

NextGen Youthwork

An URBACT APN Network

Quarterly Network Report 1 – April 2024

NextGen YouthWork

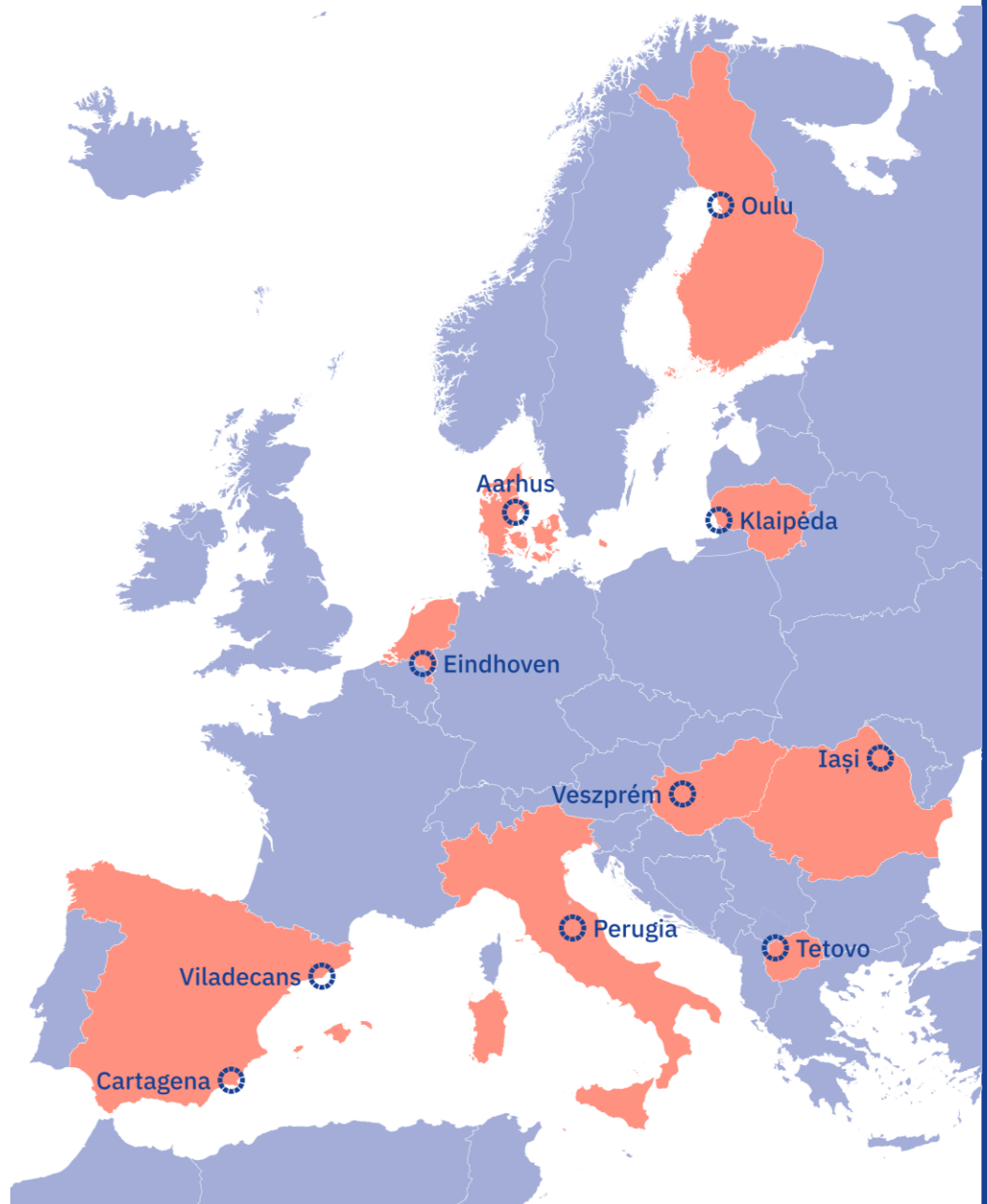
About the Network

With the rise of digitalisation, European youth spend more time online and less in physical public spaces. Youth work starts where youth are; therefore, youth workers need to acquire the skills to use key (social media and gaming) platforms to be accessible and interact with young people.

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.

NextGen YouthWork is a 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).

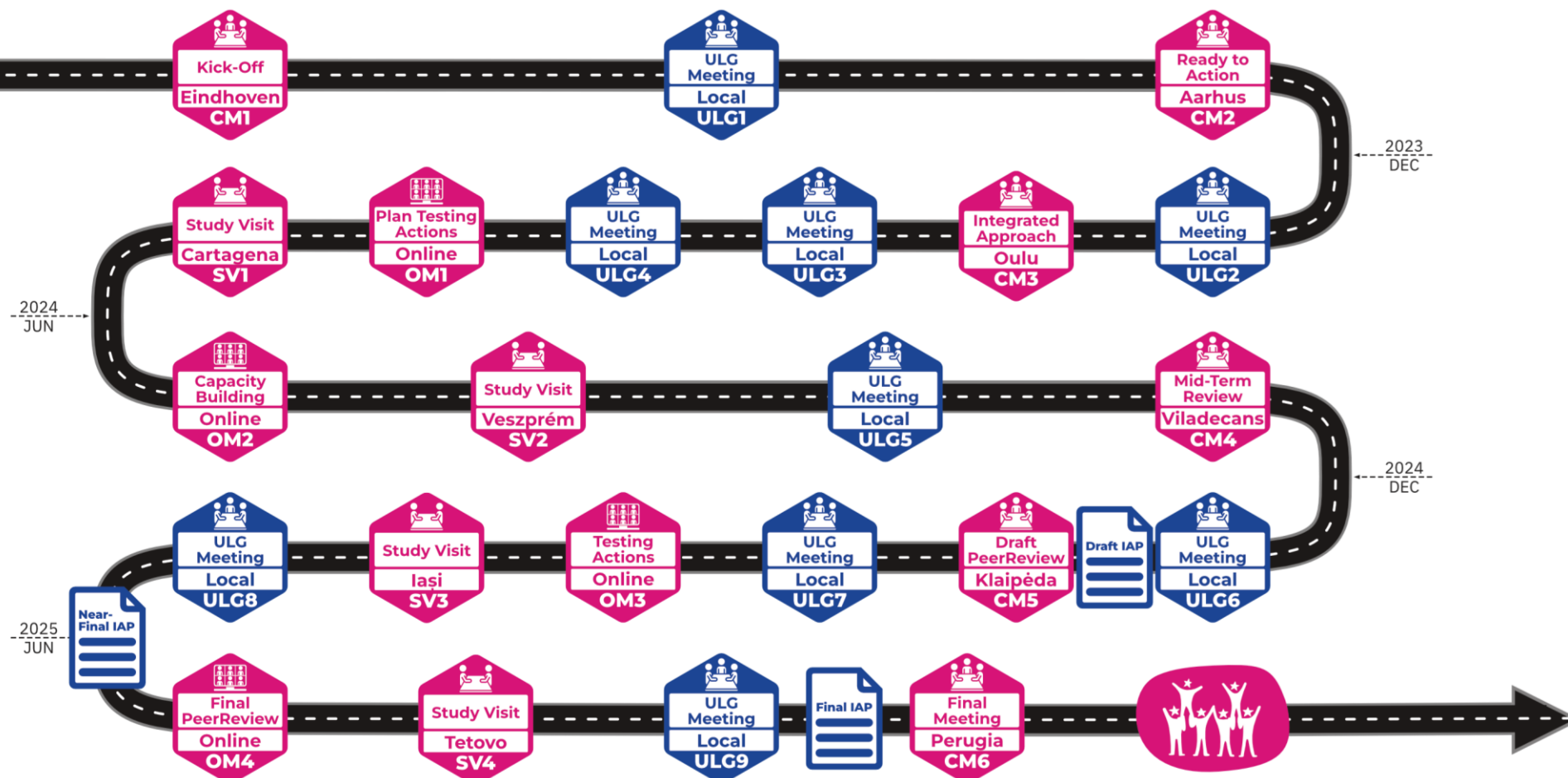
More information on the NextGen YouthWork project is available at the [URBACT mini-site](#).



NextGen YouthWork

The Network Roadmap

The Network Roadmap summarises the main steps to exchange knowledge and experience between cities. Throughout this journey, cities learn from each other through international meetings, such as face-to-face Core Meetings (CM), Study Visits (SV), and Online Meetings (OM). In parallel, they work jointly with the local stakeholders in their URBACT Local Groups (ULGs). By linking the international and local scenes, cities will develop their Integrated Action Plans (IAPs) by December 2025.



Core Meeting 1 Eindhoven, the Netherlands

Kick-Off Meeting, 11-12 June 2023

The CM1 agenda was designed to foster collaboration and learning among participants involved in NextGen YouthWork.

The program included informative presentations by Yvonne Blankwater and Zsolt Séra about the URBACT Programme and insights into the Activation stage, providing essential background information. Later, cities shared their specific objectives and challenges within NextGen YouthWork, promoting an exchange of ideas. A discussion moderated by Sanne de Jong focused on prioritising key areas for the Network, followed by visits to good practice locations such as Playing for Success, Tech Playgrounds, and Commit40.

The meeting continued the next day, with Bart Janssen sharing practical insights on financial and administrative matters. This was followed by a session on setting up URBACT Local Groups (ULGs), providing participants with the necessary tools and information to implement in their contexts.

Participants also met Eindhoven's local stakeholders, including Fenna Dam (Garage2020) and Matheus Sales de Moura (Pitstop Youth Centre). These stakeholders presented their organisations and activities, fostering collaboration and networking and making participants feel more connected and engaged in the local youth work landscape. The day concluded with an inspirational meet-up with the Vice-Mayor of Eindhoven, Mr. Samir Toub, who had been a member of Eindhoven's team earlier in the URBACT Network CHANGE and finally, a stakeholder mapping exercise.



Core Meeting 2

Aarhus, Denmark

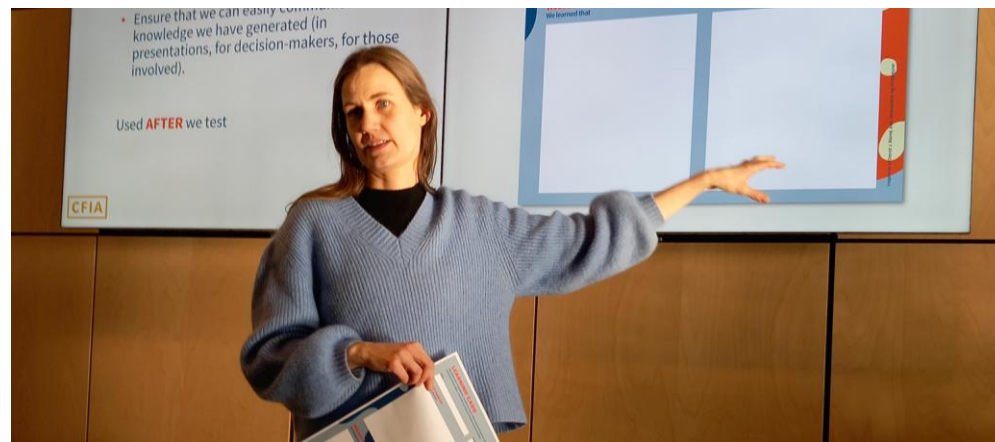
Ready for Action Meeting, 29-30 Nov 2023

CM2's main objective was to prepare the Network for action by discussing the Baseline Study and Network Roadmap and learning about Aarhus's best practices.

Vibeke Jensen, Head of the Employment Department of the Municipality of Aarhus, welcomed participants. The joint work started with a presentation of the Baseline Study, giving a detailed Policy Overview and a summary of the city visits, good practices of cities and their learning needs. The next day, cities delved into the Network Roadmap, defining the methodology of knowledge exchange and setting up the exact dates of transnational meetings, study visits and online meetings.

During the two days, Aarhus also presented its good practices related to the topic. Ask Bendixen explained how the city uses an anthropological approach to digital transformation. This was followed by a presentation on the city's Digital Inclusion Plan, which focuses on four target groups: young people and vulnerable citizens. On the second day, cities learned about BRUS, a free support program for children and young people in families with substance abuse problems.

Finally, participants gained hands-on experience with the Aarhus Test Card, developed by the Centre of Innovation in Aarhus. They also actively participated in a mini hackathon led by Dirk-Jan van Soelen (Eindhoven) and Marko Tiisanen (Oulu) to identify youth engagement methods.



Cities in Focus

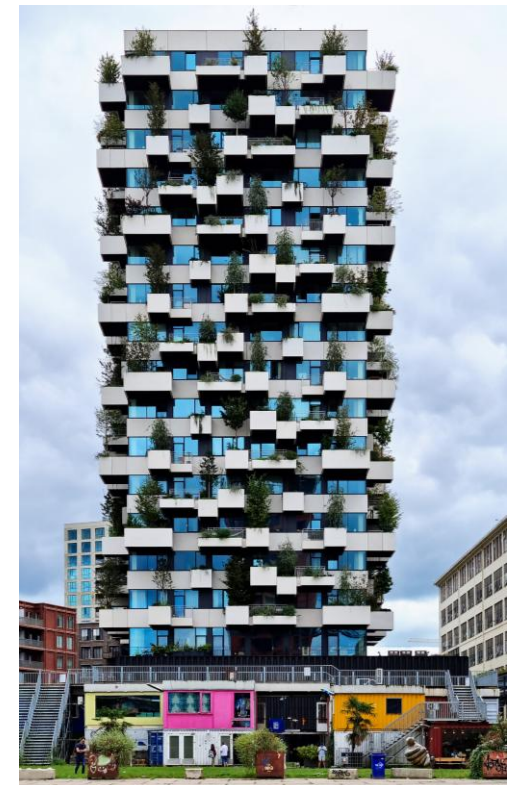
Eindhoven, The Netherlands

Eindhoven, the fifth-largest city in the Netherlands, is located in North Brabant, in the southern part of the country. It is 125 km from Amsterdam and 135 km from Brussels, Belgium. The city has a population of 245,000, of which 67,500 (28%) are aged 14-29.

Eindhoven's key challenge is the declining participation of vulnerable youth in outdoor activities and physical youth centres. These youth spend much of their time online, mostly on social media or gaming platforms.

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. Although many examples of youth workers' online presence exist, youths' demands for online services, platforms, and tools still need to be fully met.

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



Cities in Focus

Aarhus, Denmark

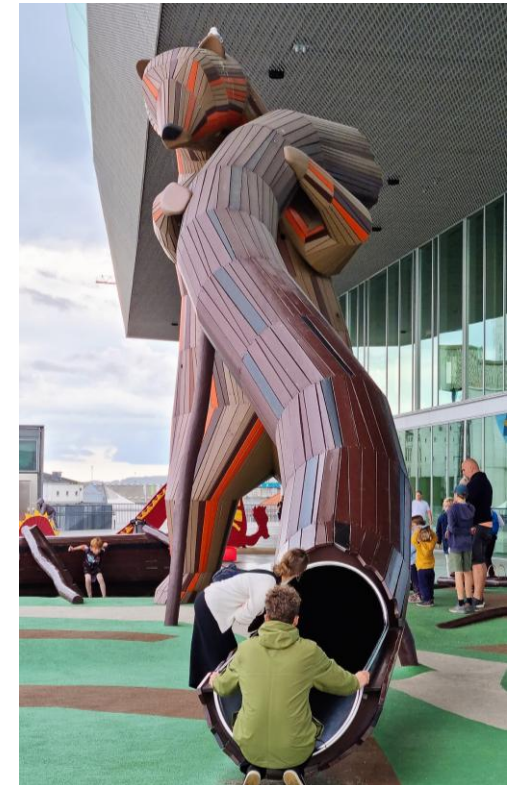
Aarhus is Denmark's second-biggest city, located on the eastern coast of the Danish mainland, Jutland. It is 307 km from Copenhagen, and Billund and Aarhus Airport are within a one-hour drive. The city has a population of 330,000, of which 149,000 (45%) are under 18.

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.

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.

The Municipality of Aarhus has identified youth's mental health as one of the city's Seven Wicked Problems. Children and young people often struggle, facing problems such as loneliness, absenteeism, dropping out of education programmes, anxiety and depression.

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.



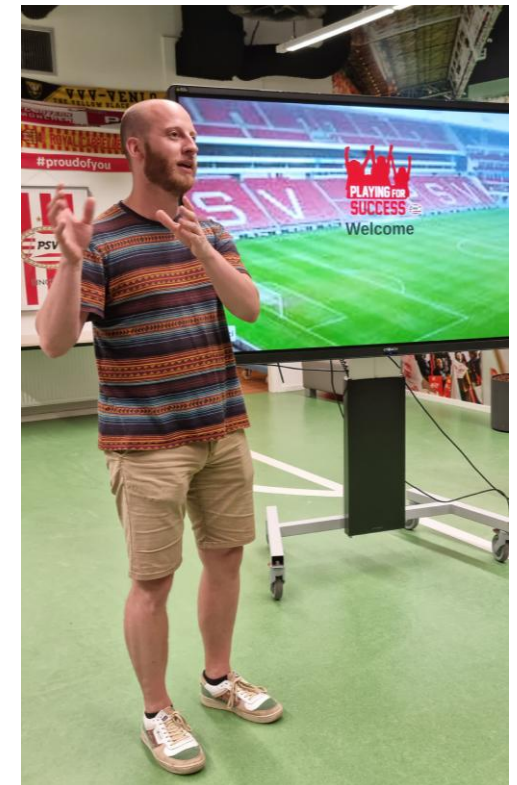
Good Practices

Eindhoven, The Netherlands

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 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.

Playing for Success Eindhoven is a unique concept that increases children's and young people's development. These children can use a helping hand to increase self-confidence, learn motivation, cooperate with others, and be more positive about themselves. Together with the children, Playing for Success Eindhoven works on these goals and strives to ensure that children achieve the optimum return at school.



Good Practices

Aarhus, Denmark

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, as well as anonymous chat and SMS counselling. The program aims to give children and young people a safe and supportive space to discuss their experiences and help them 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:

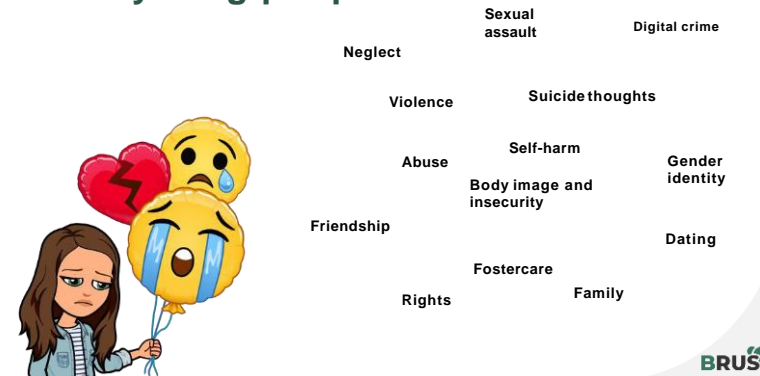
- o Individual counselling can help children and young people process their emotions and experiences, develop coping mechanisms, and build self-esteem.
- o Family counselling can help families communicate more effectively, develop healthy boundaries, and build trust.
- o Group counselling can help children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

Anonymous digital counselling helps children break the taboo and seek help without concern about the consequences. It offers easy access and may empower children and youth to seek further help.

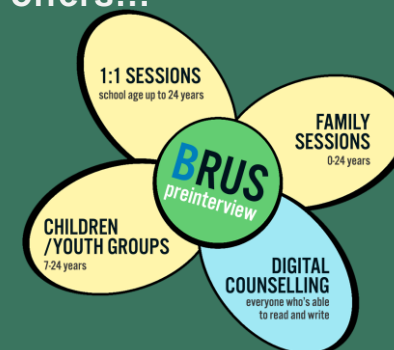
A child with a drinking problem?



The young people



BRUS offers...



Tools and Methodologies Used in Meetings

Stakeholders' Power/Interest Matrix

Engaging stakeholders is pivotal for the [URBACT Method](#). However, working with stakeholders is often very challenging.

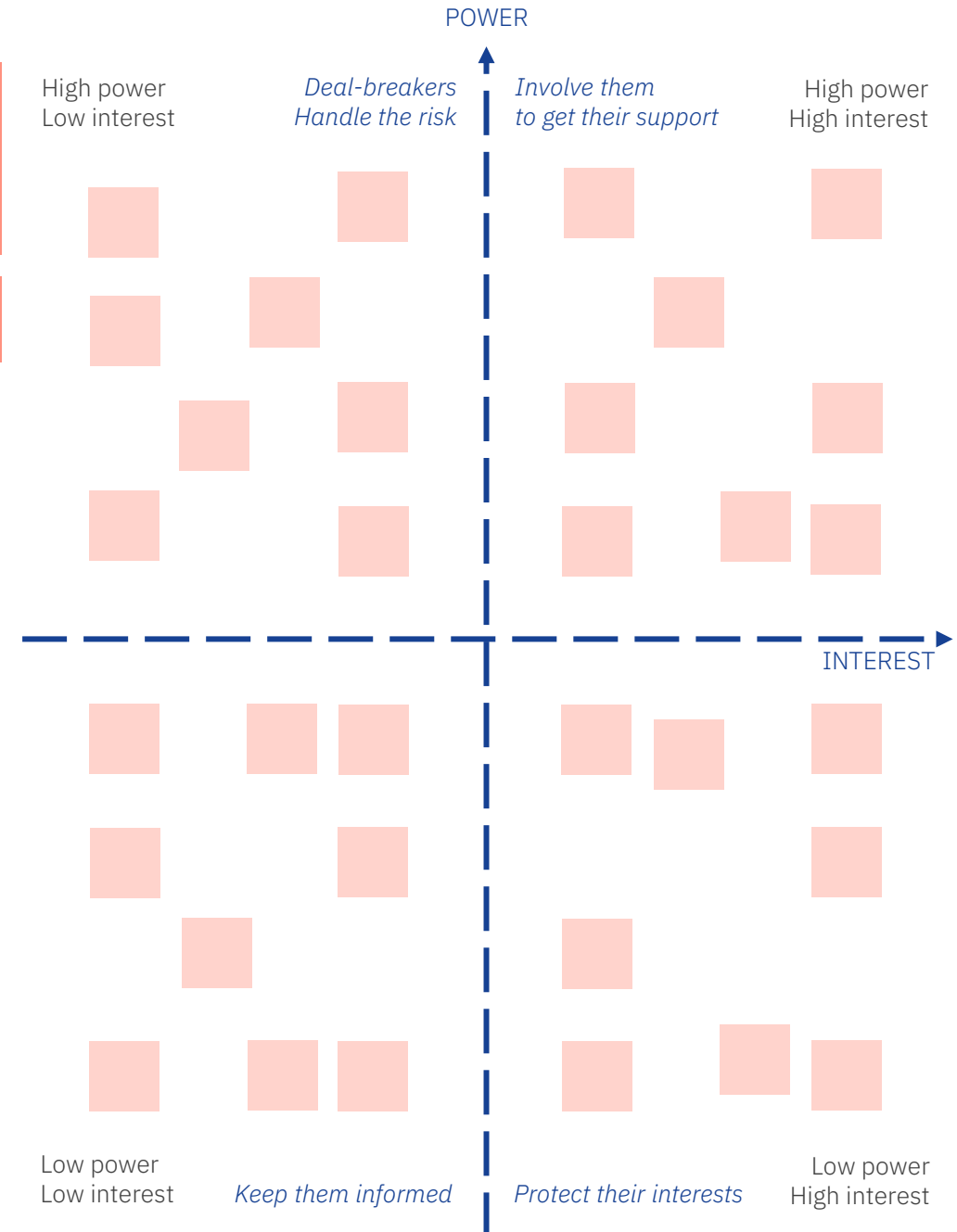
The [Stakeholders' Power/Interest Matrix](#) aims to identify, map, and prioritise stakeholders. Its scope is to consider the right approach for each. Analysing and mapping stakeholders' power and interest in the challenge can help understand what could drive their involvement. Having a plan of action is equally important to ensure that the interests and power of key stakeholders adjust as the action plan progresses.

The tool should be used at the beginning of the project and, if necessary, repeated several times during the project cycle. It can be used for brainstorming and idea-knowledge exchanges, during which different perspectives about stakeholders' relative power and interest are likely to emerge.

The exercise can be used in a workshop format, as a role-play exercise, or as a simple tool for participants to fill in. It takes about an hour to have a fairly complete matrix.

To go further, you can use the [Stakeholders Ecosystem Map](#) or the [Stakeholders Analysis Table](#) to prioritise stakeholders, analyse their interests and motivation and decide how to engage with them.

NGYW cities tested the tool during CM1 in Eindhoven and the Malmö Summer University.



Tools and Methodologies Used in Meetings

Newspaper of Tomorrow

When different stakeholders come together, they bring different perspectives, which is valuable for participatory and collaborative work. However, objectives and goals may be different and challenging to combine, and creating a shared vision becomes essential to a project.

The [Newspaper of Tomorrow](#) tool can be very helpful in creatively achieving this objective. It allows a team to project into the future to create a shared vision on a specific topic. The tool should be used at the beginning of the project to develop a shared vision among the project team. It can also be used during brainstorming and ideation workshops.

To use this envisioning technique, ask the stakeholders to imagine how a newspaper, magazine, or blog post of their choice would discuss a topic two or five years from now. It should be related to the project or solution you are developing.

First, ask participants to answer pre-written questions on sticky notes to help define the chosen topic. Then, open the floor for conversation, during which all participants will share their answers and react to others. The conversation will help identify potential headlines and try to find the most compelling one. You can explain it with a few lines beneath and bring some quotes from the previous steps. If you manage, try finding a suitable image. NGYW cities tested the tool during the Malmö Summer University. The example shown on the right comes from the URBACT Summer e-University.

Headline

Your title comes here; this is going to be your vision of the future

**No more home cooking –
the unpredictable success of Food Hubs**

Paragraph

A short paragraph describing the news, i.e. your future vision

A recent study highlights a notable trend: 90% of elderly individuals and 60% of families choose to dine in Food Hubs instead of cooking at home. These hubs offer convenience and a sense of community, serving affordable, ready-to-eat meals that cater to various dietary needs.

Food Hubs are accessible to residents of social housing through discounts and free meals, promoting inclusivity and addressing food insecurity. By providing nutritious dining options in a social setting, Food Hubs support healthier eating habits and foster connections among neighbours, redefining the dining experience for many.

Image



Quotes

Who said what? This can be the central person of your story-telling when you talk about your vision

“It is so much easier and worry-free, and I can trust the quality of food” – Emma, a mother of two small children

Tools and Methodologies Used in Meetings

Aarhus Test Card

When a project team thoroughly analyses a problem and has a shared vision of what to do, they are often tempted to jump to defining actions, which might be premature. To avoid this, URBACT emphasises the importance of learning from small-scale actions.

The Aarhus Test Card was developed by the [Centre of Innovation in Aarhus](#), which aims to strengthen the innovation capacity across the Aarhus Municipality and create new solutions for welfare challenges that improve the lives of citizens, employees, leaders, and external stakeholders.

The Aarhus Test Card is based on the principles of Design Thinking. The tool aims at rapid learning through small actions by focusing on building on experimenting and building up knowledge instead of building on assumptions.

The tool consists of a Test Card and a Learning Card. The Test Card is used before testing and summarises the hypotheses, defines research questions, and identifies actions to be carried out and indicators that can confirm or disprove the hypotheses. The Learning Card, used after the test, describes the hypothesis, what was observed during the test, the insights gained, and the next steps.

NGYW cities tested the tool during CM2 in Aarhus.

To learn more about the Aarhus Test Card, contact Sara Brixen at brsar@aarhus.dk or Kathrine Arlander at ankaar@aarhus.dk.




TEST CARD

Briefly and precisely describe your hypothesis, the questions you want to investigate, how you will test your hypothesis and the indicators for whether the hypothesis is disproved or confirmed.

Title

Your name

HYPOTHESIS

We believe that...

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

We want to investigate...

TEST

To verify this, we will...

INDICATORS

To confirm or disprove the hypothesis we will look for...

Inspired by David J. Bland, Alex Osterwalder and Strategizer

Summer University Malmö, Sweden

29-31 August 2023





URBACT



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