



## **NextGen Youthwork An URBACT APN Network**

**Quarterly Network Report 4 – January 2025**

# NextGen YouthWork

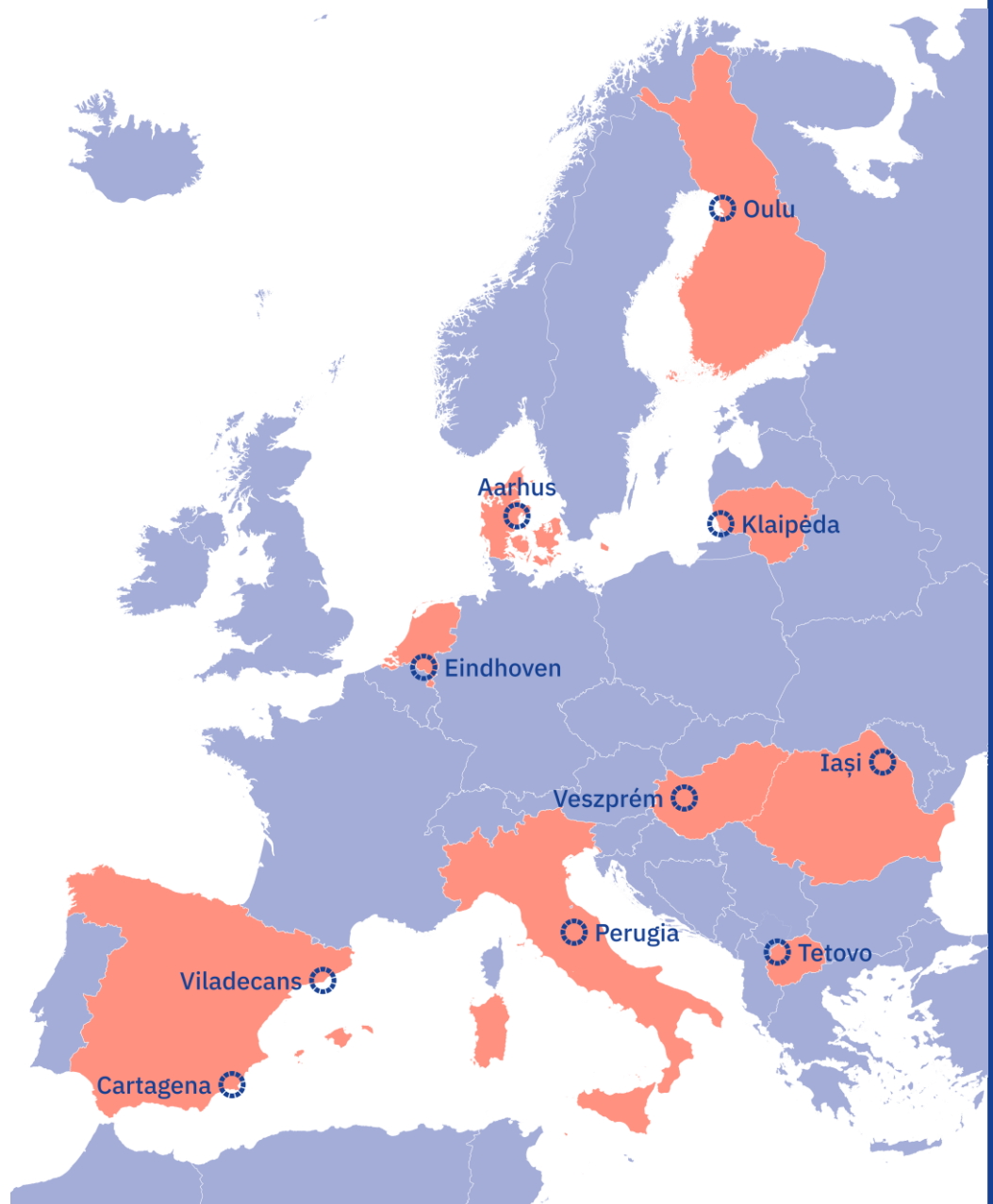
## About the Network

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).

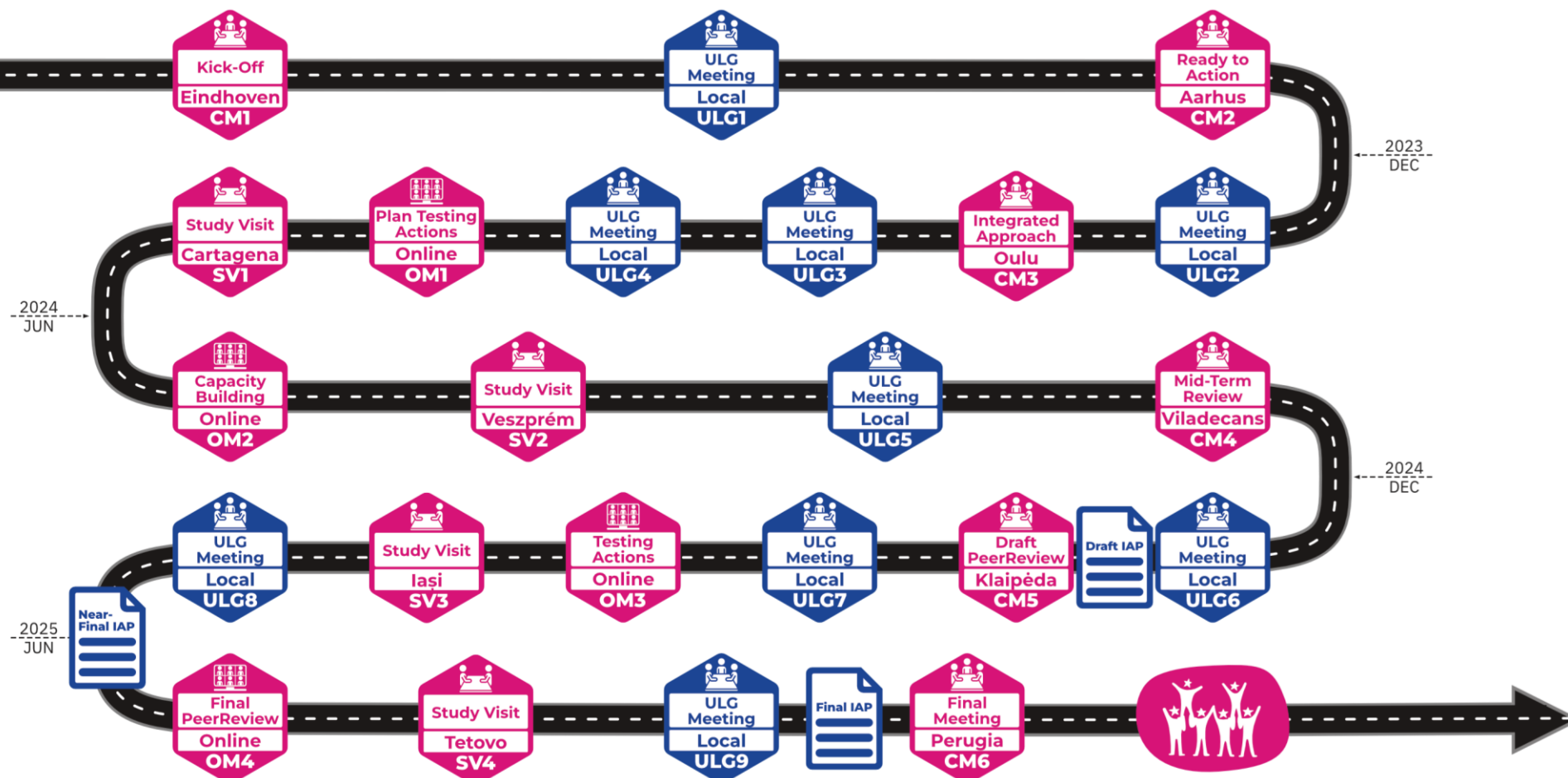
More information on the NextGen YouthWork project is available at the [URBACT mini-site](#).



# 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 4 Viladecans, Spain

24-25 October 2024

The fourth transnational meeting of the NextGen YouthWork network took place in Viladecans on 24–25 October 2024.

The first day focused on the diverse youth services of Viladecans. Participants visited Can Xic Youth Resource Centre, the city's central hub for youth services, offering academic and employment guidance, emotional support, and spaces for creative and technological projects. The group also learned about the PIDCES project, which brings youth services into secondary schools to provide information and engagement opportunities. A visit to the School of New Opportunities (ENO) showcased a model for educational re-engagement, supporting young people in resuming their academic or professional paths.

In the afternoon, partners actively engaged in local initiatives fostering youth participation, including the theatre-based New Project Local Actors, the study classrooms at the library and the session on La Fede, a student-led federation that organises community events such as Hallonyada. An interactive segment allowed participants to experience Viladecans' youth services firsthand, covering information access, employment support, youth engagement, and emotional well-being. The day concluded with an “open environment” visit with street educators, providing insights into outreach work.

The second day focused on discussions along the Mid-Term Reflection.

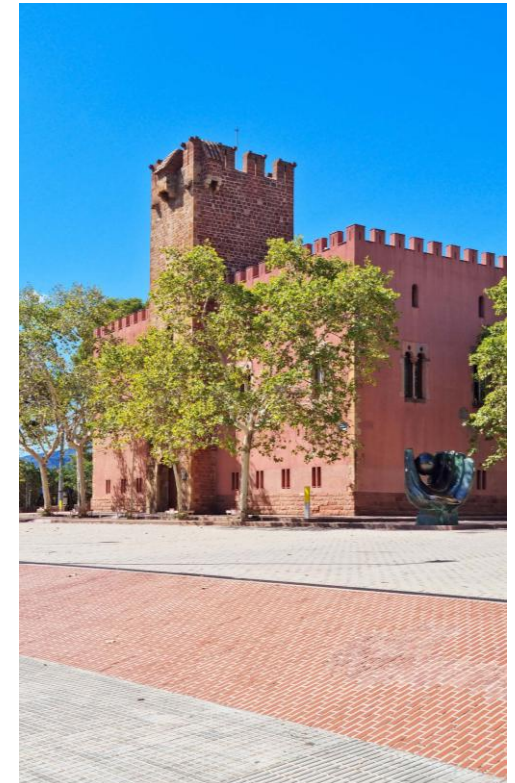




# Cities in Focus

## Viladecans, Spain

Viladecans is a vibrant city located near Barcelona in Catalonia, Spain, with a population of 67,000, including 17,500 young people aged 12-35. Despite an active youth service, Viladecans faces challenges in reaching all young people, particularly those from minority communities. Many youth perceive public institutions as distant, and there is a growing need for better mental health support, employment guidance, and relevant educational opportunities. Adapting to new digital communication trends and creating more inclusive engagement strategies are key priorities. Youth policies in Viladecans are guided by the Local Plan for Youth, the Viladecans 2030 Strategy, and the Local Urban Agenda. These frameworks focus on education, employment, social inclusion, and digital innovation while emphasising equal opportunities and gender equality. The Integrated Action Plan (IAP) focuses on redefining youth worker roles, improving communication strategies, and ensuring services are more accessible. A hybrid approach combining digital and in-person engagement is key to making youth services a trusted resource for all young people. Viladecans seeks to learn from other cities about digital literacy for youth workers, user-centric design in public services, and effective online engagement strategies. Best practices in inclusive communication and data privacy will also help the city build more youth-friendly services.





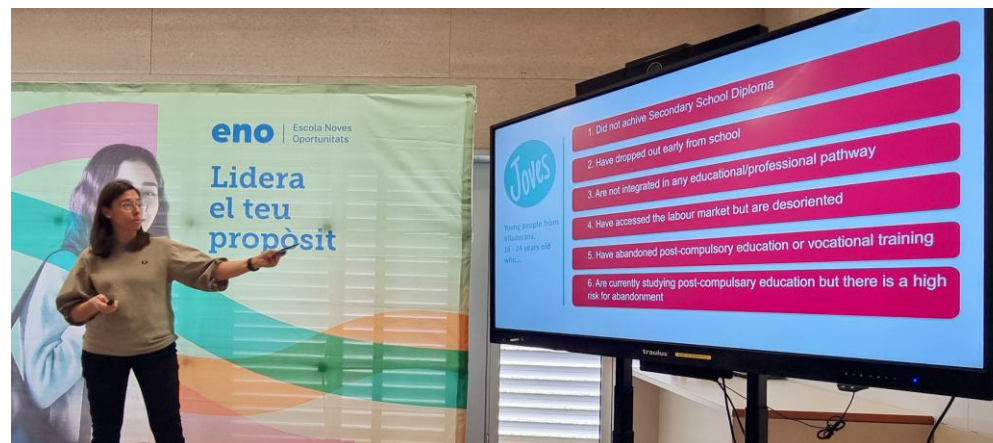
# Good Practices

## Viladecans, Spain

Viladecans has developed a comprehensive youth service model that ensures accessibility, engagement, and support for youth aged 12-35. At the heart of this approach is the [Can Xic Youth Resource Centre](#). This municipal facility has been instrumental in providing a range of free services tailored to diverse youth needs. These include academic and employment guidance, emotional and health support, LGBTQIA+ assistance, and international mobility advice. Can Xic has also been a hub for study spaces, technological support, and opportunities for youth organisations to thrive, demonstrating its effectiveness in serving the community.

To reach younger audiences directly, the PIDCES project operates within secondary schools, offering information and engagement opportunities on topics selected annually by students. Another key initiative, #LaFede, is a self-managed youth federation that fosters civic participation through activities like the Hallonyada festival, where proceeds support local non-profits. Additionally, the Student Meeting introduces young people to city services through interactive team-building experiences.

The [School of New Opportunities](#) (ENO) aims to identify young people who have deviated from their educational or professional trajectories. It then provides them with tailored support, guiding participants through training programmes that enable them to complete their compulsory studies, choose an area of interest within the professional field, or enhance their potential for integration into the labour market.



# The Mid-Term Report

## Looking back at what happened so far

So far, NextGen YouthWork has successfully fostered collaboration through in-person and online meetings, where cities have refined their youth work strategies and exchanged valuable insights. Core Meetings in Eindhoven, Aarhus, Oulu, and Viladecans have provided platforms for discussing integrated approaches, youth engagement, and action planning. Study visits in Cartagena and Veszprém allowed participants to experience innovative youth work practices firsthand. Meanwhile, URBACT Local Groups (ULGs) have been instrumental in applying network learnings at the city level.

Several cities have shown a strong commitment to practical experimentation and peer learning. They have defined small-scale initiatives, such as developing youth apps, creating community spaces, and implementing digital engagement tools. This commitment is a testament to their dedication to improving youth work practices.

Despite these achievements, several challenges remain. Many cities have found refining their Integrated Action Plans (IAPs) difficult, as youth work spans multiple policy areas. Stakeholder engagement and maintaining regular participation in ULG meetings is challenging, the need for professional facilitation being evident. Additionally, securing resources and funding remains a key concern, with cities expressing the need for more structured guidance on identifying financial opportunities, writing successful grant applications, and aligning objectives with measurable outcomes.



NGYW is committed to addressing these challenges and working together to find solutions and strengthen its foundations. The Network will place a significant emphasis on refining funding strategies, providing dedicated training sessions, and enhancing governance structures to ensure the successful implementation of IAPs. The upcoming meetings and workshops will focus on strengthening operational readiness and securing political and financial support. A peer review process will enable cities to refine their action plans, ensuring alignment with broader urban policies and fostering sustainability.

# Testing Actions

## Eindhoven

### Research on Online Youth Centre

Research whether young people would be interested in an online youth centre and what activities they would like to see there. During the 'Night of the Nerd' event, youth were asked to answer multiple questions about online youth centres.

*Finished*

## Eindhoven

### Brainstorm session Dynamo Youth Work and LEV group

The second action was a work session in which employees of Dynamo Youth Work and the LEV group brainstormed about developing online tools for youth workers.

*Finished*

## Veszprém

### Creation of '4You' Youth Community Space

Based on an online youth survey with 342 people on the need for a community space, Jutasi Community Point has been transformed into a youth community space, offering programmes, counselling, events, informal spaces, and games.

*Being implemented*

## Veszprém

### Developing a Youth App with Youth

A Youth App is prepared together with the youth. They receive app development training and develop ideas, which are evaluated. Then, the app is developed and tested.

*Being implemented*

## Aarhus

### The Box

We work with new ways of guiding youngsters seeking information about vocational education. Digital, hands-on and exciting.

*Being implemented*

## Aarhus

### Digital Youngster Board

We plan to dig deeper and create a board of youngsters who will guide the city through the process of digital transformation.

*Under preparation*

## Viladecans

### WhatsApp for Youth

Creation of a WhatsApp broadcast channel. It aims to be a direct way to address the youth and improve engagement with youth services and activities.

*Under preparation*

## Viladecans

### Youth TikTok

The City Council already has a TikTok channel, but it needs to be boosted and to expand the youth target. We will work to reach the entire range of possible ages between 12 and 35.

*Under preparation*



# Testing Actions

## Iași

### Creation of a Youth Centre

Creation of a Youth Centre with stakeholders from various NGOs in one of the city's districts, working mainly with volunteers and the local universities. The challenge is to identify the specific services for the good functioning of the Centre and to assess the needed skills and training for youth workers.

*Under preparation*

## Tetovo

### Training digital tools

Training youth to improve tech skills for employability, communication and collaboration skills, entrepreneurship and innovation, personal development, civic engagement and empowerment.

*Under preparation*

## Iași

### Untitled

We have seen a good practice called Mandarache Award in Cartagena and got inspired to do something similar in Iași. The city already hosts the International Festival of Literature and Translation, and this practice could be transferred involving relevant stakeholders to define the right approach and title.

*Under preparation*

## Tetovo

### Youth Hiking Initiative

A structured youth hiking program encouraging outdoor exploration, fostering connections among participants, and promoting a healthy lifestyle.

*Being implemented*

## Perugia

### Laboratory for Youth Ideas

A tool to enable young people (both formal and informal associations) to express their voice and tell the city's story by managing small budgets.

*Under preparation*

## Perugia

### CreaChatBot

Create a bot that can support young people in organising events by answering their questions and assisting in developing workflow processes.

*Under preparation*

## Perugia

### Urban Futures Festival

Creation of a moving festival aimed at rethinking urban spaces' functionality through physical and digital installations thanks to the testing action CreaChatBot.

*Under preparation*

## Klaipėda

### Indicators program for Open Youth Centres and Spaces

We plan to join the KEK network and obtain a digital tool to help youth centres and spaces collect data about young people.

*Under preparation*



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