to:

- Bring youth associations and other youth-oriented groups closer to society.
- Raise awareness among young people and the general public of the activities that entities regularly carry out.
- Promote the exchange of ideas, best practices, and mutual understanding among participating youth entities.

The Encuentro Interasociativo is an excellent opportunity for young people to learn about the many different organisations and activities available to them in their community. It is also a chance for associations to connect and share ideas.

Mandarache Awards (Premios Mandarache)

Target age group: 12-35

Number of young people involved: about 7,000 persons each year

More information: **website**

The Mandarache Awards are a project to promote reading and reading education, organised by the Youth Department of the Cartagena City Council and supported by the Ministry of Culture and Sports.

Two central literary awards support the project: The Hache Award is a youth literature award for young participants between 12 and 14, while the Mandarache Award is for young participants between 15 and 30.

The finalist books are selected each year by the decision-making body, which consists of a group of teachers, librarians or people related in some way to the world of culture and books, who work voluntarily in the selection of texts, organisation of activities, student registration, etc.

In parallel, the municipal program works with two groups of young people in different lines:

- *Mandarache Notebook:* literary creation and writing workshop aimed at young people, made up each year of those between 15 and 18 years old who have previously participated in the Mandarache and Hache Awards.
- *Radio Mandarache:* Radio Mandarache is a podcast network with three programs and a radio soap opera.
- *Orillas Mandarache:* A pilot initiative to gradually internationalise the Mandarache Reading Education Project, inviting young students from other Cartagenas to read and vote alongside the thousands of readers participating in the Cartagena program in Spain.

The Mandarache project has an annual timeline, running parallel with the school year, beginning in September and ending in June.

Youth Correspondents (Corresponsales Juveniles)

Target age group: 15-20

Number of young people involved: 37

More information: **website**

Through the Youth Department, the City Council of Cartagena has a program called "Corresponsales Juveniles" (Youth correspondents) in High Schools and the University of Cartagena. These students, with the support of Informajoven (Youth Information Centre), keep their classmates informed about activities, services, and resources that may interest them. These helpers receive a small financial reward in return.

The role of the youth correspondent is crucial for disseminating information in educational centres and encouraging them to be the protagonists of the dissemination processes and access the resources at their reach.

These young people are the ones who allow a direct bi-directional connection between their educational centres and Informajoven. On the one hand, they bring information to their classmates. On the other hand, they provide feedback from their peers to the City Council services. They work in teams with Correspondents from other Centers to perform their functions. Some of their tasks are:

- Managing a joint Instagram account
- Maintaining an information panel in their educational centre
- Answering their classmates' questions during breaks between classes.

For all these, they have the permanent support of Informajoven and the teaching staff.

Rainbow Point (Punto ArcoIris)

Target age group: no limit

Number of young people involved: about 300 people, LGTBQIA+ and families

More information: **website**

The Punto ArcoIris LGBTQIA+ Information and Orientation Service offers advice and support to lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual, and intersex people and their families, regardless of age and throughout the Region of Murcia. It is staffed by professionals specialising in legal, psychological, educational, and social work counselling. The Youth Department, specifically

the Youth Space, is the designated location for management and in-person care by the psychologists of this department. Assistance is provided in person, via WhatsApp, and by video call. Punto ArcoIris was inaugurated in November 2022.

4.3. Eindhoven

Dynamo Youth Organisation

Target age group: 7-27

Number of young people involved: more than 25,000 people involved

More information: website and Instagram

Dynamo Jeugdwerk is committed to all ages from 7 to 27 in Eindhoven. Discovering and developing talents is central to the 'Inspire – Learn – Work' (ILW) method. Dynamo is where the young people are, at school, in the neighbourhood, in dynamo youth centres and at events. As a result, Dynamo knows the youth and the youth Dynamo. Based on trust and solidarity, Dynamo contributes to the resilience of all young people. Part of this is that Dynamo is part of a group and always comes a step further together, even when things are not going well. Dynamo Jeugdwerk's offers are diverse, from sports and technology activities to culture and health.

Dynamo Esports Center

More information: website and Instagram

Dynamo Esports Center is the first youth centre in the Netherlands focused on the gaming community and organising e-sports activities, including e-sports tournaments, workshops, conferences and many other activities. All this is organised for and by the young people themselves.

Neighbourhood Heroes (Buurthelden)

More information: website and Instagram

Buurthelden is a project for young people who want to be involved in safety issues in their neighbourhood. In a training of six months, these young people are trained to become "Neighbourhood Heroes". They learn all the ins and outs about how to be the eyes and ears of their neighbourhood. The program covers five themes: Safety, self-confidence, self-defence, exercise and social skills. All these themes are reflected in activities such as judo, rock and water, first aid, fire lessons, and boot camp/kickboxing. They go out for an afternoon in the neighbourhood with the area coordinators and district officers of the police.

Commit

More information: website and Instagram

Commit is the place to be for the freerunning community in Eindhoven and the surrounding area. Since August 2018, the community has found its home in the first location at Strijp-S. Together with experienced teachers, they work passionately on developing their sports skills and offer a place to young people from different cultures and backgrounds. Freerunning is an accessible and social sport where everyone has their own development path. This is different from the well-known traditional sports. As a result, young people often feel at home and ease. Commit is mainly committed to the community, supporting each other within the sport.

Foundation Pitstop: Youth Organisation

Target age group: 10-23

Number of young people involved: more than 6,900 encounters with more than 2,300 youngsters

More information: website

Pitstop Youth Center Eindhoven aims to help young people aged 10 to 23 discover their gifts and talents and develop into people who are jointly responsible for the society in which they live. Pitstop does this, among other things, by creating an environment where young people feel safe, are heard, and can be themselves. Pitstop believes in an approach in which the joint efforts of the municipality, residents, social organisations and communities have a major impact on the young people in the city of Eindhoven. The activities of Pitstop aim to achieve the highest possible return in breadth (number of young people) and depth (targeted deployment). Pitstop believes in the power of both offering a place where young people come, such as in the Pitstop youth centre, and 'going out' and looking for young people where they are. They pay attention to both components of youth work: Talent Development and Outreach Work.

Trend Watching Youth

The online youth worker engages with young people through social media channels like Instagram, Snapchat, Discord, and Telegram. The online youth workers spot and signal trends, challenges and trending topics, which could be dangerous for young people. With the help of a cyber youth team (trendwatchers), we scatter through algorithms and timelines to warn youth professionals in Eindhoven about the online whereabouts of young people.

The Walk-in (Het Inloop / Het ScholierenChillCafé)

More information: website

The Walk-in / ScholierenChillCafé is a meeting place for young people from Eindhoven between ages 10 and 23. In practice, the youngsters come directly from schools in Prinsenjagt, Jagershoef, Woenselse Heide, 't Hool, Vlokhoven and Achtse Barrier districts. The opening hours are aligned with their class schedules. With a free-to-walk character and the function of after-school care, the youth centre offers a safe and relaxed place where young people can meet each other, have a nice meal or drink, play a game of pool or table tennis and use the internet or play PlayStation. ScholierenCafé is a low-threshold facility for leisure activities for young people. Pitstop wants to build a relationship with the young people and find out where they are. There is a regular opportunity to help them with their problems. There is a high degree of non-commitment, and it is precisely this non-commitment that gives young people the space to do something. The youngsters are cared for by 2 to 3 core volunteers and usually one or more interns. This activity always involves one permanent professional youth worker.

Girls' work (Meidenwerk)

More information: website

Girls' work focuses on increasing resilience among girls who dropped out in areas of life. Support is offered with specific girl groups and activities based on the Superwoman methodology. The Netherlands Youth Institute has qualified this methodology as well-developed, transferable, substantiated and based on practical experience and scientific theory. Using this methodology, young girls learn to deal with themselves, their thoughts and their behaviour in social and personal situations in a self-aware way. Pitstop makes them aware of their strengths and teaches them to use them in different situations. Themes that are discussed during the girls' activities include identity, intimacy and sexuality, autonomy and presentation, social media, bullying, talents and self-image.

FC Pitstop

More information: website

FC Pitstop is a talent-oriented activity in which football and a walk-in improve relational and emotional skills by using cooperation between young people. Research shows that working together is essential for promoting emotional skills. For this, both cultures will be mixed while playing football so that they come into contact with each other and have to work together. In addition, during the walk-in, there will also be a focus on meeting people through accessible activities such as table football, PlayStation and pool. There is also

an active focus on meeting people through conversation starters and various games that provoke interaction and communication. Pitstop uses bridging and connecting with people from different ages, ethnicities, and interests. This way, new knowledge can be gained about each other, young people become more familiar with each other, and differences can be bridged.

Garage2020

More information: website

Garage2020 believes in a society where children, young people, parents, and their environment can grow together with opportunities. This requires new forms of youth care, which are more in line with the world of experience and have an eye for technological possibilities. Garage2020 works towards this endeavour by designing solutions to concrete problems experienced by children, young people, parents and their environment. They collaborate with various experts and the person for whom the innovation is intended, so their perspective is central, and they keep asking questions until the real issue is defined.

Zicht op Online

More information: website

Zicht op Online is a physical tool that healthcare or education professionals can use to guide young people. It visually and playfully maps the young person's physical and digital social network. This method puts the young person in the expert role and creates a safe environment for open conversations. It also offers social workers a unique opportunity to understand the young person's online world and support it correctly.

Social Sphere

More information: website

Developed collaboratively by Garage2020 and Fontys ICT Media Design, Social Sphere is a concept of a platform designed specifically for youth workers. This platform offers various courses focused on enhancing digital skills, particularly in navigating popular social media platforms such as TikTok, Snapchat, Discord, and Instagram. Through these courses, youth workers are equipped with the knowledge and techniques to connect and engage with people in the digital age effectively. Additionally, Social Sphere ensures its users are always in the loop with the latest online trends, thereby maintaining relevance and effectiveness in their interactions with the youth.

The Eindhoven Youth Council

More information: website

The Eindhoven Youth Council consists of students from various secondary schools in Eindhoven. Each school year, they choose four subjects that they consider essential. The members of the Youth Council meet twice per subject to elaborate on advice and present it to the city council. The following topics have already been discussed or are currently being discussed: climate and clean city, safe traffic, inclusive society and mental well-being.

Jong040

Target age group: 16-27

Number of young people involved: 22 core team members, 43 network members, and 14 partners/professionals that are older than 27 and want to help with their expertise

More information: website

Jong040 is a group of youth ambassadors with young people aged 15 to 27. They provide unsolicited and solicited advice to Eindhoven politicians on current topics in Eindhoven. They meet every two weeks on Wednesday evenings. Jong040 connects politics directly with Eindhoven youth. In collaboration with city council members, the ambassadors of Jong040 make visible the problems that play a role among young people in Eindhoven. In addition, they try to find a solution together.

Future Mentors Project

More information: LinkedIn, Instagram, case study

The Future Mentors Project connects young people and administrators. Together, they discuss the future of the city. The project started in 2022 from Eurocities Year of the Youth and is a European project. As Future Mentors of Eindhoven, they are in contact with Berlin, Tallinn, Espoo, Ghent and Brno. Last year, they successfully launched the Future Mentors Programme with the mayor of Eindhoven. The project will continue with the new mayor and other influential city officials in 2024.

4.4. Iași

Challenges of youth during the digital era

Target age group: 12-18

Number of young people involved: 300 young people + 50 teachers and parents

More information: **website**

The Project Challenges of Youth during the Digital Age, implemented by the Moral Compass Association, is co-financed by Iași Municipality and aims to promote digital education and responsible use of technology and provide a space for debates and discussions. Adolescents are invited to participate in debates and discussions about problems related to the use of technology, such as Internet addiction, online bullying and harassment, and the protection of personal data. The project organises workshops for teenagers, in which they learn skills related to identifying fake news, protecting personal data, and positively using technology, but also the ethics of using artificial intelligence in an educational context (e.g. GPT Chat), the impact of social networks on self-image/body image and their contribution to the emergence and development of eating disorders. These general objectives are embodied in non-formal educational workshops, scientific events such as round tables, studies on the use of digital media among adolescents - protective and risk factors and podcasts about digital education (with and for teenagers). Podcasts about the challenges of adolescence in the digital world from teenager to teenager can be helpful for more effective communication, addressing relevant topics, involving youth, sharing their experience and promoting open discussion.

FabLab Iași Youth Community

Target age group: 12-35

Number of young people involved: 1,200-1,500 annually.

More information: **website**

FabLab Iași is part of an international Fab Labs network that aims to facilitate innovation and digital production. There is a flexible co-working and connection space driven by a community passionate about education, technology, design and personal development, increasing the entrepreneurial spirit in the region. FabLab Iași has three premises, and besides the co-working spaces, it organises various events involving local partners dedicated mainly to the youth generation. It also creates bridges

between youth and mentors in multiple domains, from digitalisation and tech to design, well-being, gender equality, inclusion, and learning. Some of the most appealing events for youth are gaming sessions (both old-fashioned games and esports), food nights (when everyone brings and shares their traditional handmade food) and meetings with local or national inspiring personalities, mainly successful business or community leaders in various domains. Also, FabLab Iași hosts multiple training sessions for youth, European project meetings, school visits, exhibitions, presentations and debates. They have also volunteered, supporting local NGO's good causes, mainly for education for disadvantaged people or rural areas (with the Mobile FabLab). Being open to hosting activities dedicated to youth, they have created a strong community of youth and mentors who gather together often and impact the city community.

Youth Café – Creative space of support and opportunities for young people

Target age group: 15-18

Number of young people involved: 40 teenagers (in the 1st stage of the project)

More information: **website**

The Bethany Foundation has implemented the project, co-financed by the Iași City Council, held between August and October 2023, through which 40 young people from Iași high schools benefited from a complex personal and professional development program. The Youth Café project proposes using new creative learning methods adapted to the particularities and needs of each participant. The project was conceived from the desire to support young people in continuing their pre-university studies, giving them the context to develop and discover their interests to make the most appropriate career choices. Through the project, 40 young people between 15 and 18 benefited from learning and development workshops following their interests. It also allowed them to interact with mentors, i.e., local community representatives and professionals from technology, entrepreneurship, art, design, sports, social and civic involvement, creative industries, etc. Among the main activities of the project is the youth selection stage, which collected the necessary data related to the young people interested in participating in the project, but also the screening activities through which the needs and areas of interest of each young person were identified so that they could be directed to relevant learning workshops. The workshops organised twice a month are a core activity aiming at the personal development of young people, but also at increasing the degree of motivation, confidence and commitment they have in the local community.

The Summer Camp organised in the project aimed to increase the capacity of young people to identify needs in the community and find the right solutions for them. The Youth Camp was designed in the format of a day camp for five days, being a dynamic and applied educational space that encouraged young participants to express themselves in public and make their voices and ideas heard through a volunteering project that they designed during the camp days and later put it into practice.

4.5. Klaipėda

Virtual Reality in Education

Target age group: 14-29

Number of young people involved: 500

The project was initiated during the European Youth Capital 2021 year. VR education is used in the Open Youth Centre for school students to create awareness of and strengthen empathy for people living with disabilities and bullying at school. Virtual reality education contains two movies. One is about bullying at school. The viewer witnesses a typical situation in the school where one boy is bullied because of his clothes and is prompted to choose various actions, influencing the movie's ending. The other film puts the viewer in the role of people with a disability, such as vision impairment, hearing impairment or physical disability, sitting in a wheelchair. Pupils involved in these sessions watch the movies and then discuss their actions, how they impacted the end of the story and how they felt in those situations. Klaipėda will prepare two other movies within a project shortly.

I Care App and Green Corridor Service (Man Rūpi)

Target age group: 14-29

Number of young people involved: About 250 app downloads

More information: Facebook

Young people can use this app to read health-related news, directly contact specialists with questions about their health, and register in the green corridor. This service provides fast-track access to a doctor in case they need it. The app can help youth keep track of their sleep patterns and count steps, and it also contains some games.

Youth Line (Jaunimo linija)

Target age group: 16-35

Number of young people involved: around 400 volunteers (and tens of thousands as users)

More information: **website**

Jaunimo Linija is a national NGO providing emotional support to people of all ages, but the leading target group involves young people from 16 to 35. It operates on a volunteer basis, and emotional support is provided via phone or online chat. The organisation is an example of a multi-level organisation where volunteers may choose from various activities, such as on-call duty, emotional support training, volunteer backup and mentorship, development, and many other roles. Before becoming active volunteers, candidates must undergo a selection process and complete a four-month-long training. After the training, they are committed to donating at least 180 hours of volunteer service before taking up other roles or staying on to provide emotional support. Jaunimo Linija actively participates in a wide range of youth-related programmes and projects. One of the most recent projects launched on International Mental Health Day was **Green Light to Life** (Žalia šviesa gyvenimui), uniting many Lithuanian organisations, influencers, and artists to promote the importance of mental health care. Jaunimo Linija is a beacon to everyone feeling lost, lonely, or experiencing emotional problems. The goal is to convey the message of the importance of mental health, self-care, equal opportunities, inclusiveness, and diversity.

4.6. Oulu

Byström One-Stop Guidance Center

Target age group: 16-29

Number of young people involved: 40,000

More information: **website**

Bystöm One-Stop Guidance Center is a low-threshold service for young people living in Oulu and aged under 30 where they can get help in matters related to work, education and everyday life. Services are available for parents and professionals working with young people, too. The goal is that young people receive all the necessary services from the same place, with or without an appointment. The services include face-to-face and online information and counselling on various subjects, group activities, and events for young people. Subjects concerning young people include work,

education, health and welfare, relationships, leisure time, financial issues, housing, studying/working/travelling abroad, alcohol and drug abuse, addictions and much more. The focus is on prevention, and fewer young people are moving on to so-called repairing services. It started in October 2011, and Byström is one of Finland's largest One-Stop Guidance Centers, with almost 50 employees.

Bystöm gathers employees from various departments within the city of Oulu and other organisations, such as:

- *City of Oulu Youth Services:* outreach youth work, youth advisors, advisors for young immigrants, sexual counselling, occupational therapist, vocational education youth worker, library, Pelifarmi (Game developing program).
- *City of Oulu Employment / BusinessOulu Services:* personal coaches in employment issues and psychologists specialised in vocational guidance.
- *Well-Being Services (County of North Ostrobothnia):* Public health nurse, Psychiatric nurse, social counsellor, substance abuse worker.
- *KELA (Social Insurance Institution of Finland):* customer service specialist.
- *City of Oulu Educational Services:* Study counsellor.
- *City of Oulu Cultural Services:* Art activities.
- *Uusimaa TE-office:* Psychosocial support.
- *Osnakodit (member of The Finnish Youth Housing Association, NAL):* Housing advisor.

The City of Oulu Youth Services coordinates the service. The employees are on their own organisation's payroll but are stationed at the Byström. Other expenses are covered by the city of Oulu's Youth Services. Rental costs are covered by Youth and employment services. Co-operation is carried out with the third sector, educational organisations, companies, the Finnish Defense Forces and many others.

Youth Bysis and Gaming & Media space

Youth Bysis is a youth house in the city centre where young people under 30 come to spend their leisure time, but there are also band activities and a space designed for pc-gaming and media projects. Bysis is open 3-4 nights weekly from Wednesday to Saturday during school. The activities are organised according to the needs and suggestions of young people who can freely use the space. Training, workshops and events, such as online gaming tournaments, are also organised. The target group of the activities is young people aged between 12 and 25.

Youth Information and Counselling

Youth Information and Counselling Offers equal, free and appointment-free counselling, guidance and information for young people aged between 13 and 30, their parents and others working with young people. Youth advisors are in charge of the initial assessment of the young person who comes to Byström for the first time, identifying the young person's situation and providing the information, guidance and support they need or selecting a professional who continues to work with them. Service is offered by phone, email and online. Youth Information Library is a part of the Oulu City Library. There are books, research articles, and other materials about youth work and the lives of young people.

Outreach youth work

Seven outreach youth workers are in Byström, and one is stationed at Kiiminki Health Care Centre. The target group of this individualised work form is young people aged between 15 and 29 who are beyond the labour market, education system or other activities. The work is also carried out using group activities, partially in co-operation with other professionals. Outreach youth work is a form of specialised youth work to reach NEETs under 29 and support them in getting the needed services. Outreach youth work offers them early support if they decide to accept it and strengthens their preparedness to move forward in life. For young people, participation is always voluntary. Outreach youth workers are where young people are, offering them opportunities for safe, confidential encounters with adults. They help young people find answers to their problems and questions and assist them in finding the services they want and need.

Advisors on summer jobs and social employment

Advisors aim to find jobs for young people in Oulu through the summer job voucher process and students' summer job campaigns. They instruct employers in summer job employment and students seeking summer jobs from the city of Oulu's service areas and public utilities. They also advise young people on matters regarding summer job vouchers and summer job entrepreneurship.

Arpeetti Employment Programme

Arpeetti Employment Programme is targeted at students. There is employment activity all year round; workplaces are in Oulu's service areas and public utilities. KELA (Social Insurance Institution of Finland) and social services guide students to it.

Advisor for young immigrants

It supports young immigrant people settling in a new country after the settlement period has ended. They are sorting out the background situation, advising on daily life matters and licence issues, managing in a new cultural environment, and supporting them.

Personal coaches

Personal coaches offer service and support to help young people pursue their employment goals and plans and find jobs. The aim is to find the right services regarding the young person's education and employment at the right time. Personal coaches help young people find suitable activities, for example, rehabilitative work, work tryouts, or education. Counselling is implemented in co-operation with a multi-professional network and employment services.

Public Health Nurse

The Public Health Nurse aims to improve health and welfare, prevent illnesses and detect problems early. The essential job is to support and strengthen the use of young people's resources and coping with life. Work includes health meetings, multi-professional co-operation, consultation, pair work, group activities and outreach work in different environments.

Psychiatric Nurse

The activity aims to improve mental health, working individually or in pairs. Work duties include working with young people who suffer from depression, panic disorders and insomnia. If necessary, customers are directed to specialised health care services. The psychiatric nurse collaborates with other professionals at Byström.

Yökoris

Target age group: 15-35

Number of young people involved: 7,500

The Goal of Yökoris is to strengthen the involvement of youth and young adults, build a community that anyone in need could join and prevent segregation by creating places where people from different backgrounds can meet. The target group is youth and young adults from different backgrounds who might feel loneliness and a feeling of being left outside.

Kaasi Street-Based Youth Work

Target age group: 13-29

Number of young people involved: 9,500 annually

Street-based youth work is based on teams of three youth workers focusing on youth who spend their free time in the streets, malls, and parks. The team hosts one-on-one counselling and group activities and works on multiple social media and digital platforms. The team acts as a safe adult friend and provides services to youth ages 13-29, and they also cooperate with the police, security services and other street-based youth workers. Street-based youth workers are visible and easy to recognise, creating a sensitive and safer space with their presence. They must be accessible and approachable and have the necessary language skills. Individual guidance includes directing youth to services, providing a safe adult friend when needed, helping with school and work, daily management guidance, help with shopping and doctor visits, preventive drug work and multicultural and sensitive work. Group guidance starts with the needs of the young people and the group, along with activities structured according to their needs. It can be one-time or long-term, prescriptive or free-form.

Crime Preventing Youth Work (Ankkuri and Nurri)

Target age group: under 18 for Ankkuri and 12-29 for Nurri

Number of young people involved: about 150 for Ankkuri and 50 + their families for Nurri (annually)

Ankkuri is a multi-professional service involving a police officer, a social worker, a psychiatric nurse and a youth worker. It is directed at young people under 18 and their families. Ankkuri's goal is to promote the well-being of the youth and their families early on and prevent crimes and criminal activity. The team meets young people and their families to discuss young people's criminal activity, but also other domains of their lives (school, hobbies, mental health, friends, family, substance abuse, etc.). Additional meetings with the team's psychiatric nurse or youth worker can also be arranged.

Nurri works with young individuals aged 12-29 who have a background of severe or repeated criminal behaviour. The team operates as a multi-professional workgroup, aiming to provide support promptly, promoting the overall well-being of young individuals and prevent recidivism. Each young person and family situation is unique, and the required forms of support are individually assessed for each young person. Support forms for the young person can include counselling and leisure guidance.

4.7. Perugia

Youth Service Centre (Centro Servizi Giovani)

Target age group: 14-30

Number of young people involved: More than 3,000 users

More information: **website**

The Youth Services Center is a place for meeting, socialising, informal education and information. Open and accessible, it is a point of reference for teenagers and young people who live, study and work in Perugia. It is a multifunctional space that aims to offer the young people who frequent it the opportunity to cultivate their passions and interests: it is the place where ideas meet.

Activities and services available at Youth Services Center include orientation on the world of work and training, drafting Curriculum Vitae, free workshops and meetings, peer education projects, youth listening desk, free Wi-Fi and recreational areas (relaxation area, shared library, ping pong, darts, table football, playstation).

The Centre is a public service managed by third-sector companies and their skilled youth workers. It hosts many financed projects to support young people in facing different life steps. Many are linked to the digital world and its implications for young people.

The Centre also hosts the Radioactive Pigeons, an informal group of artists: young people with a passion for art who have been meeting inside the Youth Services Center of the Municipality of Perugia since 2017, organising performances and urban regeneration projects.

Youth Information (Informagiovani)

Target age group: 14-30

Number of young people involved: About 1,400 users

More information: **website**

Youth information is a free service managed by civil servants of the Municipality who coordinate many projects financed jointly with third-sector associations and in close collaboration with the Youth Service Center.

Here, young people can consult job offers and competitions, fill out the online CV, which will be available to companies, training courses and university courses, volunteer and national civil service, collect the Perugia Youth Card, promote youth associations, find assistance for activities and events carried out by young people

SWITCH-ON

Target age group: 18-35

Number of young people involved: About 50 activists and 8,000 connected

More information: **website** and **Instagram**

How do you work with and for young people? The model SWITCH-ON intends to promote is a project that starts with a group of young people, musicians and lovers of all the performing arts, who have decided to organise a music festival for the city together. Over the years, the project has become an essential event for the area. The association of young organisers was formally established and opened up to the city. Thanks to a project financed by the Perugia Foundation and the Municipality, the association has proposed redevelop the spaces of their headquarters. It offers spaces open to all interested young people who want to collaborate or participate in the organisation of some events or propose new ideas to put into practice or train on some aspects related to new communication technologies or on technical issues associated with the events. The success seems to be guaranteed by the popularity enjoyed by the association, as well as the flagship event it organises (L'Umbria che Spacca - The Smashing Umbria). The involvement of young people is natural, so it is simple to offer them new opportunities to grow, develop talents, and participate in the urban regeneration of their city.

4.8. Tetovo

Unemployed youth engaged in assisting pupils

Target age group: 1-29

Number of young people involved: above 100

The project involved unemployed young people with a psychology or pedagogy degree below 30 who worked in primary schools with pupils with special needs. In the last two years, the target groups were pupils with special needs in high schools. The project is successful as the municipality has received many requests from the schools and parents for the

engagement of young assistants since the need for educational assistants in schools has increased significantly in recent years. Young people involved participated in training and were licensed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Most of them have become later self-employed in various organisations and institutions. It also reduced unemployment by training young people to be competitive in the labour market. The Municipality coordinated the project in collaboration with various institutions, such as the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the Municipality of Tetovo, the Employment Service Agency, and UNDP.

Restoration of the youth council premises

Target age group: citizens, youth organisations, the youth council, educational institutions

Number of young people involved: 20 (and 160 total participants in all forums)

The Municipality of Tetovo, together with the city's young people, has implemented essential projects to support citizen participation in community development at the local level. The first was the Strengthening of municipal councils where, through forums with citizens and various participating organisations, a project was chosen that was financed by SDC and implemented by UNDP and the Municipality of Tetovo. Five forums were held during 2020-21, with over 40 in each, despite Covid-19. Participants mostly attend all forums, so they have the right to vote. The participants were divided into tables depending on their interests, such as youth, education, council, administration, etc. After the fourth forum, the participants voted on the project that should be financed, and the fifth was for reporting the results. Also, through this project, the municipality added an article to the statute of self-governing units' local identity. During these forums, the youth council of the municipality of Tetovo managed to bring out their first project, where the city co-financed the restoration of a dilapidated building and its transformation into the youth council premises. On these premises, the youth council, NGOs, and young artists can hold different activities such as meetings, youth and mental health debates, events, exhibitions, readings, and poetry.

4.9. Veszprém

Digital Knowledge Centre (Digitális Tudásközpont)

Target age group: 7-19

Number of young people involved: about 6,000 yearly

More information: website

The centre has two main goals: to provide up-to-date and hands-on knowledge in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) and to develop essential skills for the labour market. As the Hungarian educational system focuses on factual knowledge, having such a digital centre focusing on skills development is crucial. Visitors can participate in 90-180 minute sessions of creative projects and use technologies like 3D printing, laser cutting, robotics and programming to make their own products. Afternoon classes and summer camps are also available for students who want to dive into these technologies. Families and adults of all ages are also welcome on weekends & school holidays. The centre functions as a hub for startup events and cooperates with companies. The centre and educational space opened in 2022.

Planning Youth Community Spaces

Target age group: Generation Z youth, university students

Number of young people involved: 65 in planning and more than 8,200 in events

More information: website, article, video, Facebook

Young people participated in planning and developing four outdoor meeting points, two indoor youth community spaces, and some related programmes via three projects, all funded by the Veszprém-Balaton 2023 European Capital of Culture Programme. The University of Pannonia coordinated the development of Pannon KözTér, while the Eötvös Károly County Library coordinated the creation of the Zug indoor youth community space. The Lélektér Foundation Youth NGO coordinated the planning and development of four outdoor meeting points within the VeszprémGeneration project, including mentoring the four youth teams and consultations with the Municipality.

Democracy Reloading Toolkit

Target age group: municipality staff involved in youth work

Number of young people involved: n.r.

More information: **website**

This online, free toolkit supports municipalities in successfully engaging young people in decision-making. It helps to acquire the four key competencies that help design, implement, and evaluate a successful youth participation structure at the local level. Conferences, training, and a complementary European Goes Local project enhance its usage. Veszprém had participated in training but has not started using the toolkit.

Planning an IAP linked to the SDGs

Target age group: n.r.

Number of young people involved: n.r.

More information: **project website** and **toolkit**

Veszprém gained experience from the URBACT APN project Global Goals for Cities (GG4C) about different aspects of SDG localisation, focusing on planning or improving local actions that contribute to sustainable development goals at the city level. A Learning Kit has been developed by the key expert of the GG4C project that offers a brief, practical guide to the action planning steps and provides illustrative examples of how different cities have tackled the issue. When planning the NGYW IAPs, this tool can lead to transformative and sustainable actions. It may also be used to integrate European Youth Goals into the IAPs.

4.10. Viladecans

Youth Resource Centre (Can Xic)

Target age group: 12-35

Number of young people involved: n.a. (total youth population of the city)

More information: **website**

Can Xic is the municipal facility where the Youth Service workers have offices. In addition, it is the space where all the services aimed at the youth group are located. It has a study room and another equipped with sound equipment, a stage and mirrors that adapt to the needs of use. It also has

spaces for transfer in case users request them, and laptops are available for the public.

The services and activities aimed at young people try to be as diverse as the city's young population. All services are free.

- *Youth Information Point:* it is the gateway to youth services. Information adapted to young people's demands in the academic, work, international mobility, health and sport, leisure, housing, culture and participation and association areas.
- *Affection point:* emotional support and accompaniment
- *LGBTI point:* attention to LGBTQIA+ diversity
- *International Mobility Advice:* information and guidance for a stay abroad, whether volunteering, working or studying.
- *Employment advice:* information, guidance and support in the job search, CV preparation, etc.
- *Academic advice:* information, guidance and support in the academic field, scholarship processing, and registrations.
- *Technological point:* support and advice on technological projects.
- *Health point:* decentralised midwife once a week in Can Xic.
- *Support for youth organisations:* information, guidance and support to local organisations.

Each of the above services detects needs on the part of the group and program activities to respond to them in all areas. The schedule of activities is variable. Some of them are quarterly, annual or specific. They also offer leisure (concerts, sports and cultural activities) and informative and training activities in all areas of youth interest (sexual, emotional, physical, academic, work and health).

Information and Revitalisation Point in Secondary Schools (PidCes)

Target age group: 12-16

Number of young people involved: n.a. (Secondary schools requesting the service)

The Information and Revitalization Point is the Youth Information Point decentralised in schools, visiting six secondary schools weekly. The themes dealt with during the playground hour are divided into monthly themes. These are chosen by the students at the end of the year through a survey provided to the schools by the service.

Student Federation (#LaFede)

Target age group: 14-17

Number of young people involved: 50

#LaFede is a non-formal and self-managed collective of young people from Viladecans that receives support from the municipal Youth Service in revitalising and financing the group. It meets weekly with the facilitator in Can Xic (Youth Information and Resource Centre) and programs its activities for the city, such as Hallonyada (Halloween + local festivity Catanyada), where they design a passage of terror open to the public and the money collected goes annually to a non-profit organisation of the municipality.

Student Meeting

Target age group: 13-16

Number of young people involved: 40-50

The municipal Youth Service team organises a weekend meeting for 40-50 students of 3rd grade of Secondary schools of Viladecans in a farmhouse to explain the city services (among them, #LaFede) for them. Youth participation is encouraged through dynamic exercises to get to know each other and themes selected by professionals, where the main objective is to awaken interest in linking this non-formal group and participate in creating new programming proposals for the citizenry.

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