Baseline Study

TechDiversity

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Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems

January 2024

TechDiversity is an URBACT network of eight partners representing small and medium-sized European cities, that aim to boost and facilitate diverse local communities that are not active in Tech & Digital sector, facing specific challenges in terms of diversity, gender equality and inclusion. Furthermore, the partner cities will mainly focus on an identified pressing aspect and will support at least one diverse local group in each of the participating cities, through the action plans.

Table of **Contents**

The Big Picture

The TechDiversity consortium will undergo an extensive programme of facilitated transnational exchange and learning, as well as participative co-creation at the local level, in order to develop tailor made comprehensive integrated action plans (IAPs) by the end of 2025 for each partner city.

The process of collaborative discovery and development is outlined in the diagram below. All partners will develop an Integrated Action Plan following networking and involvement of local stakeholders. This co-production process will be the result of the exchange of good practices and ideas with the other EU partner cities in the TechDiversity Action Planning Network (APN) and of meetings of the URBACT Local Groups (ULG), who will take up these practices and adapt them in their cities. The plans will include a set of clearly defined actions, timelines, actors, and potential funding sources.
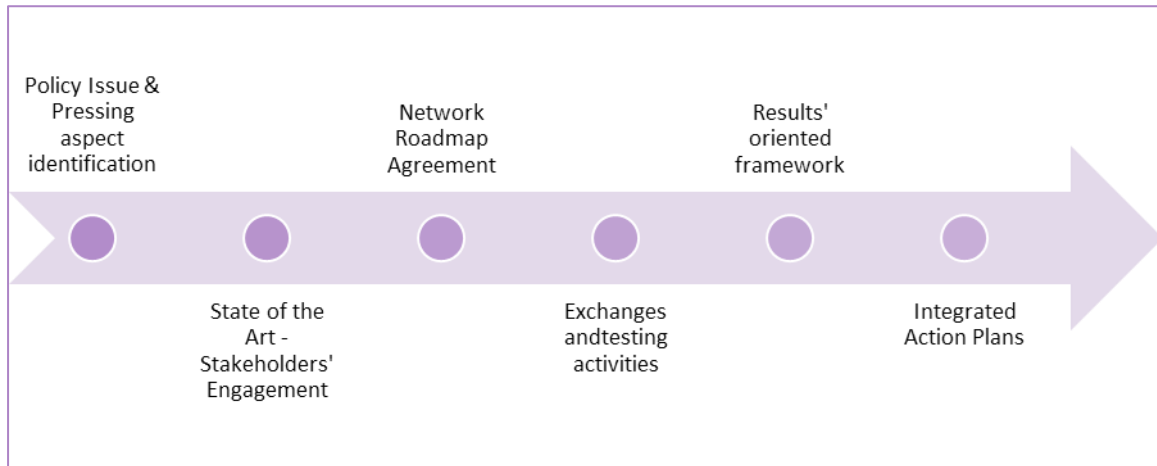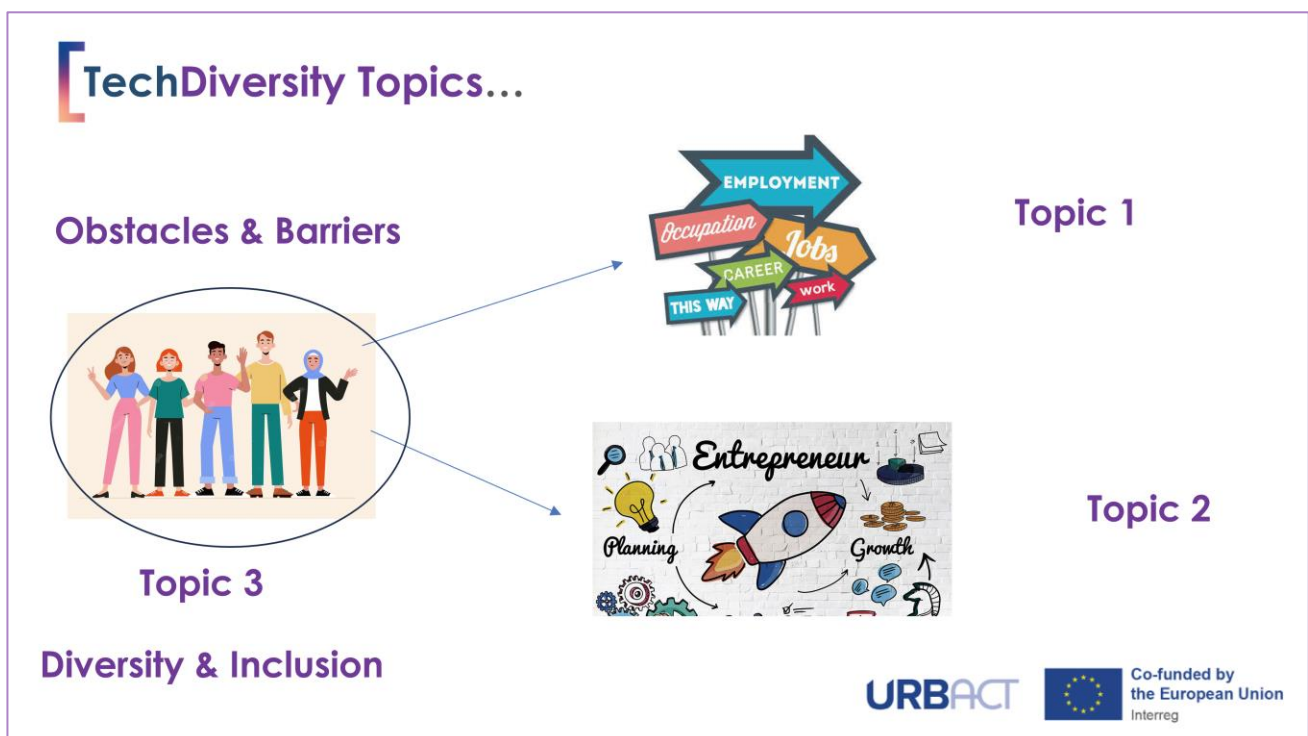

Diagram 0.1 TechDiversity Cities Action Planning Network Discovery & Development Process

The following visual represents "Big Picture" of the TechDiversity policy issue, while a 6 pages Executive Summary of this Baseline Study is available.

Section 1: State of the art - EU Overview

1.0 Introduction

This section includes TechDiversity 1ˢᵗ brainstorm of ideas and inputs that are thematic/city specific.

Diversity and inclusion are two of the biggest challenges facing the Tech and Digital industry today. When businesses consist of people from the same backgrounds, they often leave diverse ideas and perspectives behind.

Policy context

The policy issue that TechDiversity deals is the lack of diverse communities looking to grow knowledge-based digital and tech ecosystems.

TechDiversity is an URBACT network of eight partners representing small and medium-sized European cities, that aim to boost and facilitate diverse local communities that are not active in Tech & Digital sectors, facing specific challenges in terms of diversity, gender equality and inclusion. Furthermore, the partner cities will mainly focus on an identified pressing aspect and will support at least one diverse local group in each of the participating cities, through the action plans.

1.1 Diversity in the tech and digital industry: Europe, minority groups and city economies

Diversity and minority groups are considered as important concepts in the context of society, culture, and demographics. They refer mostly to the presence of a variety of different characteristics, backgrounds, and perspectives within a given population or a community. Here's a brief overview:

a. **Diversity:** Diversity is the recognition and inclusion of differences among individuals, groups, and communities. These differences can encompass a wide range of factors, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, socioeconomic status, physical abilities, and more. Embracing diversity can lead to a richer and more inclusive society.

b. **Minority Groups:** Minority groups are populations within a society that are smaller in number than the dominant or majority group. Being a minority can be based on various factors, such as race, ethnicity, language, religion, sexual orientation, and more. Minority groups may face unique challenges and experiences related to discrimination, prejudice, and disparities in opportunities and resources.

Here are some key points regarding diversity and minority groups to consider:

1. Inclusion: Promoting diversity is not just about acknowledging differences, but actively including and valuing individuals from various backgrounds. This involves creating environments where everyone has an equal opportunity to participate and succeed.

2. Equity: Achieving diversity often requires addressing historical and systemic inequalities that have marginalized minority groups. Equity efforts aim to level the playing field and ensure that everyone has access to the same resources and opportunities.

3. Representation: Adequate representation of minority groups in various aspects of society, such as economy, politics, media, and corporate leadership, is crucial for making diverse perspectives heard and considered.

4. Cultural Competence: Individuals and institutions can benefit from becoming culturally competent, which means understanding and respecting the customs, beliefs, and values of different cultures and minority groups.

5. Intersectionality: Many people belong to multiple minority groups simultaneously (e.g., a black woman who is also part of the LGBTQ+ community). Intersectionality recognizes that these multiple identities can intersect and create unique experiences and challenges.

6. Legal Protections: In all countries in EU, laws and regulations are in place to protect the rights of minority groups and ensure equal treatment under the law.

7. Social Justice Movements: Various social justice movements, such as the civil rights movement, LGBTQ+ rights movement, and women's rights movement, have played crucial roles in advocating for the rights and recognition of minority groups.

"Recognizing and celebrating diversity, supporting minority rights, and promoting inclusivity are fundamental principles in building a more just and equitable society. It's important to continue conversations and efforts related to diversity and minority groups to create a more inclusive and fairer world for everyone."

Diversity in the tech and digital industry refers to the inclusion of individuals from a wide range of backgrounds, including but not limited to race, gender, age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. **Promoting diversity in the digital and tech sector is important for several reasons:**

1. **Innovation**: Diverse teams bring together a variety of perspectives, experiences, and ideas. This diversity can lead to more creative solutions and innovative products and services.
2. **Market Relevance**: The digital sector serves a global and diverse user base. Having a diverse team can help in understanding and addressing the needs and preferences of a broader range of customers.
3. **Fairness and Equality**: A diverse workforce promotes fairness and equality by giving opportunities to individuals from underrepresented groups. It helps to rectify historical and systemic imbalances.
4. **Talent Pool**: Fostering diversity widens the talent pool, enabling companies to attract the best and brightest from all backgrounds.
5. **Problem Solving**: Different perspectives can lead to better problem-solving. In the digital sector, this can be especially important in addressing complex technical and societal issues.

Digital sector

To promote diversity in the digital sector, companies and organizations can take various steps:

1. **Diverse Hiring**: Actively seek out and hire individuals from underrepresented groups. Ensure that job postings and recruitment efforts reach a wide audience.
2. **Inclusive Work Culture**: Create a workplace culture that is inclusive and welcoming. This involves addressing bias, promoting diversity and inclusion training, and fostering an atmosphere where all employees feel valued.
3. **Mentorship and Support**: Provide mentorship programs and support networks for employees from underrepresented groups to help them advance in their careers.
4. **Leadership Commitment**: Leadership must demonstrate a commitment to diversity and inclusion. This sets the tone for the entire organization.
5. **Transparency**: Be transparent about diversity statistics and progress. This encourages accountability and a commitment to ongoing improvement.
6. **Educational Initiatives**: Invest in educational programs and partnerships that promote diversity in tech fields. This can start at the school level and continue through higher education.
7. **Flexible Work Arrangements**: Offer flexible work arrangements to accommodate diverse needs, such as family responsibilities or different working styles.
8. **Data-Driven Decision-Making**: Use data and metrics to track progress and identify areas where improvements are needed.
9. **Community Engagement**: Engage with underrepresented communities and support initiatives that encourage people from these groups to pursue careers in the digital sector.
10. **Anti-Discrimination Policies**: Enforce clear policies against discrimination and harassment and ensure that employees are aware of their rights and how to report any violations.

Diversity and inclusion are ongoing efforts that require a commitment at all levels of an organization. By promoting diversity in the digital sector, companies can benefit from a wider talent pool and contribute to a more equitable and innovative industry.

Tech sector
Diversity in the tech sector refers to the representation of people from various demographic backgrounds, including race, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability status, and more, within the technology industry. Achieving diversity in the tech sector is important for several reasons:

1. **Innovation**: Diverse teams can bring a wider range of perspectives and ideas to the table. This can lead to more innovative solutions and products.
2. **Market Responsiveness**: A diverse workforce can better understand and serve a diverse customer base. This is especially important in a globalized world.
3. **Fairness and Equity**: Promoting diversity in the tech sector is a matter of social justice and fairness. It ensures that opportunities are available to all, regardless of their background.
4. **Talent Pool**: The tech industry faces a shortage of skilled workers. Fostering diversity can help tap into a broader talent pool.
5. **Reducing Bias**: A diverse workforce can help reduce biases and stereotypes in product design and decision-making.

6. **Improved Decision-Making**: Diverse teams can make better decisions by considering a wider range of perspectives and potential pitfalls.

To promote diversity in the tech sector, various strategies can be employed:

1. **Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives**: Tech companies can establish formal programs and policies to promote diversity and inclusion. This may include diversity training, mentorship programs, and resource groups.
2. **Recruitment and Hiring Practices**: Firms can adopt strategies to attract a diverse pool of candidates, including adjusting job descriptions to be more inclusive and reaching out to diverse networks.
3. **Diverse Leadership**: Having diverse leadership at the highest levels of an organization can set an example and drive cultural change.
4. **Equal Pay and Promotion Opportunities**: Ensuring that people from all backgrounds have equal opportunities for advancement and are paid fairly is critical.
5. **Data and Accountability**: Companies can track their diversity metrics and set goals for improvement. Transparency can drive change.
6. **Educational and Outreach Programs**: Encouraging and supporting underrepresented groups to pursue careers in tech through educational programs and outreach.
7. **Networking and Mentorship**: Providing opportunities for people from underrepresented groups to connect with mentors and peers in the industry.

Diversity in the tech sector is an ongoing process and a complex issue that involves cultural and systemic changes within organizations and society as a whole. It's not just about representation, but also about creating an inclusive and equitable environment, where people of all backgrounds can thrive and contribute to the industry's growth and development.

There is a distinction between Tech and Digital Sector presented above to better match each local ecosystem of the partnership.

EU Overview

Delivering an inclusive digital and green transition of Europe's industry is crucial for EU's cohesion and climate ambitions. Specific challenges of regional & local economies and communities need to be considered to strengthen Europe's competitiveness & productivity and at the same time avoid growing territorial disparities. These challenges should be also reflected in terms of Diversity and Inclusion.

The technology industry is one of the most powerful and important in today's economy. Forecasts indicate that its future potential will continue to gain momentum for possible economic leadership. However, in terms of diversity and inclusion, it is one of the industries with the biggest gaps. Inequity in the technology industry is evident and measurable.

The European Commission has taken over since the decade of 2.000 a long-term commitment for diverse workplaces and inclusive societies. The European Diversity Month 2023 theme was ['Assessing diversity and inclusion',](#) and Helena Dalli, the EU's Commissioner for Equality, has urged organisations to think long and hard about whether diversity policies are delivering. It's an essential part of any serious approach to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) – or any serious approach to anything: to step back and look at the results. In our urgency and determination to create better futures, we can all too easily fail to critically engage with what we've done so far and look for room for improvement.

A snapshot of the reality demonstrates the significant underrepresentation of women and minority groups in the technology industry in European cities. **According to Eurostat, although women represent 46% of all employed persons in the EU, men represent about 84% of the EU's total workforce with an ICT educational background, and 66% amongst managers.**

As for **entrepreneurship**, a study from Sifted (2021), found out that the 90,1% of funding raised by European startups in 2021 was raised by male founder teams, and only 1% of funding was raised by female only founder teams. And despite a growing number of initiatives to get female founders funded, it is not changing in fact, since it went down in 2021.

The ethnicity issue.

Founders who raise Venture Capitals funding are also almost all white. In Europe in 2021, only $1.8bn was raised by teams made up of solely ethnic minority founders — compared to $103.9bn raised by all-white founding teams, Sifted (2021).

The leadership issue.

It's also not just about founders. They're just the tip of the iceberg, since Europe's since startup ecosystem also lacks diversity in leadership positions.

The tech team issue.

The European startup ecosystem also really lacks diversity in engineering teams.

The DESI report also provides very helpful – but uncomfortable – data regarding older individuals: Only one in four people over 65 years old have basic digital skills (2022). Of course, things get worse when those social categories overlap and intersect to create unique experiences of discrimination.

Representation

- 20.3% of founders in the startup ecosystem in Germany are women
- Only 13% of Web3 founding teams include a woman
- 84% of disabled founders feel they don't have the same access to funding and opportunities as able-bodies peers
- 75% of UK founders come from advantaged socioeconomic backgrounds
- 72% of top management positions at Europe's leading neobanks are held by men
- At those same neobanks, women hold just 26% of board positions — a whole 10% below the 37% benchmark of legacy banks
- 86% of angel investors in the UK are men
- Two thirds of UK unicorns had a pay gap worse than the national average in 2022

Startup life

- 75% of LGBTQ+ founders feel they must hide their identity from investors
- 56% of ethnic minority founders said access to capital was their biggest challenge in 2022, compared to 41% of white founders
- 36% of female founders named getting access to capital as their biggest challenge in 2022, compared to 24% of male founders.
- 70p — what female startup employees earned for every £1 their male colleagues earned in 2022 in the UK
- Women represent 41.6% of layoffs between October 2022 and February 2023, despite making up just over a third of the tech workforce
- 25% — how much less female founders pay themselves, compared to male founders
- 30% — how much less women in UK tech are paid compared to male colleagues. In Germany, it's 23% less, and 16% less in France.

Anti-Discrimination Laws in EU

Diversity and equality are not only morally necessary, but also legally required in the European Union. To ensure that hiring methods for employees in the EU adhere to diversity and inclusion standards, a variety of laws and regulations are in place.

The main laws and rules that affect hiring will be covered in this piece, along with how they support workplace diversity and inclusion.

Protection Against Discrimination in Europe

To combat discrimination, the European Union has a complete legal system. Discrimination is forbidden under this framework's different directives, which cover a range of grounds. Some of the important directives that seek to encourage variety and inclusion in the workplace include:

- Employment Equality Directive,
- Racial Equality Directive, and
- Gender Equality Directive.

Disability rights and LGBTQ+ rights are mentioned below as a part of the regulations as well.

Employment Equality Directive

Discrimination in work and occupation based on religion or belief, disability, age, or sexual orientation is illegal under the anti-discrimination law called The Employment Equality Directive.

Employers are required to handle all job applicants and employees equally under this directive, regardless of any of these factors. Additionally, employers must make appropriate accommodations for workers with disabilities. This might entail altering the working surroundings or the tasks an employee must perform to do their job.

Furthermore, the directive mandates that companies take action to stop employee victimization and harassment for any of these reasons. Employers are required to have policies in place for handling reports of victimization, harassment, and discrimination.

Racial Equality Directive

Another important anti-discrimination law, the Racial Equality Directive, prohibits discrimination on the grounds of race and ethnic origin in employment and occupation. This directive requires employers to ensure that all job applicants and employees are treated equally regardless of their race or ethnic origin.

Employers are also required to take measures to prevent racial harassment and ensure that victims of harassment receive appropriate protection against discrimination and support. The directive also requires employers to provide remedies for victims of discrimination, harassment, and victimization.

Gender Equality Directive

The Gender Equality Directive (2006/54/EC) seeks to end workplace discrimination based on gender. According to this anti-discrimination law, employers must ensure that men and women are treated equally in terms of salary, working conditions, and promotion opportunities.

Employers must also put policies in place to stop sexual harassment and guarantee that those who are harassed get the proper support and security. The directive also mandates women's protection against discrimination in the hiring process and that employment advertisements and recruitment processes be gender-neutral.

Disability Rights

A variety of anti-discrimination laws and rules have been put in place by the European Union to support the liberties of those who have disabilities. A crucial tool for advancing and defending these rights is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which the EU has signed.

As was previously mentioned, the Employment Equality Directive mandates that companies make reasonable accommodations for their disabled workers. To enable employees to execute their job, employers must modify the work environment or job requirements. The Disability Strategy 2010-2020, another initiative of the EU, seeks to advance the rights of those with disabilities and guarantee their full participation in society. The strategy contained several initiatives to support disabled people's access to social services, employment opportunities, and education.

LGBTQ+ Rights

The European Union has taken action to advance the rights of LGBTQ+ people and fight against prejudice based on sexual orientation and gender identity. These are prohibited under the non-discrimination laws, the Employment Equality Directive, and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, which both forbid discriminations based on a person's sexual orientation.

The EU has also adopted the EU LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025, which aims to promote LGBTIQ+ rights and combat discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity. The strategy calls for a variety of actions to advance inclusion and equality, including better data collection on discrimination, financial support for groups that identify as LGBTQ+, and advocacy for LGBTQ+ rights in public life.

Protection Against Discrimination Closing Points

It should be noted that diversity and inclusion are crucial to the success of any company. This reality has been acknowledged by the European Union, which has put in place some policies and regulations to encourage inclusion and diversity in the workplace.

Some of the most important anti-discrimination laws implemented to guarantee that all job applicants and employees are treated equally and are protected against discrimination include the Employment Equality Directive, the Racial Equality Directive, the Gender Equality Directive, Disability Rights, and LGBTQ+ rights.

However, it is crucial to understand that the achievement of diversity and inclusion in the workplace requires a tough balance between following legal obligations and establishing a welcoming and inclusive workplace culture.

TechDiversity and cities in EU today.

We find out that today, cities in Europe are becoming increasingly diverse. This is due to a number of contributing factors, such as immigration, socio-economic inequalities, spatial segregation, a diversity of identities, activities, and lifestyles. Having said this, this poses significant challenges for urban policymakers and institutions.

The increased participation of women – girls and all minorities in tech & digital sectors and innovation, and their engagement as students and professionals in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, is crucial to economies around the world, as well as the global transition to sustainability, **even for the small or very small cities in EU, like those cities represented in TechDiversity project.**

1.2 Diversity and current policy directions around it for cities as centres of growth & job creation

Equality between women and men, as also inclusion of al minorities are two ones of the European Union's founding values and a key objective of the **Sustainable Development Goals**. The EU has recognised that diversity, inclusion, and gender equality can make a major contribution to economic growth, job creation, prosperity, and competitiveness in cities. In the developed world increasing numbers of economists are recognising that the increase in female and other minorities employment has been a major driving force of growth in the past three decades. Addressing diversity in employment affairs and releasing this potential is an important theme in the EU already back in 2002. EU Strategy defined targets in terms of participation rates for women and other community minorities in the labour market and entrepreneurship development.

Unfortunately, whilst there are examples of effective ways of developing underrepresented communities to contribute to growth that have occurred because of EU commitment, its achievement remains slow and in many ways is compromised by the various and numerous obstacles community minorities still encounter in the job market and business creation field at local level, especially in small cities in EU.

When it especially comes to small cities as centres of growth and job creation and as human beings are almost endlessly diverse, the needs of one underrepresented community will often differ starkly from those of another.

1.3 Policy Context Review

A review of reports & policy guidelines at the EU level, existing knowledge, projects, and networks working on the issue are following to provide the background for TechDiversity future activity, and to place it in the wider context of EU urban policy development. This establishes the existing base on which the network could build, and any gaps TechDiversity could tackle.

The expectation of the partnership is that TechDiversity will add value to all partners giving them the opportunity to broaden their knowledge of the global trends and challenges that will impact on all cities globally, including their own cities, **as new pathways for facilitating diverse groups to employment and entrepreneurship opportunities in digital and tech industry.**

These trends and challenges will be further explored in various activities scheduled across the Stage 2 project period.

EU's main framework that presents all EU Diversity and inclusion initiatives is considered as the basis for the TechDiversity related EU policy context.

More policy context relations with TechDiversity project approach are following:

• TechDiversity policy context aims to mobilize significant investments in urban areas to promote sustainable and inclusive development, create jobs, and drive social and economic progress. **In this regard, the network's goals and objectives perfectly align with the EU's** Urban Agenda.

• **The** Urban Agenda for the EU's Action Plan for Jobs and Skills in the Local Economy (October 2018) informs the emphasis in the Baseline Study on partner cities examining future work and the skills sets required in their local economies. **These are priorities for supporting local minorities – diverse groups to employment and entrepreneurship opportunities in digital and tech.**

• Regarding the Sustainable Development Agenda: at the TechDiversity core meeting in Trikala, all partners discussed with the support of the LE which of the 17 goals could be directly related to the project and where each city's IAP could contribute to the achievement of the stated goals.
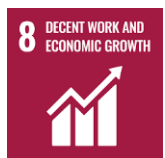
These goals are:

8 - Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all

11- Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

5 - Gender equality

8 - Decent work and economic growth

10 - Reduce inequality within and among countries

In practice it means that partners will work on their actions during Stages 2-4 period to contribute to these goals and the specific relevant targets attached to each goal.

• The TechDiversity network aims to create a more inclusive and equitable digital economy that can contribute **to sustainable and green, just, productive urban transition even in small and medium sized European cities.** Start-ups and innovative SMEs **that employ staff coming from diverse background** can develop new technologies and business models that contribute to sustainability and green transition, such as circular economy practices, sustainable agriculture, etc.

• TechDiversity approach also aligns with the European Pillar of Social Rights. TechDiversity emphasises the right to equal opportunities and treatment, as well as access to the labour market and social protection.

• The partnership aligns with the policy for a more competitive and smarter Europe. TechDiversity will promote productive investments, the development of skills for smart specialisation, industrial transition, and entrepreneurship. All the above are directly related to the 2021–2027 European Urban Policy context's objectives.

A competitive environment and the advancement of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) has changed the ways of working. In 2015 the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions identified the following new forms of work:

• job sharing, where an employer hires two or more workers to jointly fill a specific job.

• employee sharing, where a group of employers hire one employee to meet their combined needs.

• interim management, where highly skilled experts are hired temporarily for a specific project.

• casual work, where an employer is not obliged to provide work regularly to the employee but has the flexibility of calling them in on demand.

• ICT-based mobile work, where workers can perform their job from any place at any time, supported by modern technologies, so-called digital nomads.

• portfolio work, where a self-employed individual works for many clients, carrying out small scale jobs for each of them.

• crowd employment, where an online platform matches employers and workers, often with larger tasks being split up and divided among a 'virtual cloud' of workers.

• collaborative employment, where freelancers, the self-employed and/or micro enterprises cooperate in some way to overcome limitations of size and professional isolation (co-working).

There is a question for partner cities in TechDiversity regarding these new forms of work: Are these trends of new forms of work, workplace environments and working time presents opportunities for people to settle in their cities as attractive options for locations to work from or to establish a base for work expansion?

Relevant Projects

There have been many of EU projects on the topic of Diversity and Inclusion funded since 2000, far too many to name or detail within the frame of this document. Some key projects of relevance however are outlined below and considered as sister projects. TechDiversity will benefit from sister Action Planning Networks who are same time examining similar trends and challenges, as also Networks funded from the URBACT III program:

TechTown - A digital city future, adapt or die (URBACT III) is considered a project that is related to the TechDiversity policy challenge. It explored how small & medium sized cities can maximise the job creation potential of the digital economy.

DigiPlace - Digital innovation for cities (URBACT III) was an Action Planning Network that aimed to set up an acceleration mechanism to enable cities to catch up the digitalisation opportunities in hard & soft infrastructure. Trikala city was involved as partner in DigiPlace.

DIGI-INCLUSION - Leaving no-one behind in a digital world (URBACT IV) is considered a sister project. DIGI-INCLUSION network aims to tackle social exclusion and boost digital inclusion not only by granting access to technology but by enabling people to develop the necessary skills and to become sufficiently empowered to take full advantage of the opportunities offered by the digital world.

Agents of Co-Existence - Creating new ways to foster civic participation (URBACT IV) is also considered a sister project. The main challenge of the network is to embrace social innovation and inclusion across all aspects of local governance.

C4TALENT - Where Talent Meets Opportunity (URBACT IV) is considered a sister project. C4TALENT is about creating a business & startup friendly environment to lessen the effects of brain drain, attracting & retaining young professionals.

FEMACT-Cities - Transforming cities for women (URBACT IV) is considered finally a sister project. The objective of FEMACT-Cities is to support the drafting of eight "Local Action Plans on Gender Equality" about main challenges regarding women's liberty and empowerment.

Synergies will be also explored with the URBACT Networks: Remote-It, Residents of the future and NextGen Youth work.

The URBACT Online course on digital transition will provide basic understanding around the main concepts and challenges associated with digital transitions in related policy areas and are already suggested to the partners.

Related Networks & Initiatives in EU

The success of cities to be a 'birthplace' for new businesses and to attract entrepreneurs is often the result of the activities in these cities to build the core elements of local ecosystems that enable innovation and support entrepreneurship. The **Global Entrepreneurship Monitor** developed a framework to evaluate the impact of entrepreneurship on local economies, based on 9 factors including some of them related with TechDiversity policy challenge.

EU offered in 2022 a **European Capitals of Inclusion and Diversity Award.** Towns, cities, or regions could get the recognition they deserve for building an environment that allows everyone to feel safe and fulfil their potential.

EU Diversity Self-Assessment Tool is a tool provide by EU and is for employers in the public and private sectors and for organisations big and small. Results of the tool are indicative only and all information is confidential. The assessment takes 20-30 minutes, and the organisations receive an email with their results.

These policies aim to enhance TechDiversity Cities attractiveness that is an overarching challenge for most of the partners.

1.4 TechDiversity Definitions

Diversity is an important aspect of any community or organisation, as it contributes to a range of perspectives and experiences.

Inclusion refers to the intentional effort to create an environment in which all individuals feel valued and able to fully participate. It is not simply about tolerating differences, but rather about actively working to create a culture of belonging.

Digital ecosystem refers to the economic activity that results from everyday online connections among people, businesses, public services, data, and processes. In the context of TechDiversity, the **digital ecosystem** refers to the use of technology to create more inclusive and equitable economic opportunities in cities.

1.5 Good practices – Initiatives – City examples

Successes and innovations in urban policy in terms of critical factors and preconditions are following, considered as useful for TechDiversity partners thinking about possible local actions and testing.

The good news is that there are initiatives boosting the numbers of women, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities & LGBTQ+ people building startups or being employed in Tech & Digital industry.

There are various examples as initiatives & good practice in EU level that will be explored during TechDiversity Stage 2:

EU Anti-racism Action Plan 2020-2025 is the Commission's plan to step up action against racism and achieve a Union of Equality. TechDiversity partners were encouraged to be inspired by the EU anti-racism action plan 2020–2025 and the final reports of all related EU Anti-Racism Summits.

The EU Platform of Diversity Charters is the EU Platform of Diversity Charters embodies the European Commission's long-term commitment for diverse workplaces and inclusive societies. By signing Diversity Charters and participating in their activities, members commit to create and maintain an inclusive work environment for their employees, regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation.

Eu Map with the Number of Diversity Charters signatories per country

In France, there's Diversidays https://diversidays.com/, which promotes diversity in digital.

In Finland, there's Inklusiiv https://inklusiiv.com/, which challenges fast-growing tech companies to publish diversity data.

And in Germany, there's WOW Dinner https://wowdinnertoronto.com/ a networking dinner series promoting D&I in tech.

TechDiversity will also take advantage of the Counsil of Europe initiatives for intercultural cities and mostly some useful results of the he ICC Programme.

The cities of Equality (UA for EU) partnership could be finally considered for exploring within the timeframe of TechDiversity for any potential new approaches in tackling the diversity issues.

U-Belong is a 3-year project run by the Assembly of European Regions (AER) and 13 partners, and co-funded by the AMIF Programme (AMIF-2020-AG-CALL) of the European Union. The project is pioneering the field of inclusion & integration, by using an intercultural approach developed by the Council of Europe to innovate regional policymaking. EU-Belong will showcase how multistakeholder approaches, tailored capacity-building, co-design, and transnational mutual-learning leverage regional efforts and generate innovation. The U-Belong available tools will be explored during Stage 2 for any possible use by the TechDiversity partners. The peer review of European replicable good practices report has also inspired the TechDiversity Roadmap.

 Terrassa City Council is the Capital of Inclusion and Diversity 2023. The EC awarded the city under the category of local authorities above 50,000 inhabitants for its "strong intersectional and cross-cutting strategy around inclusion and diversity." Brussels Capital Region and the city of Helsinki scooped silver and bronze awards, respectively. It is a considered a very useful good practise as city example for TechDiversity partners.

Other city examples:

1. Amsterdam, Netherlands:

Amsterdam's StartupAmsterdam program has successfully promoted diversity and inclusion within its startup ecosystem. It offers initiatives, such as the Startup in Residence program, which supports startups tackling urban challenges, and it focuses on diversity and gender equality.

Link: StartupAmsterdam

2. Barcelona, Spain:

Barcelona Activa, the city's local development agency, has implemented initiatives like 'Barcelona Women's Network' to promote women's participation in the tech sector. They also have co-working spaces and incubators for startups that emphasize diversity.

Link: Barcelona Women's Network

3. Stockholm, Sweden:

Stockholm's 'Startup Guide' highlights the city's vibrant tech ecosystem, and it features stories of diverse entrepreneurs and startups. Their emphasis on showcasing a diverse range of entrepreneurs can serve as an inspiration.

Link: https://www.startupguide.com/shop/startup-guide-stockholm

4. Berlin, Germany:

Berlin's 'Startup in Berlin' initiative provides a platform for startups, accelerators, and support organizations, focusing on diversity. It offers various programs to help startups grow and thrive in a diverse environment.

Link: Startup in Berlin

5. Lisbon, Portugal:

Lisbon has a thriving tech ecosystem and is known for its Web Summit conference. The city's diversity is showcased through various startup events and initiatives promoting social innovation and tech diversity.

Link: Web Summit

1.6 Viewing small cities Integrated Urban Development through the Lens of Diversity – The TechDiversity approach.

Given the above contextual background, TechDiversity has the overall aim of supporting the partners to examine whether a programme of action to address specific community groups underdeveloped role in economic development within small sized cities is possible and to consider how to develop and extend good practice that could do so. Strong links have been built from the very beginning between the partners, with the overall aim of facilitating transfer of actions/ideas that actively address and improve practice in relation to the issues of group minorities, entrepreneurship, and employment within their local and regional ecosystems.

Addressing these biases' detrimental effects on society is crucial for more than just ethical and moral reasons: Lack of diversity encourages inequality and exacerbates already-existing societal issues. If technology is developed without considering the needs and viewpoints of marginalised and minoritized groups, it might not be accessible or useful in meeting their demands. In addition, it also has negative effects on the economy, as studies have shown that organizations with diverse workforces and inclusive work practices outperform their competitors.

The lack of diverse groups in the tech and digital industry is becoming a major issue for cities aiming to establish high value knowledge-based digital and tech ecosystems.

One possible approach is to ensure that all members of the community can participate in the city's digital ecosystems, and to connect underrepresented populations to employment and entrepreneurship opportunities in digital and tech.

Section 2: Partner profiles

This section includes a presentation of all network partners, in relation to the local policy challenge, existing policies / action plans, and the possible focus of the URBACT Integrated Action Plan. Each profile includes also learning needs and contributions of each partner in terms of exchange and learning activities. This information feeds the Roadmap and synthesis, considering the specificities of each city.

2.0 Introduction

The TechDiversity network is comprised of eight (8) city partners, between 5.721 and 582.083 inhabitants. Trikala (Gr) is the Lead Partner city that initiated the partnership by seeking like-minded small and medium size cities who are facing similar challenges in achieving diversity and inclusion in their digital local ecosystem contexts. All cities are, however, at very different stages of their starting point, but they are having similar capacity and learning needs. Most cities can offer expertise and knowledge in a variety of different areas, as well as requiring a range of differing support. In this way, they create a well-balanced and complementary partnership that will provide mutual support during the production of their action plans.

Lead Partner e-Trikala & the city of Trikala has participated in 5 previous URBACT networks as a project partner and they stepped up being an URBACT APN Lead Partner. Five other partners have participated in URBACT before. The cities are majority in transition or less developed regions, and many share shrinking population, and working in the shadow of larger neighbouring cities.

The Partner Profiles were compiled between August and November 2023 with the primary sources of information being the approved application form, the pre city visits questionnaires and the onsite city visits by the Lead Expert and the Lead Partner representative. All partner profiles were bilaterally checked in details and agreed on their content.

The onsite visits included meetings with each project team, the ULG coordinator, municipality staff working at related to the policy issue directorates, elected politicians, core local stakeholders - ULG members, as well as case example visits.

The profiles **are mainly mapping the expectations and needs** of each partner and enable all partners to understand each other's local challenges and potential contributions. The analysis following allows the partnership **to define the different sub-**

themes to be explored by the TechDiversity Network, to support all partners in addressing their local challenges and designing their Integrated Action Plans. (more content of each city profile in included in Appendix 1 – AP1)

2.1 e-Trikala

Overview

- Trikala is situated in the Thessaly region of central Greece. It lies at the foothills of the Pindus Mountain range, which is part of the larger Greek mountain system. The city is surrounded by picturesque landscapes, including hills, valleys, and rivers. The river Lithaios runs through the city, adding to its scenic beauty.
- Trikala is one of the major cities in the Thessaly region, which is known for its agricultural productivity, particularly in the cultivation of grains, fruits, and vegetables.
- Trikala's economy is diverse, with industries such as agriculture, manufacturing, and services playing important roles. The city also serves as a commercial hub for the surrounding rural areas, facilitating trade and business activities.
- The city has a population of 62.064 inhabitants and the municipality of 78.504 (2021).
- Financial active population: 32.323 (2022)
- Unemployed citizens (%): 19.6% (2023)

Economic profile (latest available data)

Per capita GDP is 10.755 euros (for year 2020)	
Agriculture, forestry and fishing: 3.127 employees	
Mining and quarrying; manufacturing; electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply; water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities: 27 employees	Developing/declining sectors: 2011 (2011 census, Regional Unit of Trikala) Primary Sector: 7,669 employees Secondary Sector: 6,990 employees Tertiary Sector: 24,723 employees
Construction: 1.889 employees	
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles; transportation and storage; accommodation and food service activities: 4.790 employees	Primary Sector: 14,339 employees Secondary Sector: 9,005 employees Tertiary Sector: 23,114 employees
Information and communication: 267 employees	Employment in the primary sector decreased by 46.51%. For the secondary sector, employment decreased by 22,37%. The tertiary sector recorded a +6.96%. (No data yet from 2021 census)
Financial and insurance activities: 454 employees	
Real estate activities: 22 employees	
Professional, scientific and technical activities; administrative and support service activities: 1.418 employees	
Public administration and defense; compulsory social security; education; human health and social work activities: 2.598 employees	
Arts, entertainment and recreation, repair of household goods and other services: 261 employees	

Trikala City highlight

Trikala is the first Greek Smart City and one of the approved 100 climate neutral and smart cities in EU level.

2.1.1 Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems core conclusions

- **General challenges in relation to the TechDiversity policy issue tackled**

Addressing the lack of diverse communities in small and medium-sized EU cities aiming to grow knowledge-based digital and tech ecosystems is a significant challenge, but also an opportunity for positive change.

Trikala facing high unemployment would like to encourage tech and digital diversity and facilitate any related to the issue initiatives, addressing the challenge of job positions that must be created concerning everyone regardless of race, age, nationality, religion, etc.

Other related local challenges are equal access to funding, as also Investments in education and workforce development programs that focus on digital and tech skills for diverse community groups.

Access to technology, either directly or indirectly by all, is a main concern and same time a challenge of the city in order to be characterized as a sustainable, resilient and inclusive city.

- **Position of the city in terms of tackling Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems**

Trikala officers (like all partners) do no keep data in relation to the policy issue. There are plans to address this aspect during the project lifetime by overviewing all available studies – researches regarding Demographic Representation, Inclusive Hiring and Promotion, Education and Training Access, Leadership Representation & Community Engagement.

Trikala is interested in introducing diversity into digitization and urban planning, which could include a range of activities, like: co-creation activities and education about diversity, temporary and/or pop-up interventions in visible and/or problem areas, integration with the smart city program, and awareness programs for technology diversity.

- **Existing urban strategy/local plans, policies, strategic framework in place related with the policy issue**

Trikala has implemented various strategies which have common elements with the TechDiversity network such as the: Sustainable Urban Development Strategy, the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan, the Energy Transition Strategy, and the Smart City Strategic Plan RESTART mAI City!

RESTART mAI City aim is to highlight strengths, address weaknesses, take advantage of opportunities & prevent threats through a set of actions that will lead to the upgrade of the Mun. and its services, as well as the daily routine of the citizens.

Trikala has also integrated action plans which are relevant to the network theme in the framework of URBACT III. Specifically, Trikala participated to GenderedLandscape and DigiPlace networks.

- **Known barriers & threats that the city currently faces, making it difficult to have successful local support in terms of Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems**

Main barrier is the high unemployment rate of the city, also in terms of diversity and inclusion. Labor market changes because of new technologies demands new and high skills of workforce.

Another critical barrier is that women in Trikala are left out of digital and tech positions, mostly in C-level positions.

Other barriers that are considered are: the Political and Regulatory Changes and mostly the public perception and stereotypes regarding diversity and inclusion in general.

The main threats that the city faces are Brain Drain and Innovation Gap (the lack of diversity that can result in a homogenous tech ecosystem, leading to groupthink and a limited range of perspectives. This can stifle innovation and make the city of Trikala less competitive).

- **The precise core and more pressing aspect of the policy issue, and which local population group is it mostly affecting**

The local focus of the city of Trikala is to introduce technology diversity into urban planning to raise awareness in order to change the mentality of the citizens. Interpersonal relationships between citizens who belong to different social groups such as people of the opposite sex or belonging to other age groups or people with disabilities are main elements in the urban planning of a city and how sustainable it can be. Thus, access to technology either directly or indirectly by all is a main concern of the city of Trikala in order to be characterized as a sustainable, resilient and inclusive city.

Diversity and inclusion in knowledge-based digital and tech ecosystems can have a significant impact on the local population of the city of Trikala, including the age group 18-33 which will be the main group that will be examined.

- **City ambition for the TechDiversity project**

Trikala is interested in introducing diversity into digitization and urban planning, which could include a range of activities, like: co-creation activities and education about diversity, temporary and/or pop-up interventions in visible and/or problem areas, integration with the smart city program, and awareness programs for technology diversity.

2.1.2 Core challenge & possible focus of Trikala Integrated Action Plan

The local focus of Trikala is to introduce technology diversity into urban planning to raise awareness in order to change the mentality of the citizens. Interpersonal relationships between citizens who belong to different social groups such as people of the opposite sex or belonging to other age groups or people with disabilities are main elements in the urban planning of a city and how sustainable it can be. Thus, access to technology either directly or indirectly by all is a main concern of the city of Trikala in order to be characterized as a sustainable, resilient and inclusive city.

The IAP could be funded by Thessaly ROP 2021-2027 (ERDF & ESF), New European Bauhaus, Urban Innovative Actions (UIA) or EU Horizon Europe Program.

2.2 Amarante

Overview

- Amarante is a city and municipality located in the Northern region of Portugal, within the Porto District. The city is situated on the banks of the Tâmega River, which flows through the northern region of Portugal.
- Amarante is known for its local festivals and cultural events that celebrate the traditions and culture of the region. It is a city that combines historical charm with natural beauty, making it an appealing destination for tourists and visitors looking to explore authentic Portuguese culture.
- Amarante is known for its rich cultural heritage, stunning landscapes, and deep-rooted traditions. The region is famous for its wine production, including the renowned white wine.
- The city has a population of 52.116 - Gender: Female: 37.376, Male: 24.740 (2021).
- Ethnicity: Portuguese: 51.554 EU Countries: 117 Other Countries: 445
- Unemployed citizens (%): 9,42% (2021)

Economic profile (latest available data - 2021)

Companies: Construction: 5943	Financial active population: 21.184
Metallurgy and similar companies: 854	Metal works, metallurgy and wood product manufacturing have been strengths of the local economy which have been further privatised since the 1989 changes in the national constitution
Wood Companies: 589	Forestry and viticulture have always featured as part of the agricultural activities of the area
Health related services: 329	The city of Amarante was part of a European network of nine cities whose objective is to share knowledge and good practices among them in order to plan actions that transform city centres into a pole of economic competitiveness and well-being for citizens.
Cafes and Bakery: 388, Textile: 405, Footwear: 236, Accommodation: 236, Agriculture: 133, Wine and viticulture: 82, Restaurants: 130, Forest: 45, Granite and Stone: 26, Information Technology: 25, Tourism: 5	

Amarante City highlight

The IET - Tâmega Business Institute multi operations as Incubator and Accelerator, as Business and Innovation Center and as Academy (https://iet.pt/en/).

2.2.1 Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems core conclusions

- **General challenges in relation to the TechDiversity policy issue tackled**

There are enduring gender, age, and disability norms and biases that can pose challenges to promoting diversity in the tech sector, making it more difficult for women, older individuals, and people with disabilities who aspire to pursue careers in technology.

The city faces a challenge in facilitating the reskilling and upskilling of women workers in the tech sector. Existing programs may not effectively cater to their unique needs, leading to underrepresentation in tech roles.

Yet, in Amarante there is a pervasive challenge - a lack of awareness among its residents about the advantages and opportunities linked to technological inclusion. This issue underscores the pressing need for more profound and strategic outreach efforts to disseminate knowledge and advocate for tech inclusion.

- **Position of the city in terms of tackling Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems**

A notable issue in the city is the lack of clear accountability in tech companies regarding diversity and inclusion. This may result in perpetuating discrimination and bias.

- **Existing urban strategy/local plans, policies, strategic framework in place related with the policy issue**

Amarante was the lead city of the URBACT iPlace project involving a total of 10 European countries/cities. The work carried out resulted in the identification of the technological sector as an economic niche with great potential. From this informed and in-depth reflection, a vision was drawn to create 1000 jobs in the technological area by 2030, which sets the tone for the integrated Action Plan for the founding of a Technological City, which was called Amarante Tech Hub. This plan includes various initiatives, such as the "Amarante Tech Campus," "Center for Technology and Innovation," "Reskilling Programs," and others, all aimed at driving technology-related activities and fostering an innovative ecosystem.

- **Known barriers & threats that the city currently faces, making it difficult to have successful local support in terms of Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems**

Barriers identified are: Regulatory Hurdles, Limited Political Involvement, Financial Constraints, Awareness and Education Gap, Limited Collaboration with Local Partners, Low Priority on the Local Agenda.

Main Threats identified are:

- Talent Drain: A lack of diversity and inclusion may discourage talented individuals from diverse backgrounds from staying in or relocating to Amarante. This can result in a talent drain, where skilled professionals seek opportunities in more inclusive cities.
- Lack of Adaptability: In an increasingly diverse and globalized world, cities that do not adapt to diverse and inclusive practices may struggle to remain relevant and competitive.

- **The precise core and more pressing aspect of the policy issue, and which local population group is it mostly affecting**

Amarante recognizes the need to foster inclusivity and diversity in the tech sector, considering not only gender but also factors like race, ethnicity, age, and socio-economic backgrounds.

In essence, the challenge of diversity & inclusion in the tech sector cuts across various age groups, spanning from youth to older professionals. The city is committed to addressing the unique needs and opportunities for each age group to create a more equitable and inclusive tech ecosystem. A pressing aspect will be carefully explored through the first ULG meetings.

- **City ambition for the TechDiversity project**

Amarante has ambitious aspirations for change and seeks to achieve better results in various aspects related to Diversity and Inclusion. Amarante key ambitions include: Improved Representation, Equitable Access to Opportunities, Inclusive Tech Entrepreneurship, Closing the Skills Gap, Enhanced Workforce Diversity, Accountability and Reporting, Awareness and Advocacy, Community Engagement & Global Competitiveness.

2.2.2 Core challenge & possible focus of Amarante Integrated Action Plan

The aspirations of Amarante that mentioned former reflect the city commitment to create a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive tech ecosystem, ensuring that all residents have the opportunity to benefit from and contribute to the growing technology sector in the city.

Amarante aims to position the city as a leader in diversity and inclusion within tech ecosystems, enhancing the global competitiveness and attractiveness for tech businesses and talent.

The IAP will focus on key aspects to address tech inclusion, with the local authority taking on roles as implementers, facilitators, and enablers to create a more inclusive and diverse tech ecosystem in our city. Since reskilling and upskilling of women workers in the tech sector is a core challenge, a related IAP on this direction will be explored during 2024.

The IAP could be funded by European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) 2021-2027 or Public-Private Partnerships.

2.3 Arezzo

Overview

- The city of Arezzo, capital of the province with the same name, is located in an almost barycentric position with respect to the provincial soil.
- Arezzo is the city of arts and culture for its important monuments, churches, and works of art and hosts several recurrent fairs, cultural events, music festivals, etc.
- Arezzo is also an area with an industrial vocation and offers a high-quality of life. It is the 4th Italian province for number of manufacturing companies per population and the 2nd in the Tuscany Region.
- The city has a population of 97,642 inhabitants.
- Per capita Income of Arezzo in 2022 is 21.664,7 Euro
- Number of companies based in the province are 37,117 units
- 22% of the population are young NEET people.

Economic profile (latest available data)

Per capita Income of Arezzo city in 2022 is 21.664,7 Euro, well above the average of Tuscany Region and of Italy	In 2022, Arezzo province's economy experienced a consolidation with a 22% increase in added value, totaling 9.3 billion
There is a significant increase in the number of workers at a provincial level - under any contractual form - expected to join these companies, rising from 4.6 million in 2021 to approximately 5.2 million in 2022	In terms of economy, the 2021 added value of the province of Arezzo reached around 8.997 billion euros at the end of the year, growth at 9% in real terms
The Arezzo city's share of Export on GDP is the highest in Italy	
The share of working age population in the city is 63% and of young entrepreneurship is 8%	Sectors like agriculture, construction, and services, and especially tourism, performed well in 2022 in the province
In 2022 Arezzo province's Culture & Creative productive system generated 742 million euros in value added and provided employment for 13,162 people, nationally ranking third in terms of value added (7.9%) & second in terms of employment (8.7%)	The tourist accommodations recorded by the Municipality of Arezzo for the purpose of the tourist tax in 2022 amounted to 502,491, with a total of 232,950 arrivals
	Among companies with employees at a provincial level, 60% of them have planned to make new hires, a percentage that is consistent with the previous year
Technical professions which are the most demanded by companies in the provincial area also present the major recruitment challenges, also affecting the IT and ICT industries demand. The professions with the most difficulty in recruitment for young people are IT, Telecommunication and Engineering technicians	In 2022 in Arezzo province there has been a significant growth (compared to 2017-2021) of companies' investments in technologies for digital transformation, such as: cybersecurity, high-speed internet, cloud, mobile, big data analytics, software tools for data acquisition and management, Internet of Things (IoT), machine-to-machine communication technologies, augmented and virtual reality to support production processes

Arezzo City highlight

Arezzo has achieved excellent results in terms of development and growth linked precisely to culture.

2.3.1 Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems core conclusions
- **General challenges in relation to the TechDiversity policy issue tackled.**

Youth (SDGs N.8 and N.4) is the most impacted category in many respects by the pandemic years. The economic data related to youth entrepreneurship are the worst and with negative trends for several years and the city would like to improve all related indicators.

Digital innovation of the production system (SDG N.9) is another local challenge to be addressed. For many SMEs the investments of a digital economy can be a serious management problem and strategy.

There is a need to provide specialized and high-quality training to young graduates which will then be able to easily enter the job market with valuable, qualified IT, ICT, IoT skills that are becoming essential for the local industry.

Addressing at the same time social and industrial development challenges by fostering application of technology and innovation and promoting the digital economy, is the strategic key to meet broader, inclusive and sustainable development objectives, such as employment creation, poverty eradication, gender equality, labour standards, and greater access to education and health care.

The greatest challenge for Arezzo policy makers, and other local stakeholders seeking to contribute to progress toward the SDGs, is how to cooperate to leverage technology to create a more inclusive society.

- **Position of the city in terms of tackling Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems**

Arezzo officers (like all partners) do no keep data in relation to the policy issue. There are some sets of data at Social Services level containing data regarding all sorts of marginalised groups. It would be a solution to broaden the scope of the existing database in the future to cover other areas as well. The IAP for Arezzo should be the mean for also addressing this issue.

Arezzo is implementing its strategy for the digital transition aiming to make it a virtuous digital public administration by 2030 & between its ambitions there are aspects connected with the TechDiversity policy issue.

- **Existing urban strategy/local plans, policies, strategic framework in place related with the policy issue.**

There are no local plans focusing on the project issue, above the regional and national strategies.

The participatory approach, applied both for the digital and the green transition taking place in the city, is the basis of Arezzo's governance model which sees citizens, especially young and elder people, and stakeholders as protagonists of urban planning and design.

The Municipality of Arezzo is in the process of identifying the necessary urban planning equalization or cohesion policy funding sources for the set up a Digital Hub for young people using spaces located into 2 buildings of the city's suburban area. The project plan is to co-design and co-equip with the young people of the area and of the city, one "smart room" for digital education and one "innovation hub" acting as a tech and innovation laboratory. This hub could be of great potential for the "TechDiversity" actions implementation and for its results' uptake.

- **Known barriers & threats that the city currently faces, making it difficult to have successful local support in terms of Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems**

A clear barrier is that the city has a lack of knowledge of labour opportunities from underrepresented groups/communities to be able to access in the labour market.

Another critical barrier is the lack of sufficient training institutes (learning paths) in line with current job requirements – recruitments and capable to also train individuals with physical and social challenges.

The existing barriers that TechDiversity project will support Arezzo to explore and overcome are also: access to workspace, access to diverse talent, access to funding, access to equal education opportunities, and access to social capital.

As a clear threat considered is the possible low involvement of the marginalized groups in co-creating of solutions for tech integration and for participating in activities of the ULG.

- **The precise core and more pressing aspect of the policy issue, and which local population group is it mostly affecting.**

The most pressing aspect is about young people including those with disabilities and of other groups socially isolated such as women and other, to the tech and digital sector's employment offer and related entrepreneurship opportunities. There will be more discussions on the pressing aspect between ULG members during the group's first meetings in 2025.

- **City ambition for the TechDiversity project**

Arezzo wishes to establish a citywide network of businesses and organizations capable of identifying individuals facing social or physical challenges to connect them with facilities suitable for their training (keeping pace with innovations for a smooth integration into the job market). Therefore, the ambition is to have fewer people isolated in their difficulties and more opportunities for them to actively participate in the local digital ecosystem and the society.

2.3.2 Core challenge & possible focus of Arezzo   Integrated Action Plan

The final local Integrated Action Plan (IAP) will include concrete actions to deal with the following challenges:

• Facilitate the access of young people including with disabilities and of other groups socially isolated such as women and other, to the tech and digital sectors' employment offer and related entrepreneurship opportunities;

• Support and promote the inclusion of the above-mentioned underrepresented groups/communities in the digital and tech sectors companies;

• Foster and promote the offer of the local learning and certification opportunities in the digital and tech fields in order to enable equal access opportunities to all the interested underrepresented groups/communities.

As a result of this project, the Municipality of Arezzo foresees a great impact in terms of improving urban policies aimed at enhancing job opportunities in the technological and digital sectors especially for the heterogeneous and underrepresented groups of the city and a consequent development of an inclusive digital economy.

The IAP could be funded by the ROP 2021-2027 – EU Str. Funds & of the National recovery Plan. Both cases will be exploited.

2.4 Bielsko Biala

Overview

• Due to its proximity to the Upper Silesian conurbation and Krakow, as well as to the Czech city of Ostrava and the Slovak city of Zylina, Bielsko-Biala is an important center of cross-border development.
• The city's dynamic development is also facilitated by its location at the intersection of international and national transport corridors, making it an important road junction in the south of the Silesian region.
• The nearest airports are in Katowice and Kraków
• Number of infabitants: 168.106
• Density: 1350 pax/km2
• Gender: 53% of women, 47 % of men
• Education: 27 % of population has a higher education, 33 % - secondary education, 19 % - vocational secondary education, the rest of population has either a primary level education or it wasn't definite in the reports.
• Unemployed citizens (%): 1,7

Economic profile (latest available data - 2021)

Per capita GDP is 16.338 Euro - on the level of Silesia Region.	The unemployment rate in the city is very low and below average both on regional as well as national level.
Very high share of micro and small businesses in the total number of business entities registered.	Bielsko-Biala is a significant industrial center, with manufacturing and automotive industry at the forefront. However, year by year, the city is also becoming an increasingly important center of modern technology where the dynamic development of the IT industry is clearly visible.
In terms of total number of economic entities registered it is almost 28 000.	In terms of main economic sectors developed in the city: Automotive Industry, Textile and Clothing Industry, Metal and Machinery Industry, IT and Technology Services. Educational Services, Tourism, Retail and Consumer Services.
In terms of employment the demand for specialists and workers with higher education is also growing. According to the statistical data, job announcements in the banking, transportation and logistics, insurance or IT are increasing in recent years. Specialists in these fields are regularly supplied by, among others, universities and schools in Bielsko-Biala.	In Bielsko-Biala there is a very well-established ecosystem of tech-related companies and institutions, from public as well as private sector, education and NGOs, which is cooperating and organizing different initiatives, like BBDays4.IT festival.

Bielsko-Biala is a leading city in the southern subregion, located in its northeastern part, at the foot of the Silesian Beskid and Maly, on the Biała River. Bielsko-Biala is the administrative center, industrial and cultural center of the region known as Podbeskidzie, covering Beskids.	Bielsko-Biala also attracts investors both Polish and foreign. Many family businesses have located their capital here as well as large global corporations, which have allocated huge budgets for investments in the city with huge budgets.

Bielsko Biala City highlight

The shift from traditional industries to the modern business services (software development, value chain management, finance & accountant, HR & technology related n Bielsko Biala is clearly visible.

2.4.1 Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems core conclusions

- **General challenges in relation to the TechDiversity policy issue tackled.**
  - High number of migrants – especially from Ukraine – often well-educated, but work below their qualifications
  - More women in the population of the city, more unemployed women
  - Growing IT, technology, and modern business services sectors
  - Gender balance issue tackled in strategic documents
  - Tech-related higher education opportunities
- **Position of the city in terms of tackling Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems**

Bielsko Biala officers (like all partners) do no keep any data.

In the strategic documents on the city level, we can find priorities related to inclusion of underrepresented groups, equalization of educational & work opportunities, boosting technology & entrepreneurship, activation of seniors & silver economy development, lifelong learning, or startup support and multisectoral cooperation.

A local NGO – Startup Podbeskidzie Foundation is creating a yearly report based on the surveys conducted in local technological companies and startups, in which among other data, position of women in tech sector is examined.

The survey "Barometer of Occupations 2023" determines the demand for workers in the following year for the city: deficit occupations are related with digital sector and sustainable professions are related also with digital sector. This fact could act as a starting point to measure also some data related with people of diverse groups that are able to cover some of the deficit occupations opportunities.

- **Existing urban strategy/local plans, policies, strategic framework in place related with the policy issue.**

In Bielsko Biala, the challenges described above are the result of works on "Integrated Diagnosis of the City of Bielsko Biala", that is a list of the most relevant potentials and problems identified for the city and its functional area for the formation of development policy. The document was produced in a participatory formula by contrasting statistical data, conclusions from strategic documents with information from the city users and relevant stakeholders. Based on the diagnosis – Development Strategy for Bielsko-Biała till 2030 was created, defining precise goals within six identified priority areas: People, Life, Management, Mobility, Environment and Economy.

Another report "Investment Potential of Bielsko Biala" - published in 2022, confirms the shift of the city towards technology and digitalization. It shows the directions where Bielsko Biala should go and what resources would be needed to get there in terms of workforce, employment trends, education, and competences. When planning diversity & inclusion activities, this report may be considered as a roadmap presenting local trends.

Finally, the report "Startups & IT companies in Podbeskidzie region" gives a special emphasis on status of women in tech on a local market.

- **Known barriers & threats that the city currently faces, making it difficult to have successful local support in terms of Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems**

A critical barrier could be reaching and engaging minority groups – they might not be interested in participation in the project.

A critical threat could be the lack of funding for the IAP actions.

- **The precise core and more pressing aspect of the policy issue, and which local population group is it mostly affecting.**

Bielsko Biala recognises that once the local digital ecosystem is not using the potential & skills, is not taking the advantage of diverse teams and is not knowing "what's" and whys" of diversity and inclusion (both from the perspective of local governments and company owners), then it comes to policy issue that needs to address.

Three main groups are initially indicated in terms of the need of their better connection to employment and entrepreneurship opportunities: Women, migrants, and seniors. A fourth group, (also treated as cross-sectoral for women and migrants) may be also young people. A pressing aspect will be carefully explored through the first ULG meetings.

- **City ambition for the TechDiversity project**

The city of Bielsko Biala is very interested in boosting local economy through the development of tech sector, especially IT. The implementation of TechDiversity project may facilitate this process.

2.4.2 Core challenge & possible focus of Bielsko Biala Integrated Action Plan

The core challenge is a mix of the difficulties from the perspective of minorities in finding a job, wage inequality, lack of access to C-level positions, and under-qualified works.

The IAP will probably focus on 4 key aspects.

- facilitation the cooperation among institutions interested in the issue – business, education, community, BSOs, NGOs
- raise awareness activities
- workshops, trainings, events
- connecting the dots – find what is already on the market, create synergies and bring added value

The IAP could be funded by Interreg programs like Europe, Central Europe, Poland-Slovakia, Czech Republic-Poland according to the calendar of calls or other EU funded programs like Horizon Europe, Digital Europe, Creative Europe. An alternative is a participatory budget on the city level.

2.5 Bucharest District 6

Overview

- Located in the West of Bucharest, District 6 borders District 1 to the north, to the south with District 5 and in its western extremity with Ilfov County (Domnești and Chiajna communes and Chitila town).
- District 6 is connected via Iuliu Maniu Boulevard to the A1 highway, being the road connection between Bucharest and the western part of the country and Europe, and vice versa.
- District 6's main function is a residential one, however it has the largest retail buildings surface 317,000 sqm.
- Population: 397.546 Gender: 184,537 male and 213,009 female inhabitants
- Education: 70.200 pupils and students.
- Ethnicity: Romanian 88,45 %, Roma 0,48%, Hungarian 0,17%, Turkish, Germans, Russians, Greeks, Tatars, Bulgarians, Armenians, Ukrainians, Italians, Macedonians, Serbians, Polish under 0,10% each
- Vulnerably group: Roma.

Economic profile (latest available data – 2021)

Financial active population: 161.361 citizens	
Unemployed citizens (%): 0.53% of district population	District 6 houses 5 HQs for companies from Top 100 in Romania (i.e Auchan Romania, Mega Image, Renault Comercial Roumanie, Telekom Romania Mobile and Electrocentrale Bucuresti).
D6 encompasses an approximate number of 128.500 employees	Key local industry/employment sectors, employment levels, developing/declining sectors, trade etc.: secondary production sector (industry)10% of total economy, 90% percent of the economy being tertiary (energy production, buildings, wholesale and retail commerce, transport, hotels and restaurants, real estate, administrative services, healthcare and social assistance etc.)

Per capita GDP is 49,700 EUR (for year 2019)	The district's economy is based on retail and tertiary services, although some tech companies have activities in the district.
Primary sector: N/A	There is an existing decommissioned industrial platform located in the southern part of District 6
Secondary Production Sector: 3,236,898.46 EUR	
Third Production Sector: 13,427,411.20 EUR	

Bucharest D6 City highlight

District 6 is oriented to host infrastructure for the tech companies.

2.5.1 Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems core conclusions

- **General challenges in relation to the TechDiversity policy issue tackled**

The district's economy is largely based on retail and tertiary services, although some tech companies have activities in the district. Also, although the tech and digital sectors companies are attracted to Bucharest, the challenge is to shift their interest towards District 6 and to match their workforce needs with the suitable diverse available candidates.

Another challenge is related to the existence of suitable infrastructure for the tech companies that would be interested in relocating their activities in the district.

The city approaches those challenges through a diverse and inclusive perspective, in terms employment, recruitment options and entrepreneurship, mostly through startups.

- **Position of the city in terms of tackling Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems**

There is no existing data base in relation to Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems. There are some sets of data at Social Services level, containing data regarding all sorts of marginalised groups. It would be a solution to broaden the scope of the existing database in the future to cover other areas as well.

A Strategy on Digitalisation will be developed in the framework of another District 6 EU funded project which is under implementation, code named SMART 6. There is a potential complementarity between the scope of the strategy in terms of identifying possible recommendations for creating a more comprehensive data set and monitoring tools that could support the collection of data in the field of Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems.

- **Existing urban strategy/local plans, policies, strategic framework in place related with the policy issue**

An Integrated Urban Development Plan for the 2021-2030 cycle (PIDU) is developed. There are 5 specific development areas targeted, and some potential tech inclusion related measures are: SMART local governance, High-performance & inclusive social development and finally Smart and competitive growth

- **Known barriers & threats that the city currently faces, making it difficult to have successful local support in terms of Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems**

Barriers identified are:

- o Stigmatisation and discrimination faced by marginalised groups
- o Lack of interest from marginalised individuals to be integrated as actively involved members of the community and to be ready to be included in the labour market

Main Threat identified is:

- o Low involvement of the marginalized groups in co-creating of solutions for tech integration and for participating in activities of the ULG.

- **The precise core and more pressing aspect of the policy issue, and which local population group is it mostly affecting**

Specific challenges are related to the inclusion in the tech economy related sector of local population (including women, young student graduates, members of vulnerable groups, migrants, and Roma).

A more specific pressing aspect will be carefully explored through the first ULG meetings.

- **City ambition for the TechDiversity project**

In the current PIDU there are concerns of socio-economic integration, but the digi-tech part was not identified as a distinct solution.

The experience & knowledge gathered both within the local group and within the partners network will facilitate the exploration of potential solutions for using resources (human, financial etc.). The identified measures could be integrated within local strategies, both in the field of digitalisation and of classic social services.

2.5.2 Core challenge & possible focus of Bucharest Integrated Action Plan

District 6 will act as a facilitator or coordinator based on its core attributes.

The Possible focus of IAP could be to act for specific measures for integration of disadvantaged groups in the economic and social sphere without segregation and discrimination based on background, culture, history, gender etc (working groups, webinars, seminars, training sessions, think-tanks).

Also, possible integration of ULG into existing clusters of innovation at district level, also coordinated by the City Hall.

The IAP could be funded by Operational Program Intelligent Growth, Digitalization and Financial Instruments 2021-2027, as also Education and Employment Operational Program 2021-2027

2.6 Idrija

Overview

- Idrija is located in the foothills of the south-eastern Alps in Western Slovenia. Geographically the municipality of Idrija lies at the eastern edge of the Northern-Primorska (Goriška) Development Region. It is characterised by its extremely varied terrain, large differences in altitude between the various parts of the municipality, large forest areas and dispersed settlement.
- Despite the fact that location and accessibility are often mentioned as important factors for social and economic development and growth, the Municipality of Idrija is an exception here. In spite of its remoteness, it ranks among the economically above-average developed areas in Slovenia. It is probably the poorer accessibility that prevents the gravitational influence of other major centres.
- Population of Municipality: 11.757, Gender: 5.954 male, 5.803 female
- Education: primary education (level 0-2) 2.775, secondary education (level 3-4) 4.891, tertiary education (level 5-8) 2.337
- Ethnicity: Slovenians 10.715, foreign nationals 1.042
  Economic profile (latest available data - 2021)

Per capita GDP is 21.749,00 EUR Financial active population: 5.372	After the demise of mining, Idrija reoriented itself into industries that are based on technical expertise. Idrija is one of the most economically developed, export-oriented and "self-sufficient" town in Slovenia, with a high percentage of residents working in the same municipality.
1.092 enterprises in the municipality, employing 4,563 people and generating an income of €808,962,000.00	The unemployment rate in Idrija is traditionally much lower than the national average (2,6%).
Agriculture is not the dominant sector, but has an important role in the local economy	In Idrija are located the headquarters of two global corporations Kolektor and Hidria. They are suppliers for automotive industries, developing industrial technologies and active in construction energetics, and products for the home.
There are more workplaces (5.452) in the municipality than working population (5372; 3037 male and 2335 female), so the municipality has a positive commuting ratio with more employees coming into the municipality from elsewhere	Idrija is a traditional industrial society with a prevailing secondary sector attracting high-profile technical experts on the one hand, and unskilled and semiskilled workers from the wider region on the other
	The main challenge that Idrija is facing today is its mono-structured economy and two other problems that could threaten the town's long-term development lack of space for further development and poor accessibility

Idrija City highlight
The headquarters of two global corporations Kolektor and Hidria, being flagships companies for the city.

2.6.1 Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems core conclusions

- **General challenges in relation to the TechDiversity policy issue tackled**
  - The need for better digital inclusion – equitable, meaningful, and safe access to use, lead, and design of digital technologies, services, data and associated opportunities for every resident of Idrija
  - Promotion of diversity in technology since local tech and digital industry is men dominated
  - Shortage of people in professional occupations related to the technology and digital industry (local companies struggle for a relatively small part of the workforce in the technology sector)
  - Knowledge-based digital and tech entrepreneurship and startup initiatives are still underdeveloped
  - Diverse or underrepresented groups often face challenges in accessing mentorship, funding, support, community spaces and networks necessary for starting and growing tech startups.

- **Position of the city in terms of tackling Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems**

Idrija officers (like all partners) do no keep any data. There is a plan to address this aspect during the project lifetime, and Idrija will seek to obtain certain information.

Idrija's position in terms of diversity and inclusion in digital and technological knowledge-based ecosystems depends on a number of factors, such as: <u>the local demographic situation</u> (ageing population, increased immigration, outmigration of youth,), <u>the local economy</u> (is monocultural; presence of the technology industry – male-dominated employment), <u>low unemployment rates</u> (different available jobs bring less entrepreneurship and self-initiative), <u>local policies</u> (Idrija Smart Community Strategy, Idrija Municipality Sustainable Development Strategy), <u>education and training</u> (availability of quality training programmes also in digital and technology related fields, motivational, specialist training, networking, promotion, professional entrepreneurship support and counselling), access to resources (availability of co-working spaces), <u>community and networking</u> (local networks and startup community, meetings, events), <u>infrastructure and accessibility</u> (proximity to the capital and other regional centres, accessible public transport), <u>reputation of the city</u>.

- **Existing urban strategy/local plans, policies, strategic framework in place related with the policy issue**

There are no existing strategies or plans in place closely related with the policy issue.

A strategy for the "Local development of Local action group LAS s CILjem" is in preparation and the "Innovative Strategy for the Sustainable Development of the Municipality of Idrija" includes some chapters related with the policy issue.

- **Known barriers & threats that the city currently faces, making it difficult to have successful local support in terms of Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems**

Known barriers identified: lack of awareness and understanding of the topics, some existing stereotypes, recruitment and employment challenges, resource constraints, lack of data and statistics, insufficient cooperation from large local companies.

No threats identified.

- **The precise core and more pressing aspect of the policy issue, and which local population group is it mostly affecting**

A precise more pressing aspect is not identified, although it is clear that it is connected with the Idrija's local economy and the vulnerability it poses to the local community and most importantly to specific population groups and their opportunities.

A pressing aspect will be carefully explored through the first ULG meetings in 2024.

- **City ambition for the TechDiversity project**

The city of Idrija could do more to connect under-represented groups of the population (not only women, but wider under-represented groups) with employment and entrepreneurial opportunities in the digital and technological fields.

2.6.2 Core challenge & possible focus of Idrija Integrated Action Plan

The greatest local challenge for Idrija is the lack of economic diversity based on a strong dependence on two flagship companies and almost full employment, which in turn brings vulnerability of its local economy and most importantly of specific population groups. The city will address the opportunities of diversity and inclusion in knowledge-based digital and technological local ecosystems on local populations and its future economy.

The IAP will focus on at least on one of the local challenges identified with the local authority taking on roles to create a more inclusive and diverse digital ecosystem.

The IAP could be funded by 2 funding options that are available: municipal budget or national funds.

2.7 Larnaka

Overview

• Larnaka is located on the southeastern coast of Cyprus. It is the third largest city of the island covering an area of approximately 32,5 Km2 and with a population of 84,900 inhabitants according to the census of 2021.

• Larnaka significantly supports the economy of Cyprus. This tourist resort has a commercial port & an international airport. Is home to most of the industries of Cyprus.

• Larnaka is becoming a modern, European municipality, with upgraded existing and new infrastructure, with services to its residents and visitors that highlight its advantages, turning it into an attractive place to live, to do business and a unique tourist destination.

• The service sector, including tourism, employs three-quarters of Larnaka's labour force. Many travel and tour operators and other travel-related companies have a head office Larnaka.

• The city is hosting various ethnicities from Europe, Asia & Africa

• Unemployed citizens (%): 11%

Economic profile (latest available data)

Per capita GDP is 27.000 (2022)	The economy of Larnaka contributes heavily to the economy of Cyprus. Also, Cyprus has achieved the third-highest position in terms of per capita GDP in the European Union after Luxembourg and Malta
Financial active population: 54%	The municipality is very active in economic activities providing additional incomes (central market, parking areas)
Primary sector: 1.9% Secondary Production Sector: 14.9% Third Production Sector: 83.2%	The tourism industry is playing a vital role in contributing to the economy of Cyprus. The tourist inflow from all parts of Europe to Cyprus is showing gradual growth
Education: 15.917 Secondary first stage or less: M. 7.074 / F. 8.843 13.337 - Secondary second stage: M. 6.738 / F. 6.599 8.142 - Tertiary: M. 3.912 / F. 4.230 94 Not stated: M. 46 / F. 48	Larnaka's economy has been growing since 1975, after the loss of the Port of Famagusta, which handled 80% of general cargo, and the closure of Nicosia International Airport, meant that Larnaka's airport and seaport had increasingly important roles in the economy of the island. A €650m upgrade of Larnaka Airport has been completed

Larnaka City highlight

The unified development of the Marina Port as well as the complete relocation of the oil and gas facilities are expected to completely differentiate the role of Larnaka at a Local and Regional level.

2.7.1 Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems core conclusions

• **General challenges in relation to the TechDiversity policy issue tackled**

The Municipality's goal is to make Larnaka a humane and functional city for its citizens, with the vision unfolding through the triptych: Larnaka humane and functional for its citizens, welcoming to its local and foreign visitors and attractive to investors and entrepreneurship.

The main concern of Larnaka for the TechDiversity project is to implement policies or practices related with the policy issue that do not have negative effects on the local community.

The challenge for Larnaka is to facilitate any initiative that will lead to a more inclusive digital ecosystem, involving marginalised and minoritized community groups in terms of diversity and inclusion.

• **Position of the city in terms of tackling Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems**

Larnaka officers (like all partners) have no recent data available to report the city's position in addressing Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems.

The Municipality established recently the CMMI research centre, that is acting as a structural support for the city development needs and will support the city in similar activities in the near future. Larnaka will work on this direction also in collaboration with the local universities (private and public).

• **Existing urban strategy/local plans, policies, strategic framework in place related with the policy issue**

There are no local plans focusing on the project issue, beside the national strategies.

- **Known barriers & threats that the city currently faces, making it difficult to have successful local support in terms of Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems**

The main barriers that Larnaka is facing currently, that makes it difficult for the city to successfully support Diversity and Inclusion in knowledge-based digital and technological ecosystems, is the political will from the central government, that mainly decides the means to support the digital and technological ecosystems of Cyprian cities. In addition, a barrier is the financial cost that Larnaka has to bear for any supporting activities om the policy issue as local authority.

The main threat that the city currently faces is the lack of skills from the project team on the specific policy issue, expected to be supported by an external expert.

- **The precise core and more pressing aspect of the policy issue, and which local population group is it mostly affecting**

The aim of the Municipality is to find the way of integration, either through international relations and the exchange of good practices or through the internal evaluation and strategic analysis of the local contexts and needs of each entity.

Larnaka is initially planning to focus on young scientists related with tech and digital sector to be upskilled, as to be prepared for the operation of the expected unified development of the Marina Port.

- **City ambition for the TechDiversity project**

The role of the Municipality should be the promotion of good or even bad practices, the exchange of experiences, acquired through the implementation of TechDiversity. The Municipality can draw up joint strategies between the companies and play a catalytic role in their implementation.

2.7.2 Core challenge & possible focus of Larnaka Integrated Action Plan

A core challenge for Larnaka is improving diversity & inclusion policies in Digital and Technological Ecosystems based on Knowledge that are related with human skills and job opportunities with specific facilitating actions. The IAP could be funded by the Cyprian Operational Program 2021-2027 – EU Structural Funds.

2.8 Psahna

Overview

- Psahna is a small town, about 15 km north of Chalkida in Evvoia.
- The population is mainly engaged in agriculture and animal husbandry and the main products are vegetables and forestry.
- Today, just before the entrance to Psahna, from Chalkida, are the facilities of the Branch of the University of Athens, where five departments of the Foundation operate.
- Municipality of Difyon-Messapeia: Total population 8.207 M / 7.727 F and the city of Psahna total population 5.721
- Ethnicity: Greek citizenship: 17.124, Other/No/Unknown citizenship: 1.676
- Unemployed people: 1.456 (municipality level)
- University Students: 2.780

Economic profile (latest available data - 2021)

Per capita GDP is 13.415 EUR (for year 2020) in Evvoia	Agricultural production includes olive oil and olives, honey, fir and aromatic plants, vines from which wine and tsipouro are produced, dried figs. Dairy products such as cheese and yoghurt are also produced. There are fish farms (31 floating units) on the coast of Evvoia, and fishing is also widespread in the coastal areas. The fishing fleet of Evvoia accounted for 6% of the total fishing fleet of Greece.
Employed by economic activity: •Total: 6.067	Workplace: •Senior managers and administrators: 286

• Agriculture, forestry, fishing: 1.600 • Construction: 444 • Wholesale and retail trade - repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles: 891 • Transport and storage: 286 • Accommodation and food service activities: 349 • Administrative and support service activities: 162 • Public administration and defense - compulsory social security: 326 • Education: 236 • Human health & social work activities: 145 • Other sectors: 1.628	• Professionals: 376 • Technicians and related professionals: 278 • Office workers: 332 • Service and sales workers: 936 • Skilled farmers, stockbreeders, foresters, and fishermen: 938 • Skilled craftsmen and related professionals: 836 • Industrial plant, machinery and equipment operators and assemblers (assemblers): 706 • Unskilled workers, manual workers, and small tradesmen: 1.379

Psahna City highlight

The University (NKUA) students are almost exclusively in the age group of 18-25 among the city's inhabitants.

2.8.1 Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems core conclusions

- **General challenges in relation to the TechDiversity policy issue tackled**

While the University can attract talented students from diverse backgrounds, it is more difficult to retain them in the local area after graduation, since there are limited job opportunities in the technology sector. Most of the graduates migrate to bigger cities (e.g., Athens) and abroad to pursue a career relevant to their studies.

Employees from different backgrounds could bring their own unique perspectives and experiences, which can help to transform Psahna into a more inclusive and resilient city by generating new and innovative ideas.

- **Position of the city in terms of tackling Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems**

Municipality of Diphyon-Messapeia does not keep or monitor any indicators in relation to Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge- based Digital and tech Ecosystems.

The TechDiversity policy issue has never been explored in Psahna. The labour market even in a small city like Psahna is evolving due to technological advancements, creating a need for new skills among diverse future workers. It's important to ensure that women have equal opportunities to benefit from the increasing demand for STEM/AI professionals. Providing programs that help women to reskill and upskill, can help them enter these fields. The University of Athens should take action to reduce and eliminate the existing gender gaps in access to these skills and job opportunities.

Psahna's position in terms of diversity and inclusion in digital and technological knowledge-based ecosystems depends on a number of factors, such as the five University Departments, local demographic situation, local economy, local policies, education and training programmes, access to resources community and networking infrastructure and accessibility.

- **Existing urban strategy/local plans, policies, strategic framework in place related with the policy issue**

No strategy/local plans, policies, strategic framework are in place.

Also, no national and regional development plans, strategy, or existing operational programmes in relation to the specific local challenge are in place too.

- **Known barriers & threats that the city currently faces, making it difficult to have successful local support in terms of Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems**

Identified barriers: Lack of awareness and understanding of the topics, some existing stereotypes, recruitment and employment challenges, resource constraints, lack of data and statistics, lack of entrepreneurial accelerators, lack of big technology companies in the city of Psahna.

Not threats identified beside the talent drain of the University students.

- **The precise core and more pressing aspect of the policy issue, and which local population group is it mostly affecting**

Aspects of the policy issue concern Under-representation of women, Ageing population/workforce, Youth outmigration, and University graduates/senior year students.

It concerns people that combine one or more of the above-mentioned characteristics: For example, a female young migrant that just graduated from the University that is in Psahna and is looking for employment.

A specific pressing aspect will be carefully explored through the first ULG meetings in 2024.

- **City ambition for the TechDiversity project**

TechDiversity project is an opportunity to share experiences, to see what works, and to gain deeper understanding of the diversity and inclusion issues that small towns like Psahna should be addressing from other partners with more experience in supporting diverse communities to find pathways to employment in tech industries.

2.8.2 Core challenge & possible focus of Psahna Integrated Action Plan

The main focus of the IAP will be the involvement and connection of the University with the local community of Psahna, the Municipality and the nearby large cities (e.g., Chalkida). The aim will be to develop employment opportunities for graduates of the University's departments in the local community, with particular attention to compliance with diversity and inclusion regulations regardless of gender identity, ethnicity, economic profile, race, etc.

Furthermore, in this context the IAP will focus on supporting any member of the local community to develop entrepreneurial activity related to the technology sector.

Finally, the third axis of the IAP will be to ensure that retraining opportunities are developed for all under-represented social groups, in consultation with technology companies in the region, to provide the necessary skills and knowledge to enable these groups to find jobs.

The IAP will also raise awareness among society about the importance of diversity in the technology sector. The IAP could be funded by European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) or ESF 2021-2027, as also municipal budget, national funds, or other available structural funds.

Section 3: Synthesis, Methodology and Network Roadmap

3.0 Introduction

The State-of-the-Art chapter shows the opportunities & importance of urban planning in improving diversity and inclusion in tech & digital industry in all TechDiversity cities. The 8 partners profiles & all prior city visits clearly showed the shared policy challenges, learning needs, as well as the potential for policy improvements in all cities.

Recognition of the potential benefits and opportunities which a shift to a more diverse digital ecosystem could provide at local level (even in small cities) is not new.

The cities' majority are in less and more developed regions, and most of them share their challenges around pressing local issues like economic decline and absence of industry, brain drain, shrinking population and working in the shadow of larger neighbouring cities.

The partners are at different stages of their policy issue learning needs and most of them offer expertise and knowledge in a variety of different topics.

Section 3 is a synthesis providing an overview of the network's proposed methodology for achieving good results and a Network Roadmap to guide progress. It sets out the work programme for the next 2 years and refines the issues to be addressed (possible sub-themes) at both the transnational and partner levels.

The synthesis presents a **consolidated picture of the quantitative and mostly qualitative data outlined in the previous two sections.** It summarises the respective partners' positions to clarify the precise policy challenge to be addressed and subthemes to be explored by the network.

The idea was to help the network to avoid too large/ too ambitious thematic coverage, to facilitate a common understanding of the policy issue and to ensure consistency across the partnership. **The synthesis highlights differences, gaps, and complementarities in terms of knowledge and experiences and how these will be tackled.**

This concluding section **sets out the Methodology & the Network Roadmap.** This part draws out the subthemes that the network will address, including how they will be explored in the transnational exchange with a summary of the learning needs & potential contributions across all partners. It details the exchange, learning & capacity building methodologies proposed. It gives an **overview of the potential focus** of all the Integrated Action Plans, orientations for the URBACT Local Groups across the partnership and how the network will support them to achieve their objectives.

This Network Roadmap provides an overview by outlining all partners respective ambitions, objectives, stakeholders mapping, timeline of activities, including links with transnational and local activities (testing actions), key milestones and deliverables, potential risks in order to monitor and report IAP progress.

All partner cities demonstrated a strong commitment to fully undertake the proposed activities, followed by a strong political support, an executive support, and appropriate human resources (various municipality directorates, experts, and city stakeholders in each city ULG).

The nature & scope of URBACT is clear for all partners: to develop an action plan following the URBACT integrated & participatory approach, based on the transnational exchange. These action plans will hopefully be funded from any available sources.

3.1 Synthesis

The project includes 4 stages: Activation, Action Planning, Planning Implementation and Finale to present the results to wider audience.

This Synthesis draws upon the projects' State of the Art, 8 Partner Profiles, 8 city visits for the Baseline Study needs and the consolidation of the partners, 2 network meetings and all other baseline activities, inputs, and documents (Stage 1) and uses these all in formulating the critical conclusions and finally the proposed methodology approach for Stages 2,3 and 4.

3.1.1 The TechDiversity Cities Opportunity

The state of the art for the **Topic 1** in all cities demonstrated the significant under-representation of women and of various minority groups (different for each partner) in the technology and digital industry, as in many European cities. As for the **Topic 2**, startups in all partner cities are mostly owned by male founder teams, while members of various minority groups of well-educated citizens are not able almost at all, to enter the local or regional digital and tech ecosystems.

"The TechDiversity Cities network is both diverse and inclusive, both in its constituent partner cities and on the ground within its various ULG formations. The network provides us with the opportunity to bring together businesses, local governments, startups & larger companies and of course citizen associations from across Europe, so that we can learn from each other and collectively boost our ability to speed up the transition to a more diverse and inclusive economic system in each partner city."

The TechDiversity Network will allow the involved small-medium size EU Cities to benefit from a structured and organized process of exchange and learning with peers across Europe. All of them will benefit from the tried and tested URBACT Method, which uses integrated and participatory approaches to elaborate an action plan for their cities.
All cities have the opportunity to benefit from the deep dives on the policy issue exchanges and prepare their action plans, that could strongly facilitate any local initiatives for the under-represented community groups that cannot be active in the economy ecosystem (tech and digital sector).
All cities action plans will be a very strong planning element for the partners to seek for available funding sources, since action plans will be a project main output following the participatory approach.

Peer to peer learning and knowledge transfer within TechDiversity Network will accelerate the transnational dissemination of effective practices on our selected policy issue, as also incentives and case examples. Through our work to support local minorities, we intend to help foster a collaborative ethos within our partner cities. We will also share our TechDiversity

Roadmap for this transition with cities throughout Europe and invite them to follow us on our journey through TechDiversity dissemination activities.

Finally, all activities planned with the involvement of local stakeholders and citizens have a strongly expected social effect. Small and Medium Municipalities are also there to discuss local minorities' needs and barriers to job opportunities and to facilitate any possible actions of the authorities that are mainly responsible for the policy issue in employment and entrepreneurship.

3.1.2 The TechDiversity Cities core quantitative characteristics overview.

The partners are not highly diverse in terms of their size (beside Bucharest D6 and Psahna) and their territorial characteristics. They are more diverse mainly in their socio economic and policy contexts. This diversity gives us the opportunity to follow a broad methodology & to develop the Roadmap and directions for a variety of actions expected to be included in the cities action plans. The following charts & tables provide a useful overview of the cities' core quantitative characteristics.
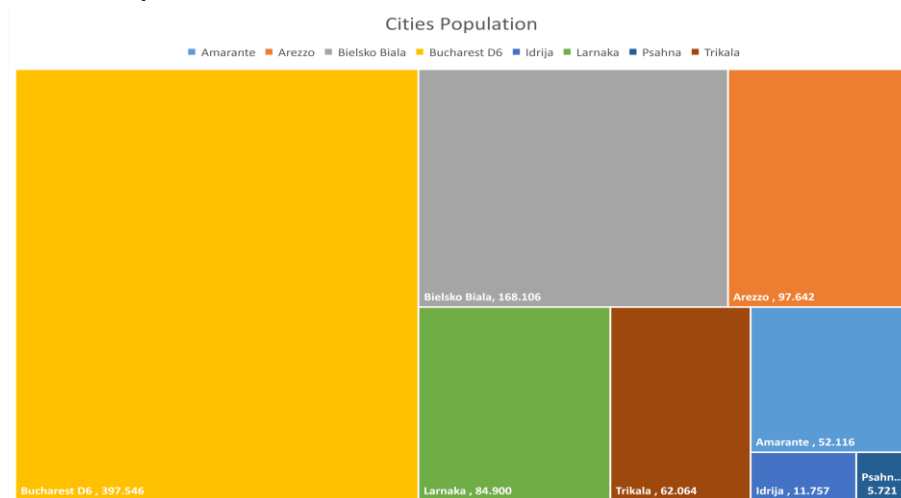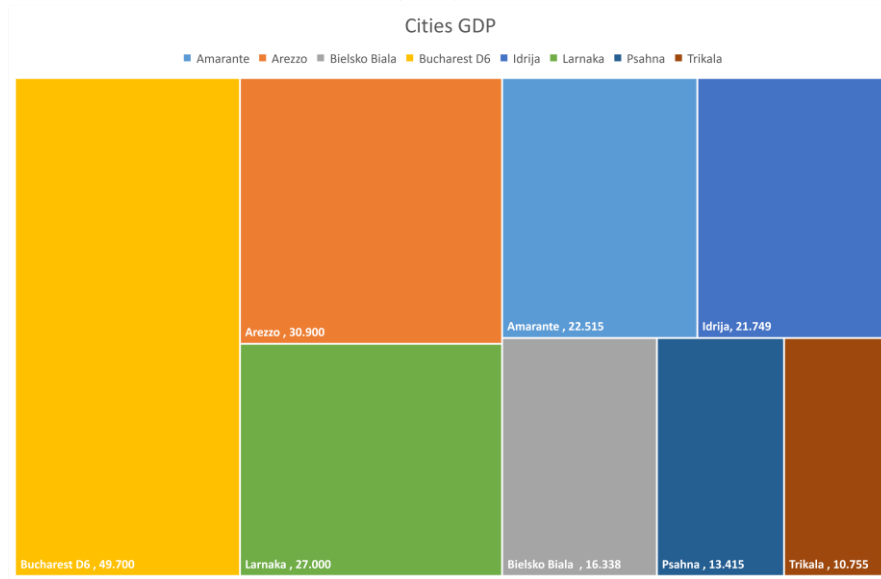
Chart 1 – Population

Chart 2 – Unemployment

Chart 3 – Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

Cities GDP

Amarante   Arezzo   Bielsko Biala   Bucharest D6   Idrija   Larnaka   Psahna   Trikala

Arezzo , 30.900 — Amarante , 22.515 — Idrija, 21.749 — Bucharest D6 , 49.700 — Larnaka , 27.000 — Bielsko Biala , 16.338 — Psahna , 13.415 — Trikala , 10.755

3.1.3 The TechDiversity Cities starting points, challenges, learning – capacity building needs & pressing aspects for Stages 2-4

A **clear conclusion** is agreed after the city visits and the discussions with all partners: **Based on the existing institutional framework of their operation in each country, the participating organisations are not directly responsible for entrepreneurship & employment issues, that is the reason why numerical data related with the TechDiversity policy issue are not available in any partner city.**

On the other hand, the partners can be very supportive to improve the position of diverse community groups in tech and digital sector, acting through the TechDiversity project as facilitators in between the local stakeholders that will be strongly involved in the process.

Two of them are development agencies and one is a university, while other 3 partners are being supported by local supporting structures, that are experienced on specific items of the policy issue. Bucharest D6 and Larnaka will be supported by external experts to approach the policy issue from the same perspective, as the rest partners.

Approach **Following these critical conclusions, the synthesis approach is based mostly in core qualitive remarks on the partners summarized profiles and inputs provided & collected through the activation stage tools.**
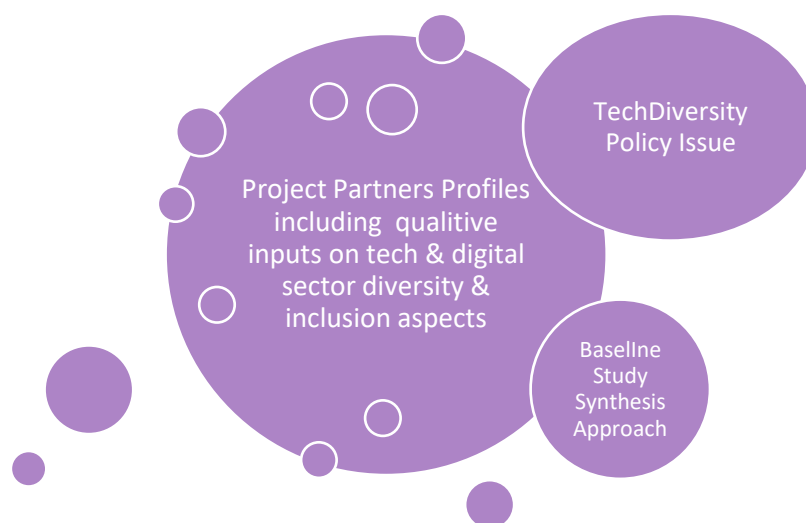

Figure 3.1 Synthesis Approach

Table 3.0 Partnership Overview related with the pressing aspects & initial action plan focus.

City	Unemployment Rate (%)	Pressing Aspect of the local financial ecosystem	Pressing Aspect of the TechDiversity policy issue & Minority Group(s) in tech & digital sectors	Action Plan Focus (Policy Domain)
Trikala	19.60	Economic decline, absence of industry	The age group 18-33 will be the main group that will be examined	The action plan can contribute so that Trikala can be characterized as a sustainable, resilient, and inclusive city
Amarante	9.42	Work in the shadow of a larger neighbouring city	The city faces a challenge in facilitating the reskilling & upskilling of women workers in the tech sector. Existing programs may not effectively cater to their unique needs, leading to underrepresentation in tech roles	The action plan will focus on key aspects to address tech inclusion, with the local authority taking on roles as implementers, facilitators, and enablers to create a more inclusive and diverse tech ecosystem
Bielsko Biala	1.70	Technology & modern business services Sectors scaling up needs	Four main groups are initially indicated in terms of their need of their better connection to employment and entrepreneurship opportunities: Women, migrants, seniors, and young people	The action plan will probably focus on 4 key aspects: -facilitation the cooperation among institutions interested in the issue – business, education, community, BSOs, NGOs, -raise awareness activities -workshops, trainings, events, -connecting the dots – find what is already on the market, create synergies and bring added value
Larnaka	11.00	Brain drain	Larnaka is initially planning to focus on young scientists related with tech and digital sector to be upskilled, as to be prepared for the operation of the expected unified development of the Marina Port	Initiatives to support upskilling scientists through vocational training courses in tech and digital sectors
Psahna	17.70	Economic decline, absence of industry	Aspects of the policy issue concern Under-representation of women, Ageing population/workforce, Youth outmigration, and University graduates/senior year students.	The main focus of the action plan will be the involvement & connection of the University with the local community of Psahna, the Municipality and the nearby large cities
Arezzo	7.40	Brain drain	Young people including those with disabilities and of other groups socially isolated such as women and other, to the tech and digital sectors' employment offer and related entrepreneurship opportunities	The action plan will include concrete actions to facilitate access to the tech and digital sectors' employment offer and related entrepreneurship opportunities mainly for young (and including disabled people)
Idrija	2.60	Work in the shadow of a larger neighbouring city	A precise more pressing aspect is not identified, although it is clear that it is connected with the Idrija's local economy and the vulnerability it poses to the local community.	The action plan will focus on at least one of the local challenges identified, with the local authority taking on roles to create a more inclusive and diverse digital ecosystem
Bucharest District 6	0.53	Few tech companies have activities in the district	Specific challenges are related to the inclusion in the tech economy related sector of local population (including women, young student graduates, members of vulnerable groups, migrants, and Roma)	The possible focus of the action plan could be to act for specific measures for integration of disadvantaged groups in the economic and social sphere without segregation and discrimination

The table 3.1 as included in the Appendix (AP2.1) summarizes all partners **core position** in terms of challenges, learning and capacity building needs, as also their pressing aspect of the policy issue. The common denominators between the partners that are already on the table are:

Core Common Challenges

- To introduce technology diversity into urban planning by supporting diverse community groups.
- To work on strategic outreach efforts to disseminate knowledge and advocate for tech inclusion, as also to facilitate initiatives that will lead to a more inclusive digital ecosystem.
- To leverage technology as to create a more inclusive society.

Core common learning and capacity building needs

- To introduce technology diversity into urban planning by supporting diverse community groups.
- Diversity training, awareness, inclusive leadership, diversity, and cities as job opportunities facilitators.
- Tools and methods to support diverse groups in entrepreneurship.
- Case examples and good practices of supporting structures experience.
- Creative actions to support diverse population groups.
- New tools and methods for effective policymaking.

Core pressing aspects of the policy issue (in priority order)

- Young scientists – professionals up to 30.
- Women workers in the tech – digital sector.
- People with disabilities
- Migrants.

Despite the differences between cities' learning needs within TechDiversity network, they all share many similar challenges in dealing with their ambition to be active on the policy issue, to facilitate any future activities in the local level, to introduce diversity & inclusion in tech & digital sector, and mainly, to raise awareness to change the mentality of the citizens.

3.1.4 The TechDiversity Cities potential contributions, ambitions, thematic interest, action plan focus and more.

The tables 3.3 & 3.4 as included in the Appendix (AP2.1) summarize all partners **core position** in terms of differences, gaps, and complementarities of knowledge and experience of the partners. They also summarise the findings into highlights. The exercise that accumulates these findings was conducted during the 1st core network meeting and complemented - confirmed the initial assumptions by the Lead Expert.

The **key comparative information** relevant for understanding and for making links with the overall thematic scope of TechDiversity and the proposed menu of network exchange and learning activities (the roadmap) are following:

Key potential contribution by the partners in terms of experience and practice

- E-Trikala is very experienced in URBACT projects and Action Planning Networks methodologies.
- Amarante has in place a knowledge-based digital and tech ecosystem in the city.
- Bielsko Biala has a lot of experiences in digital entrepreneurship, as also in tech ecosystems.
- The University of Athens has huge experience from its professional involvement in the technology industry.
- Arezzos' consolidated good practices can bring an added value to the project.

Key elements in partners ambition for the project expected results.

- Most partners are interested in introducing diversity into digitization and urban planning.
- All partners are looking for change & seek to achieve better results in various aspects related to Diversity and Inclusion.
- Bielsko Biala, Larnaka and Arezzo are very interested in boosting local economy through the development of tech sector, especially IT.
- All partners have the ambition to act as facilitators to boost diversity, inclusion and job opportunities in their digital ecosystems.

Key challenges to be addressed in ULGs, connected with the proposed methodology.

- Improving diversity & inclusion policies in Digital and Technological Ecosystems.
- Access to technology for all.
- A mix of the difficulties from the perspective of minorities in finding a job, wage inequality, lack of access to C-level positions, and under-qualified works.
- Improve the indicators related to youth entrepreneurship.
- Explore available opportunities of diversity and inclusion in knowledge-based digital and technological local ecosystems.

Potential focus of all partners' action plans related with the upcoming learning activities.

- To address tech and digital inclusion to a specific minority group

Key expected results for all partners connected with the proposed methodology.

- To better position the four identified diverse community groups to employment and entrepreneurship opportunities in tech and digital sectors

Ideas for Testing Actions related with the upcoming learning activities.

- Trikala, Amarante and Bielsko Biala as very experienced URBACT partners have identified possible testing actions to explore more the local content of the policy issue, like diversity workshops, local talent mapping, world café exchanges with startups and more.
- A testing action is not identified during the activation stage for the rest partnership and for this reason a specific plan is set, to support the partnership (starting early in 2024) by an ad hoc expert.

Table 3.2 highlights the main differences, gaps, and complementarities among partners in terms of knowledge & experiences and how these will be tackled, as also among each city's starting point.

City	Differences	Gaps	Complementarities with other partners	Tackle options
Trikala	Being a Smart City, Trikala has extended experience in similar policy issues	Lack of tech ecosystem	With Amarante and Bielsko Biala	Advantages from the city's' long experience in similar projects and the GISEMI Hub operation
Amarante	A strong start-ups supporting structure has deep knowledge on the policy issue	No gaps identified	With Trikala and Bielsko Biala	-
Bielsko Biala	Position of women in tech sector is examined & Barometer of Occupations 2023	How to include diversity and inclusion - in relation to digital and tech ecosystems - in strategic framework of the city	With Trikala and Amarante	TechDiversity Stages 2 & 3 exchanges
Larnaka	The city has many differences from the rest partners, due to the city location and the Cyprian economic ecosystem	The ULG could be considered as unstable	No	TechDiversity Stages 2 & 3 exchanges
Psahna	The city has many differences from the rest partners, due to its small size and agricultural direction. The city on the other side, has a strong influence from the University Campus community	The ULG could be considered as lacking knowledge on the policy issue	No	TechDiversity Stages 2 & 3 exchanges
Arezzo	Strong local vocational training system on IT technologies	Lack of tech ecosystem	With Idrija and Bucharest	TechDiversity Stages 2 & 3 exchanges
Idrija	Idrija mono-structured economy due to the two huge global corporations' operation that influences the policy issue approach	The ULG could be considered as lacking knowledge on the policy issue	With Arezzo	TechDiversity Stages 2 & 3 exchanges
Bucharest District 6	Although being the biggest city of the network, D6 has no specific prior knowledge on the policy issue	Knowledge on the policy issue possibly coming from the big companies located in the district	With Amarante	TechDiversity Stages 2 & 3 exchanges & through possible exchanges with the big IT companies

3.1.5 TechDiversity Mission

The Mission of TechDiversity, is to understand the 'what's and whys' of diversity and inclusion in local digital ecosystems. It has already started during Stage 1 and all cities will be supported until 2025 to understand the different characteristics and communities within their populations and what it takes to create inclusive and diverse digital ecosystems.

3.1.6 TechDiversity Vision

The TechDiversity Vision as discussed and agreed during the 1st stage core meeting in Trikala, is: **TechDiversity cities ensured that all members of the community can participate in each city's digital ecosystem and manage to connect specific minority community groups to employment and entrepreneurship opportunities in the digital and tech sectors.**

3.1.7 TechDiversity Themes

Following the partners' inputs **the themes that evolved as the overarching topics**, on which TechDiversity will focus, are following and depicted in next Figure:
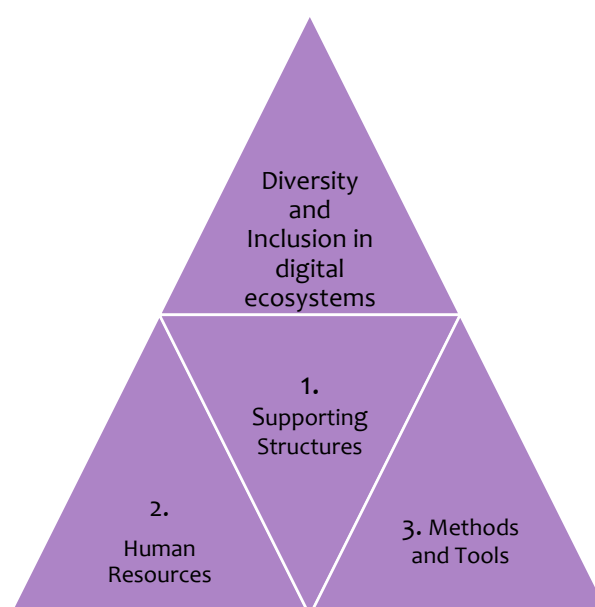

Figure 3.2 – TechDiversity Themes of focus

Table 3.5: TechDiversity Themes Description

No	Theme	Description
1	**Supporting structures**	Local – regional or national structures for vocational education and training, job employment supporting centres, pre-acceleration, acceleration, investment readiness activities
2	**Human resources**	Professionals, experts, or trained staff working at supporting structures that are mentoring, coaching, and peer-supporting individuals, groups, or thematic networks for inclusive and equitable economic opportunities in cities
3	**Methods and Tools**	Methods and tools used by the supporting structures or/and other organisations to boost skills and enhance employment opportunities and entrepreneurship for various community groups like labs, world cafes, open seminars – workshop, networking activities, gamification, peer-to-peer learning, social learning, mentoring, job searching methods, social media focused activation, career days etc. Methods and Tools will function as Enablers for a more diverse digital ecosystem

3.2 Methodology

TechDiversity partners have practically self-evaluated their learning and capacity building needs through the Stage 1 Methodology, as also their expertise and good practises that could be useful contributions to the Network level (Table 3.3).

The methodology following is to produce an evidence base that provides the foundations for exchange and learning, capacity building and the development of Integrated Action Plans of all partners.

3.2.1 Methodology Flow and TechDiversity Rationale as an Integrated Approach

The baseline city visits, the Lead Expert continuous exchanges with the partners and the strategy meetings with the Lead Partner project team, concluded to an **agreed methodology** in project level, to focus on three main themes mentioned above.

Partners will facilitate employment opportunities and entrepreneurship in their digital ecosystems having diversity and inclusion as a 4th, but clearly crosscutting theme that will be a transversal, recurrent theme for all cities.

Each city has obviously a different starting point of experiences in the 3 TechDiversity Themes. However, the 1st stage baseline process highlighted some essential building blocks, common to most cities.

Methods and Tools will function as Enablers for a more diverse digital ecosystem in each city.

Methods and Tools will be a transversal, recurrent theme for all cities in Stages 2 & 3. The Methods and Tools theme approach during Stages 2 & 3 **will feed** each partner's proposed Integrated Action Plan. This systematic process will allow partners to clearly elaborate a plan that could be really useful to tackle at least the core city challenges on the TechDiversity policy issue.

The Methodology includes some links to former URBACT APNs like IoTxChange, Active Citizens, TechRev, Gendered Landscape, Resourceful Cities, DigiPlace and Health Cities.

<div align="center">

Methodology Flow

</div>

A strong suggestion is already in place by the Lead Expert: **Starting from early steps of Stage 2, all partners should put themselves in the position of a critical facilitator to improve the position of specific under-represented diverse groups (as the most pressing aspect) in their local employment and entrepreneurship digital ecosystem.**

The next simple graph concisely summarises the overall methodology flow of the Network Stages 2-4.
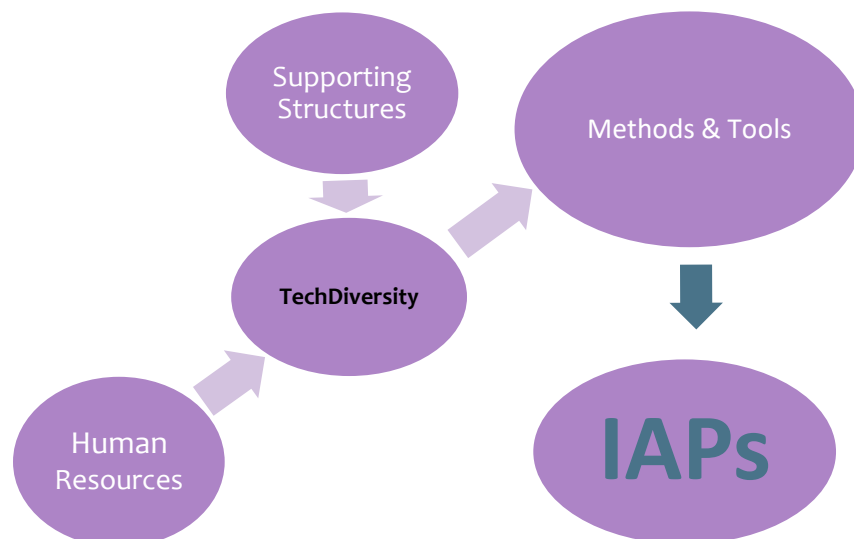

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Figure 3.3   TechDiversity Methodology Themes Graph

</div>

An agreed project rationale is also in place:

TechDiversity Rationale

The TechDiversity Network is about small and medium cities (except Bucharest D6).

aiming to facilitate actions for more diverse and more inclusive local digital ecosystems.

The Integrated Approach

The TechDiversity Methodology ensures that all activities and results foreseen, address both the technical and social aspects of diversity in tech and digital ecosystems, in an integrated way.

3.2.2 Project Results

A main result expected for all cities by the end of the project is to clearly understand what it takes to create inclusive and diverse digital ecosystems. In addition: **TechDiversity will provide the basis and a minimum set of tools of a more diverse and inclusive digital ecosystem in each partner city, that can support & facilitate minority groups in the fields of entrepreneurship & employment of digital and tech business.**

3.2.3 Capacity Building Tools, Exchanges and Workplan

TechDiversity Lead Expert developed a Workplan with the contribution of the Lead Partner project team and inputs from the project partners. The Workplan was finalized and approved at the core network meeting in Trikala, and it includes activities for the project partners' capacity building and peer-learning needs around the joint transnational and local policy challenges. These activities will directly support the development of the IAPs.

Some clear links were observed between the previous experience of TechDiversity cities, as also between the sub-themes that each partner wishes to focus on, during Stages 2 & 3. In some cases, partners wish to build on their existing expertise in specific areas, while in others they wish to develop capability in new areas.

TechDiversity will take a coaching and facilitating approach to learning and exchange.

The main TechDiversity Network Meeting Exchange Tools **for transnational exchange & learning comprised are:**

i. **Plenary Workshop**

The core transnational learning & exchange tool for participants to develop specific soft skills, useful for successful implementation of the project.

ii. **Policy Seminar (by LE and ad hoc experts or/and external speakers)**

Thematic challenges for cities to be discussed in a global and European context.

iii. **Masterclass by external speaker or/and ad hoc experts**

Specific topics related to diversity & inclusion to be addressed.

iv. **Site visit & Case Example & Good Practise**

Selection or combination of all 3 sub exchange tools to explore the local content and exchange among the partners.

v. **Peer Review**

Work with peers during the IAP preparation

vi. **Bi or Tri-lateral web meetings between groups of partners**

Web meetings between smaller groups of partners to tackle specific issues of common interest, allowing deeper dives.
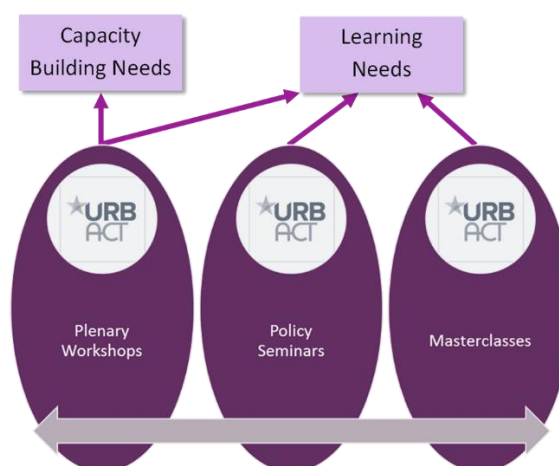
Figure 3.4   Links between TechDiversity Needs and Network Meetings' Tools

TechDiversity partners will benefit of the Stages 2 & 3 Transnational Exchange for Local Learning through an integrated approach, even all partners are starting from different points, with different experience and different challenges - goals.

Each partner <u>intended action plan focus</u> during Stages 2 & 3 is <u>their TechDiversity Driver.</u>

Much of the relevant knowledge on the 3 TechDiversity selected main themes exists within the partnership already (mainly across some core ULG members), **but a real wealth of technical expertise in relation to a more open digital ecosystem in terms of diversity and inclusion is not in place.** This expertise will be shared through the transnational project meetings through a coaching approach.

Focused and specific additional inputs from inside and outside the project is planned for Stages 2-3, as support for the development and use of integrated planning and participatory approaches within the TechDiversity cities. With the use of relevant methods and tools in the context of diversity and inclusion, we will try to help the partners to achieve their expected results.

A coaching approach to facilitating the network is crucial, in order to foster personal learning, as well as the ability to share that across local teams.

a. **Network Meetings & Exchange Tools Capacity Building Approach**
   - Network meetings (transnational level) will be animated with as much as possible interactive activities, like learning plenary workshops, seminars, open discussions, round tables, and world cafes, always balanced with relevant knowledge input from experts on the TechDiversity policy issue, from core local stakeholders and if possible, local role models.
   - TechDiversity will focus on exchanging activities as a whole capacity building group or in some cases, as subgroups.
   - In each meeting, specific time will be given to deep dive in local case studies as inspiring examples.

b. **Network Meetings & Exchange Tools Exchanges Approach outside the project**

Additional knowledge and expertise are required from outside the project level and Ad Hoc experts is expected to provide this, additionally to the LE's inputs.

Local expertise will be also used in specific transnational meetings.

The additional expertise initial requirements for TechDiversity to foster transnational learning on joint project challenges, include mainly:

   - business and economic development, including start-up support and diverse digital ecosystem development

- specific knowledge of particular solutions in recruiting people from diverse groups
- legislation and attitudes towards tech and digital companies in terms of diversity and inclusion
- detailed knowledge of diversity & inclusion challenges following the EU framework
- parallel track working in a specific focus subgroups in certain project meetings
- learnings from local meetings or similar policy issue projects
- potential links to other ongoing projects, programmes and platforms working on similar issues

Lead Partner team and Lead Expert will carefully review these initial requirements during the 1st trimester of 2024 and will explore the URBACT pool for available Ad Hoc expertise to partly meet them. As already mentioned, this may also be complemented by local expertise in certain meetings and from specific partners.

Support at Programme level could also help with particular aspects, for example drawing on the programme-level expertise and work on Gender Equality, or through general capacity building work linked to the programme methodology or capitalisation work and Knowledge Hub projects.

In Section 3.3, a GANTT chart – infographic is formulated as a visual overview of all Stages activities, based on the network transnational & local meetings.

An ULG meeting – event Is suggested (mostly) in between every project meeting. A full list of all planned project meetings in transnational level and their learning objectives is also presented in Section 3.3.

3.2.4 Sub-Themes for Network Meetings

The (non-exhaustive) sub-themes to address partners needs and challenges have been identified and agreed in project level and will be incorporated in the respective network meeting agendas. Specific contributions across all partners will be decided through a trilateral consultation between Lead Expert, Lead Partner and host city, 2 months before each network meeting. Each city Site visit & Case Example & Good Practise will be also confirmed during the same process.

Most of the learning sessions will be open for attendance by the ULG of the host city, as well as local citizens (active and interested in the local digital ecosystem improvement).
A detailed catalogue of the Network sub-themes is included as an Appendix.

- **Sub-Themes for Bi or Tri-lateral web meetings between groups of partners facilitated by the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens**

Subthemes for Bi or Tri-lateral web meetings	Partner Cities
Startups and diversity	Amarante, Trikala and Bielsko Biala
Vocational education & training for minority community groups	Arezzo and Idrija
Large scale private investments and diverse job opportunities	Bucharest & Larnaka

The webinars will be organised & facilitated by the National & Kapodistrian University of Athens and will be supported by the Lead Expert & the Lead Partner project team. The structure & duration will be flexible depending on the inputs that can be sourced. It is not anticipated that web meetings will be longer than 2,00 hours. All partner cities will be welcome to participate including their stakeholders for whom the web meeting sub-theme or topic is relevant. Subthemes, as also the duos or trios of partner cities involved will be agreed during the 1st meeting of Stage 2. The content & knowledge of all webinars are expected to be valuable for all partners' IAPs & will be presented during the project closing event of the Finale Stage.

3.2.5 Ad hoc expertise

Most of the project sub-themes will need specific expertise to be explored. The availability of ad hoc expertise included in the URBACT respective pool will be a significant input. The not exclusive sub-themes identified in this regard include:
- The value of Diversity, Inclusion & Gender Equality for more diverse new local digital ecosystems in small – medium cities.
- The impact of digital and tech sectors on more diverse future job opportunities and the urban living environment.
- Diversity and Inclusion in local digital ecosystems as Sustainable Development Goals drivers.
- Key legislation related to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion in EU level.
- Labour market integration and access to vocational training
- Public & private sector and diversity in digital ecosystems

- Tools for boosting diversity & inclusion on job opportunities in the digital ecosystem of a city
- Introduction to key concepts/trends for a more diverse & inclusive local economic development in tech & digital sector
- Local diverse ecosystems to start and scale businesses
- Small – medium Cities offering more diverse job opportunities
- United in diversity – EU moto and symbols
- Brain drain and TechDiversity policy issue
- What any diversity and inclusion policy should contain
- EU Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027

3.2.6 Local expertise

- TechDiversity will make use of identified local expertise to assist with masterclasses & deep dive in local case examples. Initially identified examples are for the cities of Amarante (IET - Tâmega Business Institute operation), Arezzo (ITS Prodigi Lab – IT and Digital Academy for young people interested in tech & digital employment careers), Bielsko Biala (FabLab Bielsko-Biała – creative space with cutting edge technologies), Idrija (ID20 Institute initiatives). Psahna (UoA campus)
- Local experts will contribute on key legislation related to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion in country level.
- Local experts will also contribute in various Thematic Challenges to be discussed in Policy Seminars

3.2.7 TechDiversity Stages

2 months city level Planning period - City TechDiversity Roadmap

From January 2024 to February 2024 all partners will prepare a simple **City TechDiversity Roadmap** which will present the activities foreseen **at city level.** Each city project team & ULG will undertake to complete a successful process to develop the Integrated Action Plan. Each city Roadmap will adopt the Network Roadmap in local level. The same partners will provide information about their good practices – case examples on a template provided by the LE.

a. Stage 2: 12 months Planning Actions

From January 2024 to December 2024 all partners will be involved in a series of activities following the Network Roadmap and their City Roadmap. Stages 2 – 3 are set for exploring solutions, practices, case studies and providing inspiration. It is also the period to engage stakeholders by testing and co-designing local actions.
The following graphic illustrates the TechDiversity Project process in Stages 2 & 3.

Figure 3.5 The TechDiversity Project process

Each partner city is expected to reach 3 core milestones during Stages 2 - 3:

1) Local Analysis: Each partner city along with their ULG will carefully explore the local digital ecosystem in terms of diversity and inclusion of minority groups.

2) Methods and Tools identification: Each partner city along with their ULG will identify those methods and tools that will be introduced in project level during 2024 and could be included in each city IAP.

3) Draft Action Plan Structure: Each partner city along with their ULG will select an initial set of actions to be included in a draft integrated action plan structure, based on the project exchanges and deep dives in the policy issue.

Regarding possible Testing Actions:
<u>Most of the partners didn't identify any testing (small scale) actions on the ground during Stage 1.</u>
Each partner will further discuss with the city's ULG for any potential testing action during the 2nd Stage 1st local meeting (details are included in Table 3.4: Cities potential Integrated Action Plan focus).
Once specific ideas that partners wish to further test are agreed in local level, will be discussed, and agreed also with the Lead Expert and will be tested during 2024, as their results to be included in the respective integrated action plans of partners.

b. Stage 3: Preparing Implementation
Finalization of the action plan, possible funding scheme and monitoring framework is foreseen for each partner for this Stage.
From January 2025 to September 2025 each partner city will verify any draft actions with a time scale for implementation and the resources to be sought for each action. Key indicators to monitor and evaluate the successful implementation will be also agreed. Thereafter the final Integrated Action Plan will be adopted and submitted to the city council of each partner city.

c. Stage 4: Network Finale

Network final event in person (small scale conference), showcasing and celebrating results, pitching to external audience are foreseen for the Finale Stage. The final event will be co-organised with the Greek NUP.

From Oct to Dec 2025 the partner cities will work together to share the knowledge gained in the process and present their Integrated Action Plans at a final event to be hosted by the University of Athens in Greece. The knowledge capitalised will be published and disseminated following the TechDiversity communication plan.

The following graph illustrates the links between Themes, Sub-themes & Topics for the preparation of partners IAPs.
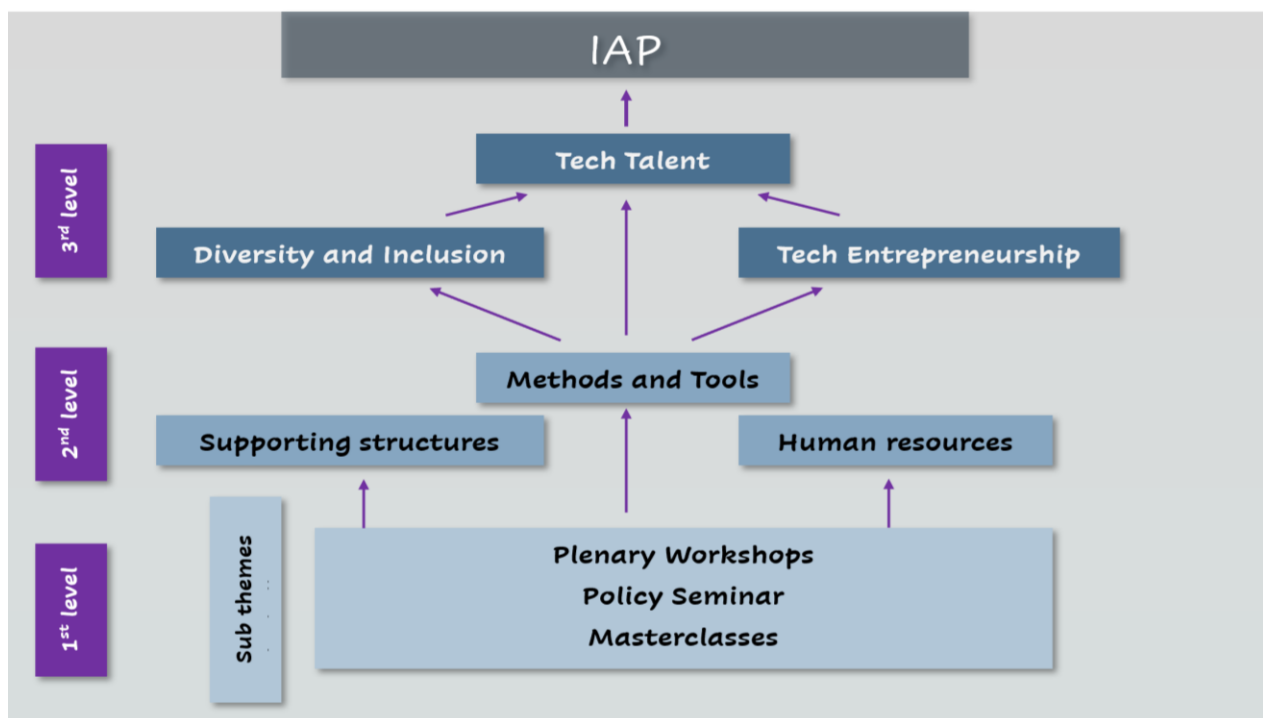

Figure 3.5 Links between TechDiversity Themes (2nd level), Sub-themes (3rd level) & Topics (1st level)
(*) Subthemes titles as included in the Appendix

3.2.8 Network Meetings in person

The TechDiversity Journey from city-to-city network meetings is presented in the following table.

Table 3.7 The TechDiversity Journey – Network Meetings

Month	City	Learning – Capacity Building Objects: Themes & Sub-themes (Exchange Tool)
		Key activities Macro aspect
		(1) Local Analysis - Planning Actions (2024) / Stage 2
03/2024	Amarante	**Project Launch for Topic 1: Tech Talent** 1. TechDiversity Methodology and Roadmap - suggested ULG Framework - Canvases & Templates (PW) 2. Introduction to The Equality Act 2010 (PS) 3. EU Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027 (PS) 4. Facilitation skills, in the context of coordinating the process and work of the ULG (PW) 5. TechDiversity IAP Training Session: Framework and Testing Actions (PW) 6. Citizens' awareness methods (PW) 7. The Bi or Tri-lateral web meetings between groups of partners (PW) (*) 8. Key legislation related to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion in EU level (PS) 9. Site visit & Case Example & Good Practice (SV-CE-GP)
06/2024	Bucharest	**Project Launch for Topic 2: Tech Entrepreneurship** 1. Guidelines on URBACT IAP & Integrated approaches (PW) 2. Deep dives on Testing Actions (PW) 3. Tools for boosting diversity & inclusion on job opportunities in the digital ecosystem of a city (PS) 4. The Diversity Charter (PS) 5. 'Brain drain' and TechDiversity policy issue (PS) 6. Public sector and diversity in digital ecosystems (M) 7. Site visit & Case Example & Good Practice (SV-CE-GP)
09/2024	Idrija	**Theme 1: Supporting Structures** 1. Introduction to key concepts/trends for a more diverse and inclusive local economic development in tech and digital sector (PS) 2. What any diversity and inclusion policy should contain (PW) 3. Potential synergies to other ongoing projects, programmes & platforms working on similar issues (PW) 4. The value of Diversity, Inclusion and Gender Equality for more diverse new local digital ecosystems in small – medium cities (PS) 5. Local diverse ecosystems to start and scale businesses (M) 6. Site visit & Case Example & Good Practice (SV-CE-GP)
12/2024	Larnaka	**Theme 2: Human Resources** 1. Introduction to key concepts/trends for a more diverse and inclusive local economic development in tech and digital sector (PW) 2. EU Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027 (PS) 3. Mid Term Review - MTR (PW) 4. How to Draft an URBACT IAP (PW) 5. Labour market integration and access to vocational training (PS) 6. Small – medium Cities offering more diverse job opportunities (M) 7. Site visit & Case Example & Good Practice (SV-CE-GP)
		(2) Methods and Tools identification - Preparing Implementation (2025) / Stage 3
04/2025	Bielsko Biala	**Theme 3: Methods and Tools** 1. Writing an Integrated Action Plan using the guidelines developed by URBACT (PW) 2. IAP Peer Review Methodology session (PW) 3. The impact of digital and tech sectors on more diverse future job opportunities and the urban living environment (PS) 4. The future of diverse workforce and the skills required to be involved in local digital ecosystems (PS)

		5. Private sector and diversity in digital ecosystems (M) 6. Site visit & Case Example & Good Practice (SV-CE-GP)
		(3) Draft IAP - Preparing Implementation (2025) / Stage 3
09/2025	Arezzo	**Deep Dives on selected Tools and Methods for IAPs** 1. Tools and Methods City Comparator (PW) 2. IAP Peer Review Closing session (PW) 3. Monitoring Framework (PW) 4. Diversity and Inclusion in local digital ecosystems as Sustainable Development Goals drivers (PS)
		(4) Finale (2025) / Stage 4
12/2025	Athens for Psahna	1. Network Results Product by LE (NRP) 2. Showcasing results (with each NUP) 3. Final Conference

(*) The Bi or Tri-lateral web meetings between groups of partners will be agreed during the 1st meeting of Stage 2.

3.2.9 Programme & Network Knowledge - Local Experience

As it is obvious from the table 3.7 and the analysis made, the TechDiversity focus will be more around the digital ecosystems. The Network Meetings will combine group knowledge working and exchanging as a network and experiencing as possible local examples. These meetings will also focus on the challenges and barriers that partner cities face. The partners will have the chance to reflect and review on these cases as a group, ensuring examples are relevant and focussed: clearly linked to chosen TechDiversity themes and subthemes. Seeing the backdrop of a partner city is important to understand it's local context, needs and chosen focus, but the real added value from the network site visits is the opportunity to jointly review and reflect on the local practice in a structured way, relating it back to the network's themes.

URBACT tools and methods (available through the URBACT Digital Toolbox) that are relevant to the work will be shared with and used by the network partners. This includes both Action Planning Methods and selected Implementation Tools and Methods. TechDiversity will make use of the knowledge and outputs from various URBACT Implementation Networks to support the development and testing of the IAPs.

Key to this will be the consideration of both the WHAT cities are going to do and HOW they are going to do it – making a distinction between the policy interventions and actions we are designing (the WHAT) and the implementation of those interventions (the HOW). The implementation networks clearly demonstrated that the best way to deal with many of the challenges faced during implementation is to consider them from the start, during the action planning stage. This principle will be part of the approach in TechDiversity.

A few case examples and good practises are identified during the activation stage of the project and presented in the next table. More examples and practises (at least one plus one per partner) will be identified early in 2024. Each partner will be provided a template prepared by the LE to include all information needed. All case examples and good practises descriptions will be included in TechDiversity repository and each one will be the starting point for the network meeting study visits and inspiration for the project's topics and themes to be exchanges during Stages 2 and 3.

Table 3.8 Case Examples - Good Practises Repository Table

City	Case Example	Good Practice Subject
Trikala	Gisemi HUB operation	Supporting Structure's Projects
Amarante	IET operation	Institution's projects on start ups
Bielsko Biala	FabLab Bielsko-Biała – creative space with cutting edge technologies operation	BBDays4.IT festival
Larnaka	Tbc	Tbc
Psahna	Archimedes Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship operation	Archimedes Accelerator's activities
Arezzo	ITS Prodigi Lab – IT and Digital Academy operation	VET activities in IT and digital sectors

Idrija	ID20 Institute operation	ID20 activities combining culture and IT
Bucharest District 6	Tbc	Tbc

3.2.10 Local Level – ULG connection with the transnational level exchanges

Key to this will be the consideration of both the WHAT cities are going to do and HOW they are going to do it – making a distinction between the policy interventions and actions we are designing (the WHAT) and the implementation of those interventions (the HOW).

The composition of the ULGs has been made by the participating cities during Stage 1 (their composition is included in each partner profile) and already highlighted, the expertise and dynamic to influence policies and draft the action plans is already well established. Some adjustments will have to be made during Stage 2.

All action plans will be drafted at local level, adopting the lessons learnt from the transnational exchanges & level. An effective communication channel will be established among the TechDiversity partners - partner city - ULG Coordinator and ULGs. The ULG meetings will serve to disseminate the knowledge acquired during network meetings among ULG members and to help plan ahead in detail.

Table 3.9   9 ULGs are expected to take place per partner, distributed in time as follows:

Stage	Main Subject	When	ULGs per partner
1	Introduction and project local focus	Dec 2023	1
2	TechDiversity Policy issue reflections	Feb to Nov 2024	4
3	Action Plan preparation & peer review	Dec 2024 to Sep 2025	3
4	Action Plan endorsement and TechDiversity results promotion	Dec 2025	1

All partners are free to decide each ULG meeting format and main subject. Each meeting should reflect in any case the knowledge gathered in the transnational level. Partners are strongly suggested to discuss each agenda in advance with the Lead Expert and to use, not only presentations, but also any related with the meeting purpose URBACT tool, problem & action plan canvas etc. **They are also suggested to organise each meeting at different ULG premises and think out of the box to organise meetings with the core team, meetings with wider key Stakeholders, workshops with citizens, testing activities - pilots, events for communicating about the project and more.**

The Lead Expert and the Lead Partner will follow closely all ULG minutes and advise in case of need for specific improvements.

The volume of ULG activities will be based on the final ULG framework that will be agreed at the network level during the 1st network meeting in 2024. For the proper link with the transnational activities and the effective practice of participatory approaches on the ground (based on the needs/ specificities of the policy challenges that will be tackled) the Lead Partner supported by the Lead Expert introduced specific directions during the Trikala core meeting.

3.2.11 Additional comments

- Project Launch for Topic 1 and same for Topic 2 will focus on Integrated approach (both are considered as core meetings)
- The rest network meetings by April 2025 will focus in parallel on the 3 Themes defined by TechDiversity Network.
- The final working meeting in early September 2025 will focus on Deep Dives on the selected Tools and Methods, to be used for the action plans final version.
- The action plans Peer Review closing session will take place also during the meeting in September 2025. Partners will be sharing their action plans progress among all, already since April 2025, following a Peer Review Methodology that will be presented during the planned network meeting by the Lead Expert.
- An additional round of testing actions can take place during Stage 3 to confirm the suitability of specific actions defined in respective action plans notably with the particular target groups. This will depend on the needs and ambition in respective URBACT Local groups and is optional. Specific directions were given during the core meeting in Trikala.
- The lead Expert proposes flexibility into the journey timeline.

- A Carousel model approach will be used for all topics and themes. All partners will follow all network meetings and tasks until the end of the project.

3.2.12 Micro level table for additional foreseen activities or other issues

Table 3.10 Additional Activities

Other Network Activities		
Who	**When**	**What**
Combined with online steering committee meetings for project management	3 times per year	Online meetings among all partners are foreseen in between the network meetings to discuss specific issues, to monitor the progress of the local level exchanges, to solve any issues regarding the ULG operation and performance.
Following discussions in local level	Optional	Other peer learning activities are possible between partners, but will be agreed only in case of similar approaches for the action plan development (during the 2nd network meeting in 2024)
Discussion between Lead Expert and Lead Partner	January-February 2024 & 2025	Ad hoc expert profile for supporting specific project needs, mostly for the network events and selected sub-themes
Discussion between Lead expert and partners	-	Extra support concerning the ULG coordinator role when needed, to improve those ULG that are following the project progress
Partners that didn't provide efficient inputs for good practices	During the first months of Stage 2	Option to bring in additional good practices
Low participation in ULG meetings	The first 2 meetings attendants	LE encourages a blended approach to include physical and digital meetings

3.2.14 TechDiversity Scorecards

A set of 3 Scorecards are prepared by the Lead Expert to be used 3 times during the project lifetime (November of 2023, 2024 and 2025). The 3 Scorecards (included in the Appendix) are oriented mainly to position the partners ULG members on the 3 projects Topics. An introduction for this internal monitoring tool took place during the core meeting in Trikala, followed by the 1st group exercise. All members of the delegations filled in their starting position on the 3 Scorecards, after discussing all topics in city level. The partners had also the chance to discuss their experience with the use of this tool. The 2nd exercise with the 3 Scorecards, one per each project topic, will be done in November 2024 and will be a valuable input for the Midterm Review. The last exercise will be done during the Finale Stage and will be also a valuable input for the final report and the project results, based on the improvements achieved at stages 2 and 3.

3.2.15 The core deliverables based on the exchange of experience activities

Core deliverables are considered the good practises & the case examples forms, the Quarterly Network Reports, and the Final Network Results Product. The initial idea discussed during the 1st meeting in Trikala is to develop them in a format that will be useful for the partners to communicate locally and to give them inspiration, feeds, and ideas for their IAP production. The Final Network Results Product should be aimed for wider audience around Europe to spread the project results.
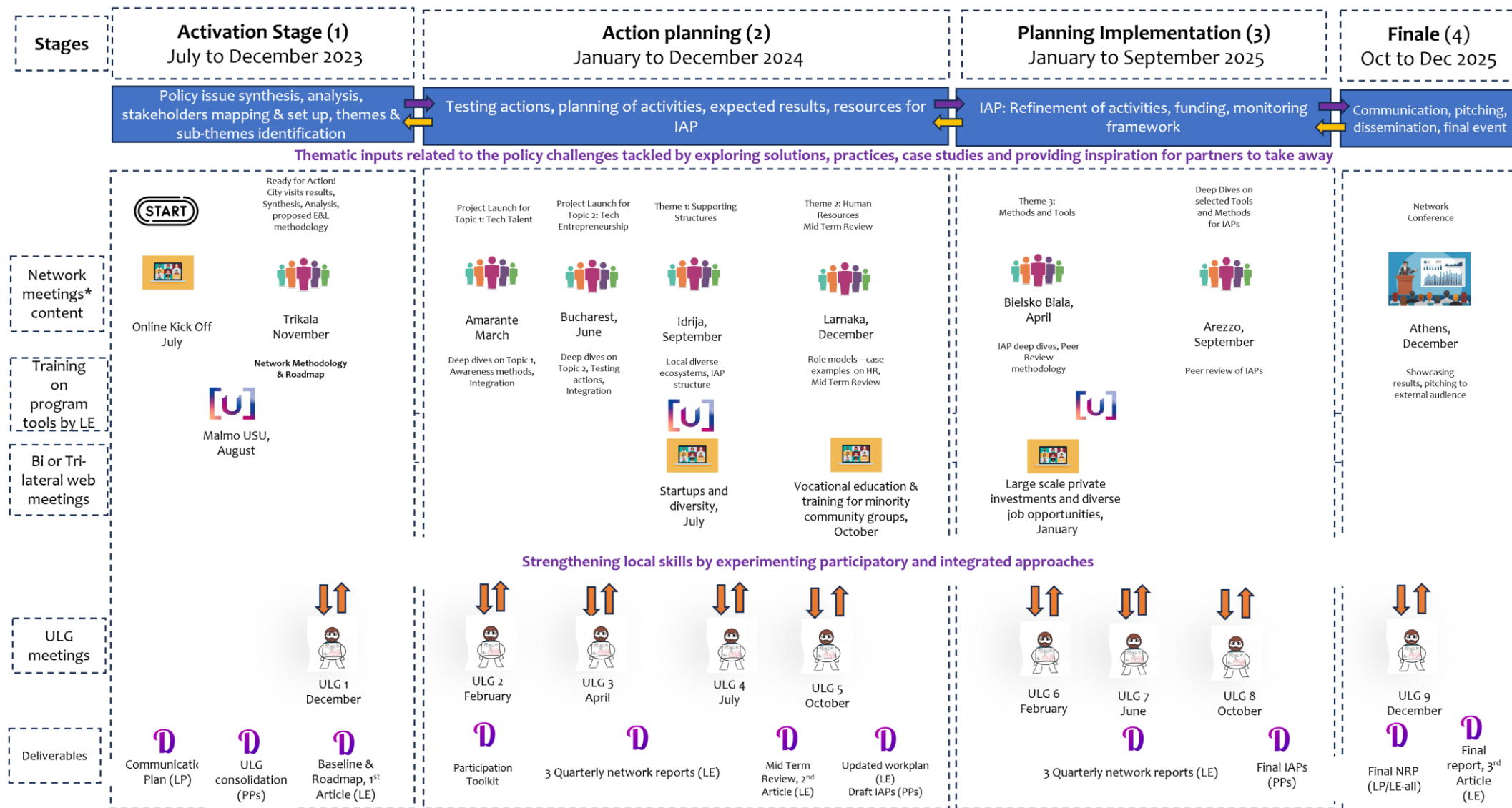
3.3 The Network Roadmap

The main outcome of the core meeting in Trikala is the following Roadmap, that is a mutual agreement around the itinerary and focus of exchange and learning activities, as well as the methodological framework for local activities and desired impact. Making links between the transnational exchange & learning and the local actions is essential to strengthen the added value of the TechDiversity network. The TechDiversity Network Roadmap (as a Work Program tool) provides an overview, by outlining mainly timeline of activities, including links with transnational and local activities, key milestones, and deliverables, in order to monitor and to report IAP progress. A GANTT chart infographic is formulated as Roadmap as a visual overview of all Stages activities based on the network transnational & local meetings.

Main **potential risks** which may impede the action plans progress will be inactive stakeholders among ULGs and/or low quality / delayed support on specific tasks from the partners. Any relative issue will be discussed trilaterally between the Lead Expert, the Lead Partner, and the specific partner to provide solutions and to act on time. Once a partner is not responding on critical and core tasks to a successful development of his action plan, the Lead Partner will contact the Joint Secretariat to report the issue and get directions for additional actions. The potential risks are not included in the Roadmap for simplicity reasons.

The menu of exchange and learning activities (Core components and Approach) is consisted of.

- **ULG:** Following the URBACT method, partners will be coached in network meetings and then they will transfer that learning in local level. The Lead Partner and the Lead Expert will be overviewing this critical process. 4 meetings are planned annually.

- **Transnational & local links:** All ULG meetings will take place in between network meetings in person to share the content from the meeting before and to give inputs from the local level to the meeting ahead.

- **Network meetings in person:** Following a well-prepared period with the hosting partner, 6 meetings are planned to cover the topics/themes in parallel, but focusing each time on specific topics, themes & subthemes as deep dives.

- **Testing actions:** The introduction about their framework and URBACT APN experience will take place during the 1st network meeting in March 2024 and deep dives will take place during the 2nd meeting in June 2024. An ad hoc expert will customise testing actions for each partner based on their specific needs, challenges, & organisational abilities.

- **Good practises – case examples:** The Lead expert provided all partners templates, customised for the policy issue, to prepare at least 1 good practise and 1 case example that will be explored during each city meeting.

- **Site visits:** They will be based on each city's case examples and highlights and mostly on supporting structures related with diverse job opportunities and young entrepreneurship.

- **Bi or Tri-lateral web meetings:** The final topic & the groups of involved partners will be decided during the 1st semester of 2024.

- **Scorecards:** The framework for their use is explained in section 3.2.14

- **Online meetings:** They are planned to take place in between the networking meetings, mostly to identify any issues on the exchange of experience among the partners.

- **Integrated Action Plans:** The core deliverable in partners' level (by October 2025).

- **Other components:** Network articles, communication plan, midterm review and a participation toolkit to give to the partners a common structure to the ULG meetings.

TechDiversity APN Baseline Study - 2024

Stages	Activation Stage (1) July to December 2023	Action planning (2) January to December 2024	Planning Implementation (3) January to September 2025	Finale (4) Oct to Dec 2025

Policy issue synthesis, analysis, stakeholders mapping & set up, themes & sub-themes identification → Testing actions, planning of activities, expected results, resources for IAP → IAP: Refinement of activities, funding, monitoring framework → Communication, pitching, dissemination, final event

Thematic inputs related to the policy challenges tackled by exploring solutions, practices, case studies and providing inspiration for partners to take away

Network meetings* content

START

Online Kick Off July

Ready for Action! City visits results, Synthesis, Analysis, proposed E&L methodology — Trikala November
Network Methodology & Roadmap

Project Launch for Topic 1: Tech Talent — Amarante March
Deep dives on Topic 1, Awareness methods, Integration

Project Launch for Topic 2: Tech Entrepreneurship — Bucharest, June
Deep dives on Topic 2, Testing actions, Integration

Theme 1: Supporting Structures — Idrija, September
Local diverse ecosystems, IAP structure
Startups and diversity, July

Theme 2: Human Resources Mid Term Review — Larnaka, December
Role models – case examples on HR, Mid Term Review
Vocational education & training for minority community groups, October

Theme 3: Methods and Tools — Bielsko Biala, April
IAP deep dives, Peer Review methodology
Large scale private investments and diverse job opportunities, January

Deep Dives on selected Tools and Methods for IAPs — Arezzo, September
Peer review of IAPs

Network Conference — Athens, December
Showcasing results, pitching to external audience

Training on program tools by LE

Malmo USU, August

Bi or Tri-lateral web meetings

Strengthening local skills by experimenting participatory and integrated approaches

ULG meetings

ULG 1 December

ULG 2 February

ULG 3 April

ULG 4 July

ULG 5 October

ULG 6 February

ULG 7 June

ULG 8 October

ULG 9 December

Deliverables

Communication Plan (LP)

ULG consolidation (PPs)

Baseline & Roadmap, 1st Article (LE)

Participation Toolkit

3 Quarterly network reports (LE)

Mid Term Review, 2nd Article (LE)

Updated workplan (LE) Draft IAPs (PPs)

3 Quarterly network reports (LE)

Final IAPs (PPs)

Final NRP (LP/LE-all)

Final report, 3rd Article (LE)

*Network meetings include: Plenary Workshop, Policy Seminars, Masterclasses , site visits to case examples or good practices, group activities, local events, network coordination meetings and ad hoc expertise on selected sub-thematic areas

Communication & Dissemination

The TechDiversity communication activities will complement and reflect the overall networking and action planning experience. Communication activities are a useful tool to spread the word of TechDiversity results, mostly about the partners involvement and achievements. A coherent project dissemination team is in place and a good consensus of the policy issue and the partners challenges have been built by the end of 2023. The responsible persons on behalf of all partners showed a remarkable commitment to involve many stakeholders from different focus groups (municipality directorates, local and regional level authorities, entrepreneurs and mostly, citizens). Apart from disseminating TechDiversity meetings and progress through the selected social media, the communication strategy prepared by the Lead partner is considered as sufficient to meet the partners and the program goals. The plan is to link up with relevant European organisations & EU projects, to reach a wider audience and to promote the sustainability of the work in the network. TechDiversity is interested to see whether and how the outcomes of the diversity and inclusion perspectives in the topics of the other URBACT APN could lead to fruitful collaboration or be otherwise harnessed.

The Lead Expert and the Lead Partner team will follow the TechDiversity Communication Plan during Stages 2 to 4. They have already given specific communication outputs during Stage 1, including short video series (vox pops) from the city visits to highlight the results of the meetings with the partners and their stakeholders, posts in LinkedIn and Facebook about the project highlights and a project level article by the Lead Expert.

Until the end of 2025, the Lead Partner together with the Lead Expert and the partners will follow the Communication Plan as a roadmap for the main communication tasks of the TechDiversity project. This Plan is divided in 2 parts, internal and external communication, while each part has its own communication tools and channels. Communication efforts will seek to mostly engage a wide audience, including policymakers, tech professionals, and the general public, to promote understanding and support for diversity initiatives.

Epilogue

Partners will be supported and encouraged to bring their own experience and good practises for learning, and this will be carefully capitalised upon in the TechDiversity work programme. There is already foreseen to bring in the project expertise from outside the network as to develop more capacities. The Lead Expert will carefully follow the first steps of all partners in local level and support when needed with additional inputs to have everyone on board, even specific difficulties and low interest will be identified.

There are strong opportunities to influence the TechDiversity policy issue and practice at the local level within the partner cities. The most critical issue for a great success is the focused involvement of all ULGs to influence and inspire all action plans, expected to be based on Tools and Methods exchanges that will be considered as useful.

Acknowledgements

TechDiversity Study was a collective effort by all partners and the Lead Expert, following the framework and the clear directions from the URBACT Joint Secretariat.

All the Baseline Study elements of the Synthesis Section and the City Profiles were asked by the Lead Expert to be reviewed by all partners.

All cities agreed on the Network Roadmap core elements and took over a clear responsibility to organise in high quality level the network meetings, that are critical aspects of the project methodology.

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Appendix

AP1. Partner Profiles additional content

Trikala – LP

SWOT Analysis of Trikala Tech & Digital Ecosystems

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Trikala is an experienced Smart City	Trikala has not been able to combat the prejudices that refer to technology diversity that are still deeply rooted in the culture of city's minorities
Trikala has implemented various strategies having common elements with the TechDiversity policy issue & network	Lack of Tech Ecosystem
The Smart City Strategic Plan: RESTART mAI City	Limited Education and Training Resources
Trikala experience in URBACT projects with similar policy issues (like DigiPlace)	Lack of Inclusive Policies
Trikala is highly motivated in joining the network, because its vision is to create a smart city in terms of its operation, self-sufficient against crises resilient and sustainable for its citizens, enterprises, and more attractive for investment, visitors, and young citizens.	Lack of Accessible Transportation and Infrastructure
The local focus of the city of Trikala is to introduce technology diversity into urban planning to raise awareness in order to change the mentality of the citizens	
Trikala can benefit from the tried and tested URBACT Method which uses integrated and participatory approaches to develop an Integrated Action Plan for the city.	
The implementation of various smart services throughout the years (e-health platforms, sustainable mobility apps, smart houses, automated buses etc) has helped the citizens become familiar not only with technology but also with the benefits of a participatory approach.	
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Trikala offer digital equity to all citizens	The unemployment rate is quite high in Trikala
e-Trikala organisation is strongly supporting projects in tech & digital sectors that encourage diversity, inclusion, and gender equality	Labor market changes because of new technologies demands new and high skills of workforce of the near future
Programmes that support reskilling and upskilling women and other minorities	Women are left out of digital and tech positions, mostly in C-level positions
Trikala will try through the TechDiversity IAP, to raise awareness of the social whole in matters of technology diversity	
Trikala will continue the pursuit of Smart City policies through supporting relevant projects highlighting all tech and digi related aspects	
Trikala is selected by the European Commission to participate in the EU Mission for 100 climate-neutral and smart cities by 2030	
Available structural funds 2021-2027	
A Small-Scale Action can be funded to implemented, that will help the City of Trikala to experiment local solutions in technology diversity issue	

The Trikala Learning – Capacity building Needs & Potential Contribution in terms of exchanges and learning

Learning – Capacity building Needs	Potential Contribution
The city has started to address the policy issue at local planning level but has not implemented a lot of activities yet. All project activities and tools of TechDiversity Stage 2 that are expected to add value to the people involved in the network capacity are warmly expected.	The partner and the project team have very good knowledge and a lot of experience to share being the LP, as the city of Trikala has participated at numerous URBACT APNs in previous programming periods. All involved members will be strongly supporting the TechDiversity partners to exchange with the other peers and to identify good practises, case studies and any other useful input from the partners local context.
Tech Talent: Explore what the city of Trikala can do to better prepare under-represented communities for employment opportunities and connect them into roles in local tech and digital businesses.	ULG core members have good knowledge of the URBACT cross cutting themes of gender equality, digital and green transitions applied to the policy challenge – issue, as most of them were members of the ULG of Gendered-Landscape and Vilawatt APNs which main policy issues were the gender equality and green transition.
Tech Entrepreneurship: Explore what the city of Trikala can do to support those communities to build, run and scale tech and digitally enabled companies.	The city suggests being inspired by the Institute of the Entrepreneurship Development https://ied.eu/ on aspects regarding Careers Opportunities
Understanding the 'what's and whys' of diversity and inclusion in the local context.	Strong awareness raising campaigns
Trikala needs inputs (mostly methods & tools) on how to facilitate all minority groups related with the policy issue & mostly the group that is considered as a pressing issue.	Trikala can share some useful elements from its Smart City Strategic Plan RESTART mAI City, regarding the challenge addressed on Economic Development
Joining another URBACT APN will allow the city to benefit once again from a structured & organised process of exchange and learning with peers across Europe. Trikala can benefit from the tried & tested URBACT Method which uses integrated & participatory approaches to develop a city IAP.	Initiatives to support start-ups and business development

A1. URBACT Local Group - The e-Trikala ULG & the political support

The ULG of Trikala will consist of a core group (steering committee) and a wider group of stakeholders, who will be involved via an open procedure. The core group will be responsible for the project delivery, while the wider group supports the core ULG on specific issues and activities. All members are already identified and invited to join the group. The list (included in the Annex) is not restricted but several replacements may occur. Trikala's ULG meetings, in which will participate the wider group, will be carried out before or mainly after Transnationals Meetings, in order to transfer and share knowledge, inspire its member by good practices and new ideas and finally link transnational and local activities of the Network. Trikala's ULG meetings, in which will participate the core ULG, will be carried out before and after significant milestones of the Project (SSA, IAP Draft, Final IAP) in order to share and discuss ideas, define, and plan actions, prioritize and define next steps of the Action Plan and the SSA process. Christina Karamperi is the ULG coordinator.

e-Trikala has a strong political & human resources support by the municipality.

Coordinator

Christina Karamperi (female) was born in 1978 in the city of Trikala. She studied Philosophy, Sociology and Clinical Psychology at the University of Crete, where she received her two Degrees: Degree in Philosophy and Sociology (1997-2001) and Degree in Psychology (2002-2004). She also has a MSc in Health Management. While working in E- Trikala S.A she has been involved in many European projects. She has participated as a speaker in several conferences and workshops in national and European level. She is responsible for the dissemination policy, the proper approach of end-users and management of audience, surveys, and questionnaires. She has worked very close with almost all city departments and is responsible for the implementation of co-creation activities and participatory methodologies.

Members

Core Members of the ULG:

- The Municipal Development Agency e-Trikala SA
- The Municipality of Trikala through its Mayor and his special advisors
- GiSeMi HUB
- The Technical Services Directorate of the Municipality,
- The Municipal Smart City Department,
- The National & Kapodistrian University of Athens

Additional Members of the wider ULG:

- Institute of Communication and Computer Systems
- Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering of the University of Thessaly,
- Vodafone,
- Cisco,
- Chamber of Commerce of Trikala,
- Technical Chamber of Commerce-Branch of Thessaly
- Institute of Entrepreneurship Development,
- Protergia

Trikala ULG is based on a pre-existing group that participated in previous URBACT APNs. The list above is not restricted but several replacements may occur. In any case, E-Trikala will inform and consequently engage the identified stakeholders by explaining efficiently the project in general, its scope and aims, the potential results and the expected overall outcome.

Trikala's ULG meetings, in which will participate wider ULG, will be carried out before or mainly after Transnationals Meetings, in order to transfer and share knowledge, inspire its member by good practices and new ideas and finally link transnational and local activities of the Network.

Trikala's ULG meetings, in which will participate the core ULG, will be carried out before and after significant milestones of the Project (SSA, IAP Draft, Final IAP) in order to share and discuss ideas, define, and plan actions, prioritize and define next steps of the Action Plan and the SSA process.

A2. Potential risks to have successful local support in terms of Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems.

Resistance to Change

As diversity and inclusion initiatives evolve, there may be resistance from individuals or organizations that are not fully aligned with the objectives. Resistance could stem from traditional mindsets, fear of change, or a lack of understanding of the benefits of diversity.

Limited Resources

Sustainability of diversity and inclusion initiatives may become challenging due to limited resources. As the initial enthusiasm wanes, securing funding and resources for ongoing programs can be a hurdle.

Measurement and Accountability

Ensuring that progress is measured and organizations are held accountable for diversity and inclusion goals can be difficult. Without effective tracking and reporting mechanisms, it may be challenging to demonstrate the impact of these initiatives.

To mitigate these risks, local stakeholders should prioritize ongoing communication, education, and engagement with the community. Flexibility and adaptability in the face of changing circumstances will also be essential to maintain and enhance local support for diversity and inclusion in knowledge-based digital and tech ecosystems.

A3. Potential testing actions – small scale solutions been identified

In the framework of TechDiversity APN, a Small Scale Action (SSA) will be probably implemented which will help the City of Trikala to experiment local solutions in technology diversity issue.

This SSA will be therefore also a process to allow the city of Trikala to adopt more agile ways of acting, adapting methods from other sectors such as design and tech, and to be able to test ideas for sustainable change before creating long-term action plans in the framework of technology diversity.

Trikala will be enabled to prototype local solutions and de-risk future actions, while engaging local stakeholders in doing as well as thinking together to tackle urban challenges.

The SSA will allow Trikala to design and build better and quicker, to iterate, or provide evidence that something should be discontinued rather than wasting public funds.

Amarante

SWOT Analysis of Amarante Tech & Digital Ecosystems

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Local Commitment: Amarante's strong desire to create a TechDiversity ecosystem demonstrates a commitment to progress	Limited Resources: A lack of substantial financial and human resources may hinder the implementation of diversity and inclusion programs.
The Municipality of Amarante is demonstrating a strong political commitment to the implementation of a resilient tech and digital industry in the territory to foster innovation	Regulatory Challenges: Navigating or modifying existing regulations could prove to be a complex and time-consuming process.
Amarante has extensive experience in URBACT projects.	Limited Awareness: The local community may have limited understanding of the importance of diversity and inclusion in the tech sector.
Emerging Tech Hub: The establishment of the Amarante Tech Hub provides a foundation for tech-related initiatives	The loss of population the city is facing, the aging of Amarante's population and the decrease in the number of births is clearly influencing the city's capacity for economic regeneration
Educational Institutions: Presence of local educational institutions can be leveraged to develop tech skills and knowledge	Amarante is located near a large urban center - Porto
Cultural Diversity: Amarante's cultural diversity can be harnessed to promote a rich & inclusive tech community	The city faces a challenge in facilitating the reskilling and upskilling of women workers in the tech sector. Existing programs may not effectively cater to their unique needs, leading to underrepresentation in tech roles.
Amarante was the lead city of the iPlace project (URBACT program)	A notable issue in the city is the lack of clear accountability in tech companies regarding diversity and inclusion. This may result in perpetuating discrimination and bias.

Existence of several sectors and value chains with international market, such as construction, metalworking, wood and agro-food	Low level of exports
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Collaboration: Partnering with local businesses, educational institutions, and the community can amplify diversity efforts.	Economic Challenges: Economic downturns or financial crises can impact funding and investment in tech diversity.
Regional Development Plans: Leveraging regional and national development plans and strategies can provide support and resources.	Policy Constraints: Unfavourable policies at the local or national level can hinder progress.
Tech Education: Offering tech education programs can help bridge the knowledge gap.	Competing Interests: Diverse interests and priorities in the community may divert attention and resources away from tech diversity.
Innovation Ecosystem: Integrating with the broader innovation ecosystem can open doors to resources and collaboration.	Lack of Central Support: A lack of cooperation from central government can limit the reach and impact of local initiative
A clear need to connect underrepresented populations to employment and entrepreneurship opportunities in the digital and tech field	Big unemployment rate
A pressing need for more profound and strategic outreach efforts to disseminate knowledge and advocate for tech inclusion.	The absence of diverse groups in all fields, especially in the tech and digital industry
Through TechDiversity the city hopes to equip residents with the knowledge and skills needed to thrive in an increasingly digital world, the city can foster a more inclusive, empowered, and prosperous community	There are enduring gender, age, and disability norms and biases that can pose challenges to promoting diversity in the tech sector, making it more difficult for women, older individuals, and people with disabilities who aspire to pursue careers in technology.
About 500 people graduate every year in technology in the municipality of Amarante, and in the counties that are directly neighbouring it, and where in total about 400 thousand people live	Economic cycle in which the global economy finds itself creates several challenges for which the economy in general was not prepared. Whether it is the pandemic, or the war in Europe, there are several risks for local economic development

The Amarante Learning – Capacity building Needs & Potential Contribution in terms of exchanges and learning

Learning – Capacity building Needs	Potential Contribution
Diversity Training and Awareness: Developing a deep understanding of the various dimensions of diversity, including but not limited to gender, race, ethnicity, age, disability, and socioeconomic background. This involves creating awareness of biases and stereotypes and learning to appreciate and leverage diverse perspectives and experiences	Amarante is a very experienced URBACT city and can strongly contribute to the integrated approach of the policy issue
Inclusive Leadership: Building leadership skills that promote diversity and inclusion within organizations and communities. This includes fostering an inclusive workplace culture, setting a positive example, and encouraging open communication	Amarante and the ULG have valuable experiences and practices to contribute to the network. Amarante's Tech Hub initiative, which emerged from the iPlace project, has laid the groundwork for building a knowledge-based digital and tech ecosystem in the city. This experience serves as a practical example of the potential for a smaller city like Amarante to engage with the tech sector and foster innovation
Data Collection and Analysis: Learning how to collect and analyze data related to diversity and inclusion, allowing for evidence-based decision-making and continuous improvement	Amarante, with its strong emphasis on community engagement and collaboration, is well-placed to contribute insights and practices related to promoting diversity and inclusion

Inclusive Policy Development: Developing policies and strategies that support diversity and inclusion within knowledge-based digital and tech ecosystems. This may include recruitment and retention strategies, equal opportunity initiatives, and anti-discrimination measures	The ULG coordinator, Fernando Belezas, brings extensive experience in entrepreneurship and business consultancy, adding a unique perspective to the network
Cross-Sector Collaboration: Collaborating with a wide range of partners, including government agencies, businesses, educational institutions, and non-governmental organizations, to create a comprehensive and unified approach to diversity and inclusion	Amarante's experience in implementing projects like the Amarante Tech Hub and Tech Diversity serves as a valuable case study for other cities looking to develop similar initiatives
Digital Literacy and Access: Promoting digital literacy and ensuring equitable access to digital tools, resources, and opportunities. This is particularly important for underrepresented groups who may face barriers to entry in the tech industry	The strong support from local stakeholders, including the public sector, private sector, and educational institutions, underscores the city's commitment to the project and adds a unique aspect to its contributions
Mentorship and Role Models: Establishing mentorship programs and promoting diverse role models in the tech industry to inspire and guide individuals from underrepresented backgrounds	Amarante's contributions to the network include practical experiences in developing tech ecosystems, a focus on diversity and inclusion, and unique insights from an entrepreneurial perspective, making it a valuable asset to the Tech Diversity project

A1. URBACT Local Group - The Amarante ULG & the political support

The city stakeholders have been identified for the Tech Diversity project in Amarante. The key stakeholders are 20, including city departments, local organizations/agencies, associations, chambers, NGOs, civil society, private sector, universities, research centers, and supporting structures. The 6 core members have been also identified.

These stakeholders are likely to play a central role in promoting diversity and inclusion in knowledge-based digital and tech ecosystems in Amarante. This ULG is not a closed or restricted group. Other members are encouraged and welcome to join the project at different stages. The composition of the ULG can evolve and expand as the project progresses, and new stakeholders or individuals who share an interest in promoting diversity and inclusion in knowledge-based digital and tech ecosystems in Amarante can contribute to its success.

Political support is present to some extent, but the strength and consistency of this support may depend on the prevailing political climate and the priorities of local leaders. Building strong relationships with political champions and actively engaging with elected officials will be essential in advancing the cause of diversity and inclusion in Amarante's tech ecosystem.

Coordinator

Fernando Belezas He has a wealth of professional experience and qualifications relevant to the project's objectives. His experience includes executive director roles at the IET - Tâmega Business Institute, and as a visiting lecturer at the ISCAP (Accounting and Business School of the Porto Polytechnic Institute). He has also worked as a business strategist and entrepreneurship consultant, as co-founder of Seedimo, a real estate investment platform, and as solicitor. His background in business consultancy, entrepreneurship, and legal advice equips him with a diverse set of skills to effectively coordinate the ULG.

Fernando Belezas has a strong connection to the city administration and relevant city departments through his work at the IET - Tâmega Business Institute. The IET, an institution of which the Municipality is an associated member, has the mission of promoting the entrepreneurial spirit and innovation in Amarante and the Tâmega e Sousa region.

He will work on the project tasks without a fee, demonstrating his commitment to supporting the project's goals and objectives.

Core Members of the ULG:

1. Câmara Municipal de Amarante (Amarante City Council)
2. AEA - Associação Empresarial de Amarante (Amarante Business Association)
3. UTAD - Universidade de Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro (University of Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro)
4. EPALC - Escola Profissional de Amarante (Amarante Vocational School)
5. ESTG - IPP - Escola Superior de Tecnologia e Gestão do Politécnico do Porto (Polytechnic Institute of Porto - School of Technology and Management)
6. Private Tech organizations

Members of the wider ULG:

1. Câmara Municipal de Amarante (Amarante City Council): The local government entity responsible for the administration and governance of Amarante.

2. AEA - Associação Empresarial de Amarante (Amarante Business Association): A local organization that represents and supports businesses in Amarante.

3. CENFIM: The CENFIM (Professional Training Center for the Metallurgical and Metalworking Industry) is a vocational training center that provides training in the metalworking and mechanical engineering sectors.

4. DOLMEN: A local organization or entity focused on specific areas relevant to the project.

5. GIP - Gabinete de Inserção Profissional (Employment Insertion Office): A local office dedicated to supporting employment and professional integration.

6. GIP Vila Meã: Another employment insertion office..

7. IET - Instituto Empresarial do Tâmega (Tâmega Business Institute): An institute that likely provides business-related education and support.

8. EPALC - Escola Profissional de Amarante (Amarante Vocational School): A vocational school in Amarante, which can be a crucial stakeholder in promoting diversity and inclusion in the local tech sector.

9. Escola Secundária (High School): The local high school in Amarante.

10. UTAD - Universidade de Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro (University of Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro): A regional university that can play a significant role in promoting diversity and inclusion in the tech sector.

11. ESTG - IPP - Escola Superior de Tecnologia e Gestão do Politécnico do Porto (Polytechnic Institute of Porto - School of Technology and Management): A higher education institution likely involved in technology-related education.

12. Basicamente: An entity with a role that may be closely related to the project's objectives.

13. Minsait: A private sector organization or company.

14. Jolera: Another private sector organization or company.

15. Mobiti: A private sector entity potentially involved in technology.

16. Myndware: A private sector organization or company.

17. Cercimarante: An organization that promotes the inclusion of people in their diversity and plurality, using practices aimed at sustainable development.

18. Associação 100 Ideias Amarantinas (100 Amarante Ideas Association): A local association focused on promoting ideas and initiatives in Amarante.

19. Representantes informais de DLD, migrantes, neet (Not in Education, Employment, or Training): Informal representatives of groups related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

20. IEFP - Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional (Employment and Vocational Training Institute): A national institute focused on employment and vocational training.

The majority of the ULG members have previous experience and participation in the iPlace project related to Amarante Tech Hub. This continuity from a pre-existing group demonstrates the commitment and ongoing engagement of stakeholders in advancing the goals and objectives of the project. It also signifies a shared dedication to promoting diversity and inclusion in knowledge-based digital and tech ecosystems in Amarante.

This prior experience can be a valuable asset in building on past achievements and driving the project forward.

The ULG team prior experience in URBACT Action Planning, has proven valuable to the city preparations for TechDiversity. However, Amarante project team acknowledge that each project may bring unique challenges and nuances. To ensure the success of Amarante participation in this specific network and project focused on Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems, the city remains open to receiving any additional support or training that URBACT may offer. This support could be particularly beneficial if it addresses specific aspects or challenges related to the chosen policy theme, as every project has its own unique requirements.

A2. Potential risks to have successful local support in terms of Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems.

Resistance to Change

As initiatives progress, there may be resistance to change from individuals or organizations comfortable with the status quo.

Sustainability Challenges: Maintaining long-term support for diversity and inclusion efforts can be challenging, as enthusiasm may wane over time.

Limited Resources: A shortage of resources, including funding and skilled personnel, could limit the expansion and effectiveness of initiatives.

Lack of Data and Monitoring: A lack of data on the impact of diversity and inclusion efforts may hinder evidence-based decision-making and ongoing support.

Understanding and mitigating these potential risks will be essential for sustaining successful local support for Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems in Amarante. Proactive planning, ongoing engagement, and adaptability can help address these risks as they arise.

To mitigate these risks, local stakeholders should prioritize ongoing communication, education, and engagement with the community. Flexibility and adaptability in the face of changing circumstances will also be essential to maintain and enhance local support for diversity and inclusion in knowledge-based digital and tech ecosystems.

A3. Potential testing actions – small scale solutions been identified

Identifying and implementing small-scale solutions can be a valuable approach to test and refine strategies for enhancing Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems in Amarante. These pilot actions can provide insights into what strategies work best in Amarante and inform the development of larger initiatives to enhance diversity and inclusion in the tech sector.

Possible actions to be explored:

Diversity Training Workshops, Tech Skills Bootcamps, Networking Events, Mentorship Programs, Public Awareness Campaigns, Local Talent Mapping, Collaborative Initiatives, Flexible Work Arrangements, Tech Inclusion Awards.

Arezzo

SWOT Analysis of Arezzo Tech & Digital Ecosystems

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES

The Municipality of Arezzo is implementing its strategy for the digital transition aiming to make it a virtuous digital public administration by 2030	The financial data related to youth entrepreneurship are really negative and more negative trends are foreseen for the next years
City administration is promoting locally-led development strategies and sustainable urban development, with the objective of satisfying local objectives and needs and contributing to the smart, sustainable and inclusive growth of the EU	For many SMEs investments on digital economy are facing real management problems and strategy as well as lack of staff with tech and digital skills
The participatory approach, applied both for the digital and the green transition taking place in the city, is the basis of Arezzo's governance model which sees citizens and stakeholders as protagonists of urban planning and design	Education programmes are not adequate to the real-life business needs
The sector's education network includes a complete system	Insufficient programs to involve citizens in the development of local policies
Existence of diversified social services at the Municipality	Low number of public services performed entirely online
European and national projects implemented in the social and educational field	Lack of partnerships with similar institutions in other states
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Digital innovation of the production system (SDG N.9) is a local challenge to be addressed	School dropout still affects one in four students and many young people leave high school without the minimum basic skills
Addressing social and industrial development challenges by fostering the elaboration of technology and innovation and promoting the digital economy, is the strategic key to meet broader, inclusive, and sustainable development objectives	Development of new residential neighbourhoods without the development of educational infrastructure
Arezzo is in the process of identifying the necessary funding sources to establish a Digital Hub for young people using spaces located into two buildings of the city's suburban area	Overcrowding of pre-university education institutions
Arezzo urban challenges are recently and largely addressed by the exploitation of the Next Generation EU funding mechanism (National Recovery Fund) which complements the Cohesion Fund mechanism 2021-2027 soon to be applied at the Tuscany regional level.	Low involvement of the marginalized groups in co-creating of solutions for tech integration and for participating in activities of the ULG
Possibilities to finance investments in educational, social, and cultural infrastructure	Lack of knowledge of labour opportunities from underrepresented groups/communities to be access in the labour market.
Increasing the collaboration of the local public administration with the private sector for improving the quality and diversification of public services	

The Arezzo Learning – Capacity building Needs & Potential Contribution in terms of exchanges and learning

Learning – Capacity building Needs	Potential Contribution
To scale up the knowledge-based digital inclusion already taking place in the city and to start-up its evolution to tech and digital ecosystems development, we need to exploit the transnational exchange and learning model of the URBACT APN proposed by the "TechDiversity" project.	There is no existing prior knowledge in the field of Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge based Digital and Tech Ecosystems at City administration level. The problem of digital inclusion of underrepresented groups in the digital and tech companies is a fairly new issue, the relative business sector is still growing and it has been a marginal one in the local ecosystem since the largest share has always been the one linked to jewellery manufacture.
New tools and methods for effective policymaking: To scale up the knowledge-based digital inclusion already taking place in the city and to start-up its evolution to tech and	Arezzos' consolidated good practices can bring an added value to the Project like the operation of InformaGiovani which is Arezzo Municipality's multiple service office for

digital ecosystems development, the City of Arezzo needs to exploit the transnational exchange and learning model of the URBACT APN proposed by the "TechDiversity" project.	young people and the operation of ITS Prodigi Lab – IT and Digital Academy for young people interested in tech & digital employment careers
URBACT methods of engaging the targeted groups: URBACT engagement and participatory policies tools will support the City of Arezzo to engage in the process of facing the local challenge of inclusion in the tech and digital sectors by directly involving the initially identified target groups	
Retention of stakeholders	
Tools to be used in the drafting of the IAP	
Specific measures for Diversity and Inclusion to be included in the IAP	
Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems: URBACT expertise guidance might be needed for: making a better analysis of the local problems, setting up a long-term strategy for stakeholders' engagement, planning and implementing actions, sharing knowledge, measuring results.	
URBACT expertise guidance might be needed for: making a better analysis of the local problems, setting up a long-term strategy for stakeholders' engagement, planning and implementing actions, sharing knowledge, measuring results.	

A1. URBACT Local Group - The Arezzo ULG & the political support

The ULG of Arezzo is established from scratch as it is not a ULG build on a pre-existing group. It includes 3 Municipality Councillorships, a core stakeholder named InformaGiovani which is Arezzo Municipality's multiple service office for young people and other 9 organisations.

Gianni ROSSI, Manager of Service "Support to Governance, Innovation and EU Policies", City of Arezzo) is the ULG coordinator.

Other ULG members will be identified during action planning phase.

Arezzo has a strong political & human resources support by the related to the policy issue elected politicians.

Coordinator

Gianni ROSSI, Manager of Service "Support to Governance, Innovation and EU Policies", City of Arezzo) is the ULG coordinator.

Members

In ULG the stakeholders there will be members of:

1.	Municipality of Arezzo:

-	Councillorship for "Technological Innovation, Simplification of administrative procedures, and Housing policies": Service "Support to Governance, Innovation and EU Policies": all offices

-	Councillorship for "Social and Health policies, Family, School": Social Services and Cohesion Policies office and Communication office

-	Councillorship for "Municipal staff, Immigration and Integration policies, Equal Opportunities, policies for the Protection and Defense of Animals, relations with the City Council: Immigration, Integration and Equal Opportunities office

2.	InformaGiovani – Arezzo Municipality's multiple service office for young people

3.	Municipal Foundation "Arezzo Community"

4.	Chamber of Commerce Arezzo-Siena

5.	Confederation of Southern Tuscany Industry

6.	Arezzo Territorial Employment Center

7.	Higher Education Technical Institutes

8.	University of Oklahoma exchange programme department based in Arezzo

9.	Aruba System Srl - Datacenter based in Arezzo, holding ARUBA SpA

10.	Seco SpA, Arezzo-based technology company specialized in the miniaturization of computers and the Internet of Things (IoT), covering the whole supply chain, and operating globally in the transportation, industrial automation, medical, domotics, utilities and security industries, etc.

11.	ITS Prodigi – IT and Digital Academy for young people interested in tech & digital employment careers

Other to be identified during action planning phase

Arezzo ULG is established from scratch based on the URBACT framework suggestions and the LE support. Arezzo's ULG meetings, will be carried out after or mainly after Transnationals Meetings, in order to transfer and share knowledge, inspire its member by good practices and new ideas and finally link transnational and local activities of the Network.

Arezzo's ULG meetings, in which will participate the core ULG, will be carried out before and after significant milestones of the Project (SSA, IAP Draft, Final IAP) in order to share and discuss ideas, define, and plan actions, prioritize and define next steps of the Action Plan and the SSA process.

A2. Potential risks to have successful local support in terms of Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems.

Low involvement of stakeholders or targeted groups on a longer period of time. Inability to activate and maintain the functioning of the ULG.

Flexibility and capacity of the knowledge based and educational institution to face the demand of the specialized workforce.

A3. Potential testing actions – small scale solutions been identified

A Small-Scale Action (SSA) or a pilot action is not identified during the activation stage.

Bielsko Biala

SWOT Analysis of Bielsko Biala Tech & Digital Ecosystems

	STRENGTHS		WEAKNESSES

Very low unemployment rate	Diversity and Inclusion in Tech ecosystems aren't directly mentioned in strategic documents, however analysing existing data we may foresee that the issue is already present and the focus should be made on it
Podbeskidzie Foundation produces a yearly report based on the surveys conducted in local technological companies and startups, in which among other data, position of women in tech sector is examined	Specific local groups are facing difficulties in finding a job in tech and digital sectors
Bielsko-Biała is considered as a smart city regarding the implementation of technologies	Wage inequality is recorded among various community groups
Diagnosis – Development Strategy for Bielsko-Biała until 2030 including the challenges related with the TechDiversity policy issue	Lack of access to C-level positions
The Report: Investment Potential of Bielsko-Biała (2022), that confirms the shift of the city towards technology and digitalization	Under-qualified works from the perspective of minorities
The Report created by the Startup Podbeskidzie Foundation (local NGO) that tackles different issues related to the status quo in tech-related sectors in Podbeskidzie Region	
Great experience in terms of technology related activities, awareness raising about the benefits of digitalization of processes and products as well as boosting entrepreneurial spirit in the local community	
The city's dynamic development is also facilitated by its location at the intersection of international and national transport corridors	
In Bielsko-Biała are located historically many industries	
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Bielsko-Biala has the potential to become an innovative, entrepreneurial, high-tech city that can utilise its endogenous potential of diversity	The number of post-working age population is increasing
BBDays4.IT – the biggest IT festival in Southern Poland	Not using the potential & skills, not taking the advantage of diverse teams, not knowing "what's" and whys" of diversity and inclusion from the perspective of local governments and company owners
FabLab – fabrication laboratory, creative space equipped with cutting edge technology, where ideas can be transformed into products	The municipality is not very active regarding the projects' policy issue
The city is becoming an increasingly important center of modern technology where the dynamic development of the IT industry in particular is clearly visible	Possibility of not being able to introduce the IAP as a strategic document on the city level (approved by City Council etc.), since at the application stage, policy makers from the city level weren't directly engaged in the document, only operational level employees of the city hall
Bielsko-Biała also attracts investors both Polish and foreign	Lack of funding for the IAP implementation
Growing IT, technology, and modern business services sectors	A possibility is there, that stakeholders wouldn't be committed to the issue for the whole project lifetime
Diversity and inclusion in tech ecosystems are a global trend, especially inside in tech industry.	
A critical mass of tech companies in the city, already cooperating on common projects and initiatives	

The Bielsko Biala Learning – Capacity building Needs & Potential Contribution in terms of exchanges and learning

Learning – Capacity building Needs	Potential Contribution
Tools & actions Bielsko Biala would like to exchange/ learn about: - How to include diversity and inclusion - in relation to digital and tech ecosystems - in strategic framework of the city - How to build the capacity of using of participatory approach and URBACT tools & methods	Exchange in network level the local NGO – Startup Podbeskidzie Foundation experiences. The NGO creates a yearly report based on the surveys conducted in local technological companies and startups, in which among other data, position of women in tech sector is examined.
	Elements from the report "Investment Potential of Bielsko Biala" could be valuable inputs for TechDiversity exchanges.
	BBDays4.IT festival can be considered as good practice and successful example of multi-stakeholder cooperation related to tech industry.

A1. URBACT Local Group - The Bielsko Biala ULG & the political support

Patrycja Węgrzyn, international project specialist, Regional Development Agency is the ULG coordinator.

The city stakeholders have been identified for the Tech Diversity project in Bielsko Biala. The key stakeholders are ~10, including city departments, local organizations/agencies, associations, chambers, NGOs, civil society, private sector, universities and supporting structures.

Political support is present, coming both from the president of the development agency Rozwoju Regionalnego S.A. and the mayor of the city.

Coordinator

Patrycja Węgrzyn, international project specialist, Regional Development Agency.

She cooperated in many different initiatives with the city government, NGOs, IT companies etc., just to mention:

- being a member of Organization Committee of BBDays4.IT festival (common initiative of city government, local university and IT companies

- coordinating ULG in AS TRANSFER project

- daily basis cooperation with above mentioned institutions on various initiatives related to the topic of the project

Members of the ULG:

1. City government – key stakeholder, owner of the strategies, committed to the topic; already experienced in implementation of Urbact project and knowing the added value of international cooperation
2. City departments: Economy and Strategic Development, Social Department
3. Startup Podbeskidzie Foundation – experienced in startup ecosystem building, business support, event organization and mentoring;
4. IT & technology related companies – Rekord SI, Da Vinci Studio, Selleo, Precisely, 4Experience – local companies of different sizes, actively involved in many economic & community building initiatives;
5. Academic education, students' associations, and high schools – key actors in terms of giving overview on the diversity situation in education sector;
6. Youth City Council & youth organizations (like:Redakcja BB, Zróbmy To Foundation, Punkt 11) – already organizaing initiatives related to social inclusion, young people with a fresh outlook on the situation;
7. Beskidzka Chamber of Commerce – local economic self-government, integrating most of the local companies, both from industrial as well as services sector

8. NGOs & Women support organizations – in Bielsko-BIała there are a lot of social organisations from different topics (400+); within the first phase of the project ARRSA will map them, select those in line with the project scope and invite them to cooperate in the Action Plan preparation

9. My BB – migrants consultancy point – created within the framework of Welcoming International Talents Urbact project, experienced in helping migrants in the city, knowing their situation

10. Third Age University and Seniors Council – local organizations supporting and activating seniors

Some of the entities/people where already involved in former ULG or other local groups created within the framework of different projects and tackling different topics. ULG members have a good knowledge about the cross-cutting priorities, maybe not directly related to URBACT program, but due to the fact that those are global trends and they are already transferred to the strategic documents of local level

A2. Potential risks to have successful local support in terms of Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems.

Lack of engagement of ULG members within the whole project lifetime.

Engaging private (business) sector in a long project, mostly affecting "only" strategic level – not here and now actions.

A3. Potential testing actions – small scale solutions been identified

At the stage of preparation of application form the city discussed the topic with potentially interested stakeholders some activities that may be implemented, those are:

1. **Women in Tech Bootcamp** – series of open events; recruitment to mentoring program ending up with a hackathon

2. **Give IT a try!** – workshops and events encouraging girls to find themselves in IT & technology world

3. **Mix IT** – series of awareness raising initiatives about added value of diverse teams in business and technology for employers and institutions

4. **Silver digital inclusion** – improvement of digital skills of seniors – dedicated training

5. **When innovation meets experience** – intergenerational technology & crafts meetups

6. **When startups meets 'old school' businesses** – intergenerational business meetups

7. **FOReign netWORK** – series of networking & brokering events for foreigners in Bielsko-Biała, integration with local economic community

Bucharest D6

SWOT Analysis of Bucharest Tech & Digital Ecosystems

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
The sector's education network includes a complete system	Insufficiency of educational and vocational training facilities
Existence of diversified social services	Insufficient programs to involve citizens in the development of local policies
European projects that are already implemented in the social and educational field	Low number of public services performed entirely online
There is a project team in place, having all of its members have previous experience in EU/ bilateral projects implementation	Lack of partnerships with similar institutions in other states
	Lack of existing data base in relation to Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems
	Lack of interest from marginalised individuals to be integrated as actively involved members of the community and to be ready to be included in the labour market

	Low involvement of stakeholders or targeted groups on a longer period of time
	Existing barriers regarding access to workspace, access to diverse talent, access to funding, access to support, and access to social capital
	No knowledge on practices to enhance Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Possibilities to finance investments in educational, social and cultural infrastructure - non-reimbursable European funds, allocations from PNDL (Local Development Programme), Bucharest Budget and other programs	Development of new residential neighbourhoods without the development of educational infrastructure
Increasing the collaboration of the local public administration with the private sector for improving the quality and diversification of public services	Overcrowding of pre-university education institutions
Possibilities to finance investments in educational, social and cultural infrastructure - non-reimbursable European funds, allocations from PNDL (Local Development Programme), Bucharest Budget and other programs	Very bureaucratic process when adopting a plan or strategy, even if is only at district level, requiring the approval of Bucharest Municipality
Increasing the collaboration of the local public administration with the private sector for improving the quality and diversification of public services	Inability to activate and maintain the functioning of the ULG
Possibilities to finance investments in educational, social and cultural infrastructure - non-reimbursable European funds, allocations from PNDL (Local Development Programme), Bucharest Budget and other programs	
A Strategy on Digitalisation will be developed in the framework of another District 6 EU funded project which is under implementation (SMART 6).	
The Municipality's Integrated Urban Development Plan for the 2021-2030	

The Bucharest D6 Learning – Capacity building Needs & Potential Contribution in terms of exchanges and learning

Learning – Capacity building Needs	Potential Contribution
While the major social inclusion issue has been identified and addressed by the city through the Integrated Plan for Urban Development 2021-2030, the targeted actions for tech diversity and inclusion still need to be developed	There is no existing prior knowledge in the field of Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge based Digital and Tech Ecosystems at District 6 level
Methods of engaging the targeted groups	District 6 can act as a facilitator or coordinator at local level, based on the knowledge transfer and exchange of experience gathered through the URBACT network of participants
Retention of stakeholders	Good practices in job recruitment by the big companies located in D6 (suggested by the LE) …
Tools to be used in the drafting of the IAP	
Specific measures for Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems	

A1. URBACT Local Group - The Bucharest ULG & the political support

The city stakeholders have been identified for the Tech Diversity project in Bucharest D6. The key stakeholders are 20, including city departments, local organizations/agencies, associations, chambers, NGOs, civil society, private sector, research centers, and supporting structures.

This list will be refined in the early stages of running the ULG, since it is not a ULG build on a pre-existing group with a similar policy issue to work on.

District 6 was by the end of 2023 in the process of identifying a suitable coordinator that has prior experience in facilitating & coordinating similar stakeholder groups.

The current management team in District 6 is fully supporting the project. As in June 2024 there will be local elections, a shift in supporting this type of initiatives might occur.

Coordinator

Not identified yet.

Core Members of the ULG:

1. Romanian Association for Smart City (ARSC)
2. The Politehnica University of Bucharest
3. CeRe (Resource Centre for Public Participation)
4. National institute for research activities in the field of labour market and social protection (INCSMPS)
5. Association of Roma actors - Giuvlipen
6. Association for supporting social integration – ASIS
7. General Directorate for Local Development, Digitization, Projects with External Funds of City Hall
8. School Administration and Social services Directorate District 6
9. Institute for Public Policy
10. Employers' Association of the Software and Services Industry
11. Association for Information Technology and Communications in Romania
12. Bucharest Municipal Agency for Employment
13. Representative Employers' Confederation of Small and Medium Enterprises in Romania
14. Ministry of Research, Innovation and Digitalization
15. ARESEL Platform
16. Metropolis Cultural Association
17. Authority for the Digitalization of Romania
18. APADOR-CH The Association for the Defence of Human Rights in Romania – the Helsinki Committee
19. The Romano Centre for Social Development and Studies Association
20. The Centre for Independent Journalism

A2. Potential risks to have successful local support in terms of Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems.

Low involvement of stakeholders or targeted groups on a longer period of time.

Inability to activate and maintain the functioning of the ULG.

Lack of financing opportunities to implement the foreseen actions from the IAP.

A3. Potential testing actions – small scale solutions been identified

A Small Scale Action (SSA) or a pilot action is not identified during the activation stage.

A small intervention can be targeted by making use of social and school infrastructure in the area for digital integration of citizens from the neighbourhood.

Idrija

SWOT Analysis of Idrija Tech & Digital Ecosystems

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Diverse and multicultural population in the city	Shortage of people in professional occupations related to the technology and digital industry
Well-developed technological infrastructure	Unequal access to technology and digital resources
Very low unemployment rate traditionally much lower than the national average	Employees & unemployment personal skills gaps
Thriving start-up ecosystem	Remoteness
Big and diverse initial ULG	Idrija clearly lacks in diversity in digi and tech sectors
Support between the local organisations	Brain drain among young people and other population groups
Presence of tech companies and businesses	Shortage of people in professional occupations related to the technology and digital industry
Idrija's labour force includes high-profile technical experts	Knowledge-based digital and tech entrepreneurship and startup initiatives are still underdeveloped
The project has the support of the Mayor and the City Council	Municipality of Idrija is not monitoring indicators in relation to Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge- based Digital and tech Ecosystems
The city ranks among the economically above-average developed areas in Slovenia	Low self-initiative of the population for active development and entrepreneurship
Idrija reoriented itself into industries that are based on technical expertise after the demise of mining	
Idrija is one of the most economically developed, export-oriented and "self-sufficient" city in Slovenia	
The city is enhancing knowledge-based digital and tech entrepreneurship initiatives	
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Training and other programmes – projects are available for people to upgrade their competences and help those coming from underrepresented communities to acquire the necessary skills to participate in the tech industry	Strong dependence on the two flagship companies Kolektor and Hidria
Community involvement	The city has no motorway/highway or rail connections
Municipality Smart Strategy	Lack of available areas for industrial development
Idrija hosts the headquarters of two global corporations Kolektor and Hidria	Absence of diversity in local tech and digital industry is becoming a major issue
Diversification is a priority for some institutional actors	
There are some successful individuals from underrepresented groups that can serve as role models and inspire others	Diverse or underrepresented groups often face difficulties in accessing mentorship, funding, support, community spaces and networks necessary for starting and growing tech startups.
The Innovative Strategy for the Sustainable Development of the Municipality of Idrija	

The Idrija Learning – Capacity building Needs & Potential Contribution in terms of exchanges and learning

Learning – Capacity building Needs	Potential Contribution
TechDiversity is an opportunity to learn from other partners with more experiences how to support diverse communities to find pathways to employment in tech industries	Role of Idirja could be more as a learner, but also as an example/ practice what can be the implications of monostructured local economy on employment and local development.
Idrija intents to gain deeper insights into the diversity and inclusion issues that small towns should be dealing with	Good practices to share during Stage 2 meetings.
Tools: to promote diversity & inclusion in knowledge-based digital - tech ecosystems / to encourage collaboration, participation & design innovative actions on supporting diverse population groups into tech and digital employment and entrepreneurship / to improve the city's governance in social inclusion, foster competitiveness of its local economy and improve services for underrepresented groups	

A1. URBACT Local Group - The Idrija ULG & the political support

Dušanka Černalogar, is the ULG coordinator.

Idrija ULG represents all stakeholders who will develop and implement actions that address the specific challenges on diversity in technology in the city. The ULG will consist of members that have an in-depth knowledge or the interest on the challenge and will provide an alternative way on viewing the problematics and challenge, integrated solutions and the needs and solutions of all stakeholders will be considered. The possible city stakeholders are included in the appendix.

Political support is present by the Mayor and the City Council.

Coordinator

Dušanka Černalogar, that is employed at the Development Agency of Idrija and Cerkno as an independent consultant.

She holds a bachelor's degree in political science and was already the ULG coordinator at CityCentreDoctoproject. Her work will be co-financed in accordance with the contract where the municipality has outsourced the Agency to implement certain activities in the project. She is constantly working with the municipality as she implements and manages various development projects.

Possible members of the ULG:

1. Municipality of Idrija – Mayor,
2. Municipality of Idrija - Municipal Business Officer,
3. Municipality of Idrija - Municipal Energy and IT Officer,
4. Development Agency of Idrija and Cerkno – managing director,
5. Development Agency of Idrija and Cerkno – Entrepreneurship consultant,
6. Development Agency of Idrija and Cerkno - Consultant in human resources development and training,
7. The Chamber of Craft and Small Business of Slovenia – regional Chamber of Idrija,
8. Local community, elected representatives,
9. Jurij Vega Grammar School,
10. Youth Centre Idrija, as also:
11. major employers – representatives
12. representative of start-up initiative,
13. representative of local tech or digital start-up business,

14. representative of smaller local tech or digital company,
15. representative of local Labour office,
16. representatives of diverse underrepresented communities interested in working in tech industry (youth, women, migrants, older, individuals from lower socio-economic background, etc)

A2. Potential risks to have successful local support in terms of Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems.

Potential risks could be: unintentional discrimination and exclusion of under-represented groups, resistance to change, competing priorities, data privacy, some legal and regulatory risks etc.

A3. Potential testing actions – small scale solutions been identified

Not yet, but Idrija foresees smaller testing actions, interventions (e.g. in the area of promotion, awareness or upskilling etc.).

Larnaka

SWOT Analysis of Larnaka Tech & Digital Ecosystems

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Larnaka aims at the active participation of the local government in the procedures and actions for the smooth integration of local community groups in tech and digital sectors	Larnaka is mostly based in tourism and the tertiary sector
Larnaka is very experienced in public-private cooperations for the city structures and development needs involving inhabitants as employees	Low level of cooperation with local bodies
Local universities operation	The regulatory framework for employment and entrepreneurship is almost a 100% responsibility of the central government
The Cyprus Marine and Maritime Institute (CMMI) research center operation	Lack of specific supporting skills needed for the TechDiversity policy issue
Operation of a commercial port and an international airport	
The city is home to most of the industries of Cyprus	
Cyprus has achieved the third-highest position in terms of per capita GDP in the European Union after Luxembourg and Malta.	
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Cooperation between administrative structures of the state and citizens of Larnaka	New scientists are mostly looking for job opportunities in Limassol and Nicosia than Larnaka
Available training and education programs aimed at developing skills at a personal level	Lack of knowledge on the TechDiversity policy issue
Collaboration with local agencies and private businesses	Lack of interest from the workforce and/or entrepreneurs
Larnaka will make full use of the development funds of the European Union	Low ranking of the policy issue on the local political agenda
Larnaka's mega project (port & marina construction and operation) is during its preparation phase	
The Cyprus Marine and Maritime Institute and the Arab Academy for Science Technology and Maritime Transport	

cooperation in the areas of Marine and Maritime Education, Training, Research, Technological Development and Innovation	

The Larnaka Learning – Capacity building Needs & Potential Contribution in terms of exchanges and learning

Learning – Capacity building Needs	Potential Contribution
Study of good practices, adapting them according to the city needs and the ways that the project team could apply them in the city's digital ecosystem	There is no knowledge on practices to enhance Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems

A1. URBACT Local Group - The Larnaka ULG & the political support

The ULG of Larnaka is established from scratch as it is not a ULG build on a pre-existing group. It includes 5 organisations. Andreas Louka – CEO of Larnaka Municipality is the ULG coordinator. The ULG coordinator is familiar with the URBACT method, but the ULG members are not familiar at all. Other ULG members will be identified during action planning phase. Larkana has the political support by city mayor and the CEO of the municipality.

Coordinator

Andreas Louka – CEO of Larnaka Municipality is the ULG coordinator.

Members

In ULG the stakeholders there will be members of:

1.   Larnaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry

2.   Larnaka and Famagusta District Development Agency

3.   UCLan University (Private)

4.   Livadia Municipality

5.   Oroklini Community

Other to be identified during action planning phase

Larnaka ULG is established from scratch based on the URBACT framework suggestions and the LE support.

A2. Potential risks to have successful local support in terms of Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems.

During the activation period no knowledge on practices to enhance Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems is reported by the Larnaka project team or explored during the city visit.

A3. Potential testing actions – small scale solutions been identified

A Small-Scale Action (SSA) or a pilot action is not identified during the activation stage.

Psahna

SWOT Analysis of Psahna Tech & Digital Ecosystems

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
The UoA Department attracts talented students from diverse backgrounds	The small size of the city
The UoA Psahna Campus	Very few stakeholders to participate in the TechDiversity ULG

The interconnections of the Psahna Department with the central departments of the UoA in Athens	Digital divide
Experience in Research projects related with tech and digital sectors	Unequal access to technology and digital resources
OPPORTUNITIES	**THREATS**
Employees from different backgrounds could bring their own unique perspectives and experiences, which can help to transform Psahna into a more inclusive and resilient city by generating new and innovative ideas	It is difficult to retain talented students in the local area after graduation, since there are limited job opportunities in the technology sector
Reskilling and upskilling women employees related with tech and digital sectors	The city of Psahna is not characterized by uniformity regarding the age and educational background of its inhabitants. While the University students are almost exclusively in the age group of 18-25, the local inhabitants are mostly elderly individuals
The University of Athens can develop an IAP as part of the network to raise awareness among society about the importance of diversity in the technology sector	Most of the students are looking for available job opportunities in Athens and abroad
The University of Athens can conduct applied research and address real-world urban challenges	
Participating in the network, also provides a unique opportunity for us to work with diverse partners and to build new relationships outside of academia	
The TechDiversity APN program will put a Small-Scale Action into place to assist the University of Athens and Psahna city (Municipality of Dirfys-Messapia) in testing local solutions for technology diversity	
Various ICT companies located in the territory	

The Psahna Learning – Capacity building Needs & Potential Contribution in terms of exchanges and learning

Learning – Capacity building Needs	Potential Contribution
Any resources on fostering inclusiveness and diversity in knowledge-based digital and technological ecosystems are welcome	The NKUA has knowledge to share, but a lot still to learn about the URBACT integrated approach. The knowledge on practices to enhance Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems has been acquired from the UoA professional involvement in the technology industry, European research projects and academic practices.
The University, the city and the ULG members are expected to learn about new concepts and gain deeper understanding of various subjects connected to the project's goal	NKUA can contribute with some practices already developed by: Local companies /entrepreneurs, the Gender Equality Committee (GEC) of the University, the Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship "Archimedes," the Education and Lifelong Learning Center (NKUA), the Career Office (NKUA)
The KNUA is interested in learning from or meeting examples of best practices and how partner cities address issues like those in Psahna	
NKUA is also interested in learning how to promote cooperation, participation, and the design of creative actions to support diverse population groups in tech and digital employment and entrepreneurship, as well as how to enhance local government in a way that promotes social	

inclusion, increases local economy competitiveness, and enhances services for underrepresented groups.

A1. URBACT Local Group - The Psahna ULG & the political support

Dimitris Katsianis, Assistant Professor at the Department of Digital Industry Technologies that is located at Psahna, is the ULG coordinator.

The city stakeholders for the ULG have been identified for the Tech Diversity project in Amarante. The stakeholders are 14, including city departments, local organizations/agencies, associations, chambers, civil society, private sector etc.

There is no former experience for the establishment of an ULG.

The project has the support of the Mayor and the City Council.

Coordinator

Dimitris Katsianis, Assistant Professor at the Department of Digital Industry Technologies that is located at Psahna, is the Psahna ULG coordinator. He works closely with students of the department and also holds connections with the city administration, the mayor and local technology companies.

Members of the ULG:

1. Municipality of Dirfys Messapia
2. Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship "Archimedes"
3. Centre for Training and Lifelong Learning of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens
4. Liaison Office of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens
5. Gender Equality Committee of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens
6. Gizelis Robotics
7. SABO S.A.
8. Technical Chamber of Evvoia
9. Department of Rural Development, Agri-Food and Natural Resources Management
10. Department of Digital Arts and Cinema
11. Department of Aerospace Science and Technology
12. Department of Informatics and Telecommunications
13. Association of Industries of Central Greece (SVSE – in Greek ΣΒΣΕ)
14. Student Association of the Department of Digital Industry Technologies

A2. Potential risks to have successful local support in terms of Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems.

Unintentional discrimination and exclusion of under-represented groups, resistance to change, competing priorities, data privacy, some legal and regulatory risks etc.

A3. Potential testing actions – small scale solutions been identified

A Small Scale Action (SSA) or a pilot action is not identified during the activation stage, but the UoA foresees smaller testing actions (e.g. in the area of promotion or upskilling etc.).

AP2. Synthesis, Methodology and Network Roadmap Appendix

2.1 Table 3.1: TechDiversity Cities' summarized profiles

City	Position – Starting point in terms of available numerical data related to the policy issue	Core Challenge	Learning & Capacity building needs	Pressing aspect of the policy issue
Trikala	Trikala officers (like all partners) do no keep any data. There are plans to address this aspect during the project lifetime by overviewing all available studies – researches regarding Demographic Representation, Inclusive Hiring and Promotion, Education and Training Access, Leadership Representation & Community Engagement	To introduce technology diversity into urban planning to raise awareness in order to change the mentality of the citizens.	Trikala needs inputs (mostly methods & tools) on how to facilitate all minority groups related with the policy issue & mostly the group that is considered as a pressing aspect	The age group 18-33 will be the main group that will be examined
Amarante	Amarante officers (like all partners) do no keep any data. A notable issue in the city is the lack of clear accountability in tech companies regarding diversity and inclusion	In Amarante there is a pervasive challenge - a lack of awareness among its residents about the advantages and opportunities linked to technological inclusion. This issue underscores the pressing need for more profound and strategic outreach efforts to disseminate knowledge and advocate for tech inclusion.	Diversity Training and Awareness Digital Literacy and Access Mentorship and Role Models Inclusive Leadership Data Collection and Analysis Inclusive Policy Development Cross-Sector Collaboration	The city faces a challenge in facilitating the reskilling and upskilling of women workers in the tech sector. Existing programs may not effectively cater to their unique needs, leading to underrepresentation in tech roles
Bielsko Biala	Bielsko Biala officers (like all partners) do no keep any data. In the strategic documents on the city level, we can find priorities related to inclusion of underrepresented groups, equalization of educational & work opportunities, boosting technology & entrepreneurship, activation of seniors & silver economy development, lifelong learning or startup support and multisectoral cooperation.	The city has growing IT, technology and modern business services sectors and the challenge is to support all diverse community groups (mainly women and Ukraine well-educated migrants) to be involved in them.	How to include diversity and inclusion - in relation to digital and tech ecosystems - in strategic framework of the city How to build the capacity of using of participatory approach and URBACT tools & methods	Four main groups are initially indicated in terms of the need of their better connection to employment and entrepreneurship opportunities: Women, migrants, seniors, and young people
Larnaka	Larnaka officers (like all partners) do no keep any data. The CMMI research centre, that is acting as a structural support for the city development needs and will support the city in similar activities in the near future	To facilitate any initiative that will lead to a more inclusive digital ecosystem, involving marginalised and minoritized community groups in terms of diversity and inclusion.	Study of good practices, as to adapt them according to the city needs and the ways that the project team could apply them in the city's digital ecosystem. URBACT methods of engaging the targeted groups & IAP development tools.	Larnaka is initially planning to focus on young scientists related with tech and digital sector to be upskilled, as to be prepared for the operation of the expected unified development of the Marina Port
Psahna	UoA project team as also Psahna city officers (like all partners) do no keep any data. The labour market even in a small city like Psahna is evolving due to technological advancements, creating a need for new skills among diverse future workers	Develop employment opportunities for graduates of the University's departments in the local community, with particular attention to compliance with diversity and inclusion regulations regardless of gender identity, ethnicity, economic profile, race, etc.	To learn about new concepts and gain deeper understanding of various subjects connected to the project's goal. how to promote cooperation, participation, and the design of creative actions to support diverse population groups.	Aspects of the policy issue concern Under-representation of women, Ageing population/workforce, Youth outmigration, and University graduates/senior year students. A specific pressing aspect will be carefully explored

			through the first ULG meetings in 2024
Arezzo	Arezzo officers (like all partners) do no keep any data. There are some sets of data at Social Services level containing data regarding all sorts of marginalised groups. It would be a solution to broaden the scope of the existing database in the future to cover other areas as well. TechDiversity IAP for Arezzo should be the mean for also addressing this issue	The greatest challenge for Arezzo policy makers, and other local stakeholders seeking to contribute to progress toward the SDGs, is how to cooperate to leverage technology to create a more inclusive society.	To scale up the knowledge-based digital inclusion already taking place in the city and to start-up its evolution to tech and digital ecosystems development. New tools and methods for effective policymaking URBACT methods of engaging the targeted groups Tools to be used in the drafting of the IAP	Young people including those with disabilities and of other groups socially isolated such as women and other, to the tech and digital sectors' employment offer and related entrepreneurship opportunities
Idrija	Idrija officers (like all partners) do no keep any data. Data on gender distribution, ethnic background, age distribution, socio-economic background of employees/ entrepreneurs in digital and tech ecosystems, employment data, data from employee and employer surveys, diversity training and promotion data, social media and online engagement metrics could be collected on ecosystem stakeholder's basis. There is a plan to address this aspect during the project lifetime, and Idrija will seek to obtain certain information.	The greatest local challenge for Idrija is the to address the issue resulting from the lack of economic diversity based on a strong dependence on two flagship companies and almost full employment, which in turn brings vulnerability of its local economy and most importantly of specific population groups.	Idrija intents to gain deeper insights into the diversity and inclusion issues that small towns should be dealing with. Tools: to promote diversity & inclusion, to encourage collaboration, participation & design innovative actions, to improve the city's governance in social inclusion, to foster competitiveness of its local economy and improve services for underrepresented groups	A precise more pressing aspect is not identified, although it is clear that it is connected with the Idrija's local economy and the vulnerability it poses to the local community and most importantly to specific population groups and their opportunities, since the city is depended on the two flagship companies. A pressing aspect will be carefully explored through the first ULG meetings in 2024
Bucharest District 6	D6 officers (like all partners) do no keep any data. There are some sets of data at Social Services level, containing data regarding all sorts of marginalised groups. A complementarity is expected between TechDiversity and SMART 6 program for creating a more comprehensive data set and monitoring tools, useful for the policy issue.	The core challenge is related to the existence of suitable infrastructure for the tech companies that would be interested in relocating their activities in the district offering diverse job opportunities.	Support to be active on the policy issue through the city the Integrated Plan for Urban Development 2021-2030. Methods of engaging the targeted groups. Retention of stakeholders. Tools to be used in the drafting of the IAP.	Specific challenges are related to the inclusion in the tech economy related sector of local population (including women, young student graduates, members of vulnerable groups, migrants, and Roma)

2.2 Table 3.3: Cities potential contribution – ambition - thematic interest

City	Potential contribution in terms of experience	Potential contribution in terms of practice	Ambition
Trikala	The partner and the project team have very good knowledge and a lot of experience to share being the LP, as the city of Trikala has participated at numerous URBACT APNs in previous programming periods, some of them with similar policy topics	ULG core members have good knowledge of the URBACT cross cutting themes of gender equality, digital and green transitions applied to the policy challenge – issue. Trikala can share some useful elements from its Smart City Strategic Plan RESTART mAI City, regarding the	Trikala is interested in introducing diversity into digitization and urban planning, which could include a range of activities, like: co-creation activities and education about diversity, temporary and/or pop-up interventions in visible and/or problem areas, integration with

		challenge addressed on Economic Development	the smart city program, and awareness programs for technology diversity
Amarante	Amarante & its ULG have valuable experiences and practices to contribute to the network. Amarante's Tech Hub initiative, which emerged from the iPlace project, has laid the groundwork for building a knowledge-based digital and tech ecosystem in the city.	Amarante's contributions to the network include practical experiences in developing tech ecosystems, a focus on diversity and inclusion, and unique insights from an entrepreneurial perspective, making it a valuable asset to the Tech Diversity project	Amarante has ambitious aspirations for change and seeks to achieve better results in various aspects related to Diversity and Inclusion. Amarante key ambitions include: Improved Representation, Equitable Access to Opportunities, Inclusive Tech Entrepreneurship, Closing the Skills Gap, Enhanced Workforce Diversity, Accountability and Reporting, Awareness and Advocacy, Community Engagement & Global Competitiveness.
Bielsko Biala	Bielsko Biala & its ULG have valuable experiences to contribute to the network, especially regarding the private sector position in digital and tech industry.	Exchange in network level the local NGO – Startup Podbeskidzie Foundation experiences (report based on the surveys conducted in local technological companies and startups) Elements from the report "Investment Potential of Bielsko Biala". BBDays4.IT festival can be considered as good practice and successful example of multi-stakeholder cooperation related to tech industry.	The city of Bielsko Biala is very interested in boosting local economy through the development of tech sector, especially IT. Implementation of TechDiversity project may facilitate this process.
Larnaka	Not expected	There is no knowledge on practices to enhance Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems	The role of Larnaka should be the promotion of good practices, the exchange of experiences, acquired through the implementation of TechDiversity. Larnaka can draw up joint strategies between the companies and play a catalytic role in their implementation.
Psahna	UoA can contribute with some already developed practices by: Local companies /entrepreneurs, the Gender Equality Committee (GEC), the Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship "Archimedes", the Education and Lifelong Learning Centre, the Career Office	Knowledge on practices to enhance Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge-based Digital and Tech Ecosystems, that has been acquired from the UoA professional involvement in the technology industry, European research projects and academic practices	TechDiversity project is an opportunity to share experiences, to see what works, & to gain deeper understanding of the diversity & inclusion issues that small towns like Psahna should be addressing from other partners with more experience in supporting diverse communities to find pathways to employment in tech industries.
Arezzo	There is no existing prior knowledge in the field of Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge based Digital and Tech Ecosystems at City administration level	Arezzos' consolidated good practices can bring an added value to the Project like the operation of InformaGiovani which is Arezzo Municipality's multiple service office for young people and the operation of ITS Prodigi Lab – IT and Digital Academy for young people interested in tech & digital employment careers.	The ambition is to have fewer people isolated in their difficulties and more opportunities for them to actively participate in the local digital ecosystem and the society.
Idrija	Role of Idirja could be more as a learner, but also as an example/ practice what can be the implications of monostructured local economy on employment and local development.	Good practices to share during Stages 2 & 3 meetings.	Idrija could do more to connect under-represented groups of the population (not only women, but wider under-represented groups) with employment and entrepreneurial opportunities in the digital and technological fields.
Bucharest District 6	There is no existing prior knowledge in the field of Diversity and Inclusion in Knowledge based Digital and Tech Ecosystems at District 6 level	District 6 can act as a facilitator or coordinator at local level, based on the knowledge transfer and exchange of experience gathered through the URBACT network of participants	The identified measures after the exploration of potential solutions could be integrated within local strategies, both in the field of digitalisation & of classic social services.

2.3 Table 3.4: Cities potential Integrated Action Plan focus

City	Main policy challenge to be addressed in ULG	Existing plans/ strategies	Potential focus of IAP	Expected changes/ results
Trikala	Access to technology, either directly or indirectly by all, is a main concern and same time a challenge of the city in order to be characterized as a sustainable, resilient, and inclusive city.	RESTART mAI City Plan & Sustainable Urban Development Strategy	The IAP can contribute so that Trikala can be characterized as a sustainable, resilient, and inclusive city	Improve the SOA of the absence of diverse groups in the local tech and digital industry
Amarante	Norms and biases that can pose challenges to promoting diversity in the tech sector, making it more difficult for women, older individuals, and people with disabilities who aspire to pursue careers in technology.	«Amarante Tech Hub» plan includes various initiatives, such as the "Amarante Tech Campus," "Center for Technology and Innovation," "Reskilling Programs	The IAP will focus on key aspects to address tech inclusion, with the local authority taking on roles as implementers, facilitators, and enablers to create a more inclusive & diverse tech ecosystem	Amarante aims to position the city as a leader in diversity and inclusion within tech ecosystems, enhancing the global competitiveness & attractiveness for tech businesses and talent
Bielsko Biala	The core challenge is a mix of the difficulties from the perspective of minorities in finding a job, wage inequality, lack of access to C-level positions, and under-qualified works.	The city has available 3 useful recent local reports: "Integrated Diagnosis of the City of Bielsko-Biała", "Investment Potential of Bielsko Biala" and "Startups & IT companies in Podbeskidzie region"	The IAP will probably focus on 4 key aspects: -facilitation the cooperation among institutions interested in the issue – business, education, community, BSOs, NGOs -raise awareness activities -workshops, trainings, events -connecting the dots – find what is already on the market, create synergies and bring added value	Bielsko Biala aims to better position the 4 identified diverse community groups to employment and entrepreneurship opportunities in tech and digital sectors.
Larnaka	A core challenge for Larnaka is improving diversity & inclusion policies in Digital and Tech Ecosystems based on Knowledge that are related with human skills and job opportunities with specific facilitating actions.	No	Initiatives to support upskilling scientists through vocational training courses in tech and digital sectors	Improve the SOA of the absence of diverse groups in the local tech and digital industry
Psahna	Retain talented students in the local area after graduation, since there are limited job opportunities in the technology sector	No	The main focus of the IAP will be the involvement & connection of the UoA with the local community	To transform Psahna into a more inclusive and resilient city
Arezzo	The economic data related to youth entrepreneurship are the worst and with negative trends for several years and the city would like to improve all related indicators.	No local plans focusing on the project issue A Digital Hub for young people is to be established	The IAP will include concrete actions to facilitate access to the tech and digital sectors' employment offer and related entrepreneurship opportunities mainly for young (and including disabled people)	Arezzo foresees a great impact in terms of improving urban policies aimed at enhancing job opportunities in the technological & digital sectors especially for the heterogeneous & underrepresented groups of the city and a consequent development of an inclusive digital economy.
Idrija	Opportunities of diversity and inclusion in knowledge-based digital and technological local ecosystems on local populations and its future economy should be identified and agreed by the ULG.	A strategy for the "Local development of Local action group LAS s CILjem" is in preparation & the "Innovative Strategy for the Sustainable Development of the Mun. of Idrija".	The IAP will focus on at least on one of the local challenges identified, with the local authority taking on roles to create a more inclusive and diverse digital ecosystem	Idrija will develop sustainable and effective solutions to the city challenges facilitating actions to support diverse community groups to be more active in tech and digital sectors.

| Bucharest District 6 | Tech and digital sectors companies are attracted to Bucharest and the challenge is to shift their interest towards District 6 and to match their workforce needs with the suitable diverse available candidates. | Integrated Urban Development Plan for the 2021-2030 cycle (PIDU). | The Possible focus of IAP could be to act for specific measures for integration of disadvantaged groups in the economic and social sphere without segregation and discrimination | Bucharest D6 will approach the policy issue challenges through a diverse and inclusive perspective, in terms of employment, recruitment options and entrepreneurship |

2.5 Detailed Sub-Themes for Network Meetings

The following (non-exhaustive) sub-themes to address partners needs and challenges have been identified and agreed in project level and will be incorporated in the respective network meeting agendas. Specific contributions across all partners will be decided through a trilateral consultation between LE, LP and host city, 2 months before each network meeting. Each city Site visit & Case Example & Good Practise will be also confirmed during the same process.

a. Plenary Workshops (PW)

- Workshop on URBACT Integrated approaches
- Introduction to The Equality Act 2010
- What any diversity and inclusion policy should contain
- Tools for boosting diversity & inclusion on job opportunities in the digital ecosystem of a city
- Potential synergies to other ongoing projects, programmes and platforms working on similar issues
- EU Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027
- United in diversity – EU moto and symbols
- Introduction to key concepts/trends for a more diverse & inclusive local economic development in tech & digital sector
- Facilitation skills, in the context of coordinating the process and work of the ULG
- Citizens' awareness methods
- Writing an Integrated Action Plan using the guidelines developed by URBACT
- The Diversity Charter

b. Thematic Challenges to be discussed in Policy Seminars (PS)

- 'Brain drain' and TechDiversity policy issue
- The future of diverse workforce and the skills required to be involved in local digital ecosystems
- The value of Diversity, Inclusion & Gender Equality for more diverse new local digital ecosystems in small–medium cities
- The impact of digital and tech sectors on more diverse future job opportunities and the urban living environment
- Diversity and Inclusion in local digital ecosystems as Sustainable Development Goals drivers
- Key legislation related to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion in EU level
- Labour market integration and access to vocation training

c. Local diverse entrepreneurial development & job employment topics to be explored in Masterclasses (M)

- Local diverse ecosystems to start and scale businesses
- Small – medium Cities offering more diverse job opportunities
- Public sector and diversity in digital ecosystems
- Private sector and diversity in digital ecosystems

AP3. TechDiversity Scorecards

TechDiversity Scorecards Introduction Note

TechDiversity Definitions

Diversity is an important aspect of any community or organization, as it contributes to a range of perspectives and experiences.

Inclusion refers to the intentional effort to create an environment in which all individuals feel valued and able to fully participate. It is not simply about tolerating differences, but rather about actively working to create a culture of belonging.

Digital ecosystem refers to the economic activity that results from everyday online connections among people, businesses, public services, data, and processes.

In the context of TechDiversity, the digital ecosystem refers to the use of technology to create more inclusive and equitable economic opportunities in cities.

There are some contextual factors relating to the policy issue that underpin TechDiversity:

- The Diversity Imperative: Tech companies must prioritize inclusion to thrive.
- Diversity is a crucial factor in modern talent acquisition strategies. In today's world, companies need to focus on building diverse teams to ensure they are hiring the best talent, no matter their background or ethnicity.
- Statistics show that diverse teams are more innovative, perform better, and are more profitable.

The lack of diversity in Tech and Digital sector is a problem for several reasons:

- It leads to a lack of innovation.
- The lack of diversity can also result in bias in decision-making processes.
- Employee engagement can dwindle due to lack of diversity.

The 3 Scorecards following are oriented to position the partners ULG members on the 3 projects Topics. Partners will work on this exercise 3 times during the project's Stages (Nov 2023, Nov 2024, and Nov 2025)

T1. Tech Talent

Explore what cities can do, to better prepare under-represented communities for employment opportunities and connect them into roles in local tech and digital businesses.

Investigate the possible obstacles like unclear career pathways, lack of role models, and the prevalence of informal networks in hiring - as well as learning from others about how to overcome them.

The network will promote the importance of better preparing under-represented communities for employment opportunities and connect them into roles in local tech and digital businesses.

The interaction between the local communities and the city partners of the network will provide the stakeholders with useful guidelines on how to overcome them.

TOPIC 1 - CITY POSITION - SCORECARD					
	🙂	🙂🙂	🙂🙂🙂	🙂🙂🙂🙂	🙂🙂🙂🙂🙂
None of the ULG members is very well experienced in tools and methods to prepare under-					All the ULG members are very well experienced in tools and methods to prepare under-represented communities for employment opportunities

TOPIC 1 - CITY POSITION - SCORECARD						
	😊	😊😊	😊😊😊	😊😊😊😊	😊😊😊😊😊	
represented communities for employment opportunities						
None of the ULG members has ever participated in a talent acquisition strategy						All the ULG members have participated in a talent acquisition strategy
None of the ULG members seems to have the drive & enthusiasm to carry on with the implementation of policy issues like the one of TechDiversity Topic 1						All the ULG members have the drive & enthusiasm to carry on with the implementation of policy issues like the one of TechDiversity Topic 1
The ULG members have never worked with a city structure on employment opportunities issues						The ULG members have worked with a city structure on employment opportunities issues
The ULG members have never worked on a transnational project for diversity & inclusion						The ULG members have worked on a transnational project for diversity
The city has no support of the core ULG members for the implementation of Topic 1						The city has full support of the core ULG members for the implementation of Topic 1
The ULG co-ordinator is not possessed the necessary skills and experience to deliver Topic 1						The ULG co-ordinator is fully possessed the necessary skills and experience to deliver Topic 1
The city project team has no knowledge on the possible obstacles of Topic 1						The city project team has a lot of knowledge on the possible obstacles of Topic 1

T2. Tech Entrepreneurship

Explore what cities can do to support those communities to build, run and scale tech and digitally enabled companies.

Determine what works, such as pre-acceleration, acceleration, investment readiness activities plus mentoring, coaching, & peer-support networks, and test various strategies locally before implementing them at the local level.

Existing barriers may include access to workspace, access to diverse talent, access to funding, access to support, & access to social capital.

The network will strive to support those communities to build, run and scale tech and digitally enabled companies.

TOPIC 2 - CITY POSITION - SCORECARD						
	😊	😊😊	😊😊😊	😊😊😊😊	😊😊😊😊😊	
None of the ULG members is very well experienced to support local communities to build, run and scale tech and digitally enabled companies						All the core ULG members are very well experienced to support those local communities to build, run and scale tech and digitally enabled companies
None of the ULG members has ever participated in a project to support local entrepreneurship needs						All the ULG members have participated in a project to support local entrepreneurship needs
None of the ULG members seems to have the drive & enthusiasm to carry on with the implementation of policy issues like the one of TechDiversity Topic 2						All the core ULG members have the drive & enthusiasm to carry on with the implementation of policy issues like the one of TechDiversity Topic 2
The ULG members have never been involved in a project to boost communities to build, run and scale tech and digitally enabled companies						The core ULG members have been involved in a project to boost communities to build, run and scale tech and digitally enabled companies
The ULG members have never worked on a transnational project for startups or young or women entrepreneurship						The core ULG members have worked on a transnational project for startups or young or women entrepreneurship
The city has no support of the core ULG members for the implementation of Topic 2						The city has full support of the core ULG members for the implementation of Topic 2
The ULG co-ordinator is not possessed the necessary skills and experience to deliver Topic 2						The ULG co-ordinator is fully possessed the necessary skills and experience to deliver Topic 2
The city project team has no knowledge on the possible obstacles of Topic 2						The city project team has a lot of knowledge on the possible obstacles of Topic 2

T3. Understanding the 'what's and whys' of Diversity and Inclusion

Support cities to understand the different characteristics and communities within their populations and what it takes to create inclusive and diverse digital ecosystems.

The different characteristics include women, people of colour, migrants, older people, people from lower socio-economic backgrounds and intersectionality.

The network will strive to support those communities to build, run and scale tech and digitally enabled companies.

Cities need assistance with this process to comprehend what success looks like & develop effective metrics to track their progress.

TOPIC 3 - CITY POSITION - SCORECARD						
	😊	😊😊	😊😊😊	😊😊😊😊	😊😊😊😊😊	
The absence of diverse groups in the tech and digital industry is becoming a major issue for the city						The absence of diverse groups in the tech and digital industry is a major issue for the city
None of the ULG members understands the meaning of diversity as an important aspect of any community or organization						All the ULG members understand the meaning of diversity as an important aspect of any community or organization
None of the ULG members understands the meaning of inclusion in local communities						All the ULG members understand the meaning of inclusion in local communities
None of the ULG members understands the different characteristics and communities within the population and what it takes to create inclusive and diverse digital ecosystems						All the ULG members understand the different characteristics and communities within the population and what it takes to create inclusive and diverse digital ecosystems
The project team is not at all familiar with diversity and inclusion EU framework						The project team is familiar with diversity and inclusion EU framework
Diversity & inclusion are not pressing policy issues for small – medium cities						Diversity and inclusion are pressing policy issues for small – medium cities
Elected politicians are not interested in diversity and inclusion improvement regarding the local digital ecosystem						Elected politicians are interested in diversity and inclusion improvement regarding the local digital ecosystem
Our city is not expecting an improvement on the policy issue at all following the exchanges of TechDiversity project						Our city is expecting a big improvement on the policy issue following the exchanges of TechDiversity project
Our city is not able to follow the integrated approach of URBAN APN framework						Our city is able to follow the integrated approach of URBAN APN framework

For more information, contact:

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