

EmPowerIngUs

Innovative Transfer Network Quarterly Network Journal no. 1



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This document represents the Quarterly Network Journal no. 1 for the EmPowerIngUs ITN project partnership. It was developed by the Lead Expert Klemen Strmšnik with city-level inputs from all ULG Coordinators – Alejandro Lopez Parejo (Getafe, ES), Yasin Tatou and Fabio Barbero (Etterbeek, BE), Fernando Gomes and Liliana Fernandes (Maia, PT), Georgi Petkov (Pomorie, BG), Konstantinos Karampourniotis and Laoura Vavaliou (Trikala, GR) – with the support of their project teams and ULG members. It aims to present the EmPowerIngUs project partnership and communicate our transfer progress to interested cities across Europe.

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1. ABOUT THE EmPowerIngUs PROJECT AND OUR CITIES

1.1 This is our Partnership...

The success of the Energy Poverty Intelligence Unit (EPIU) and its recognition as a Good Practice by the URBACT Programme have positioned Getafe (ES) as one of the most active and innovative cities in the fight against energy poverty.

To fully grasp the logic behind the EPIU project and its good practice, one must first understand its underlying philosophy, which can be summarized in the following statement:

***"A home is much more than just a building.
It encompasses the entire built environment, including
the people who live within it."***



EPIU's integrated and participatory approach operates across three scales (Home, Building, and Neighbourhood), utilizing three key tools (Intelligence Unit, One-Stop Shop, and Tailor-Made Solutions) to drive action through three stages (Understand, Support, and Act).

This enabled Getafe to compose a transnational partnership and develop the EmPowerIngUs Innovative Transfer Network – a project aiming to reflect on the key achievements and lessons learned from the EPIU Good Practice while transferring its methodologies and approaches to four other cities: [Etterbeek \(Belgium\)](#),

[Maia \(Portugal\)](#), [Pomorie \(Bulgaria\)](#), and [Trikala \(Greece\)](#).

Rather than being a static model, EPIU was designed as an evolving process – one that is continuously refined to better serve the citizens of Getafe and beyond. This commitment to innovation is why Getafe is leveraging the EmPowerIngUs project to further enhance and improve the EPIU Good Practice.



For more information about the EPIU Good Practice please visit the [EPIU project website](#), the [EPIU UIA profile](#), or the [EPIU Portico profile](#). You can follow the progress of the EmPowerIngUs project on [our URBACT website](#), as well as [EMSV's website](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#) channel.

1.2 ... these are our City Teams...

EMSV GETAFE (ES) CORE TEAM working on the URBACT ITN EmPowerIngUs project brings together experienced professionals from housing, architecture, and social innovation:

Fernando González Ferreira (Project Coordinator) leads the coordination of the EmPowerIngUs project in Getafe. He has a background in architecture and urban development and is experienced in managing European cooperation projects, focusing on sustainable urban regeneration and social housing initiatives.

Alejandro López Parejo (ULG Coordinator and Head of the Regeneration and Homes Area at EMSV) coordinates the Local Group (ULG) and oversees the Homes and Regeneration area at EMSV. He has significant experience in the planning and management of public housing, citizen participation processes, rehabilitation strategies and designing policies for affordable and sustainable homes, buildings and neighbourhoods in Getafe.

Marta Acosta Plata (Coordinator of OTC – Energy Communities Department) leads the coordination of the service for home energy renovation, providing citizens with information, guidance, and technical support to improve building sustainability. She has experience working with communities to promote energy awareness.



Diana Jiménez López (Architect, EMSV) contributes her technical and architectural expertise to the project, working on sustainable design and building rehabilitation. Her role supports the implementation of energy-efficiency measures within EMSV's projects.

Pablo Hayali Mateos Aparicio (Coordinator of the One-Stop-Shop, OHS) coordinates the One-Stop-Shop for social support and energy supplies, ensuring that vulnerable groups are included in housing renovation and energy transition measures. He has worked on social services and public policy programs focused on inclusion and citizen well-being.

Together, this dedicated team is advancing the EmPowerIngUs objectives in Getafe, promoting citizen empowerment, energy efficiency, and social innovation.

ETTERBEEK (BG) CORE TEAM working on the URBACT ITN EmPoweringUs project:

Jean-François Maljean - Agricultural engineer with 25-year career, I have an expertise in sustainable urban development. As Head of the “Project Development and Financing” municipal unit, I help Etterbeek to develop local/international partnerships and to find funding. I manage large budgets and tight agendas involving many colleagues and dozens of different partners. My role in the EmpoweringUs project is to facilitate the proper implementation of the project (compliance with the program, budget, and schedule). I also contribute to project tasks (meetings, reports, participation in missions, logistical tasks, etc.).

Yasin Tatou - Lawyer and graduate in political science, I manage the “Agence Immobilière Sociale” (Social property agency) of Etterbeek. I am also an elected representative of the Municipal Council of Etterbeek, the legislative body of our municipality. But above all, I am fighting to make dwellings accessible for everyone. I am happy to be part of the EmpoweringUs meetings as the Project Coordinator to share and receive good practices about energy poverty.

Benjamin Sornin De Leysat - My technical background as an eco-advisor as well as my previous career as a teacher allow me to play different roles such as the project manager, the facilitator, the communicator, the change agent, the critical thinker and the awareness raiser. As an energy advisor within Etterbeek’s Public Centre for Social Action (“CPAS”), I provide technical support to the social assistants in the management of energy-related cases. My ultimate goal is to propose solutions to reduce energy and water costs for tenants and owners. Based on my field expertise, I provide our ULG group with my insight and advise concerning the feasibility of the transfer process and I share my expertise on our one-stop shop with the other partner cities.



Fabio Barbero - With a background in environmental management and professional experience as a project manager and policy advisor, I coordinate Etterbeek’s Climate Plan. This plan aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, mitigate the effects of climate change, engage citizens in climate action, and ensure a fair and just transition. Combating energy poverty, while simultaneously reducing emissions, fits perfectly our strategy. In my role, I act as a driver of change, leading our climate initiatives in collaboration with various municipal units. Within the EmpoweringUs project, I coordinate Etterbeek’s ULG and the project’s tasks, ensuring effective coordination between units and stakeholders.

François Fillatre - As an architect within Etterbeek’s “Régie Foncière” (municipal property agency), I work to improve the energy efficiency of the municipality’s housing stock. Drawing on my technical background in construction, I manage public procurement, quality assurance, and project management for our two pilot activities within the EmpoweringUs project: conducting energy audits of our buildings and implementing awareness-raising initiatives to reduce energy consumption.

Valérie Baron - Valérie works at the municipality of Etterbeek, in the Project Development and Financing Unit. She is responsible for logistical tasks related to the smooth implementation of the EmpoweringUs project, including the organization of visits (catering, room reservations, etc.) and financial follow-up (budget monitoring, reimbursement of expenses, etc.).

MAIA (PT) CORE TEAM working on the URBACT ITN EmPowerIngUs project:

The Strategy, Innovation and Development Unit (NEDI) plays a foundational role in the management of the EmPowerIngUs project. Within the Municipality of Maia, NEDI is the entity responsible for coordinating innovation activities and is one of the key drivers of innovation and digital transition processes.

NEDI leads the development of a strategic approach aimed at identifying solutions that address local needs. As such, managing this project aligns closely with a priority issue for the municipality—energy poverty—as a crucial aspect of social cohesion.

The project is coordinated by **Fernando Gomes, who also serves as the coordinator of the URBACT Local Group (ULG)**, with **Liliana Fernandes as project manager**. Together, they work in close collaboration with various municipal departments.

It is important to emphasize that this strategic and operational management is only possible thanks to the essential support of the Quality and Information Systems Division, whose contribution has been critical—particularly in data collection and analysis, a key element for informed decision-making and impact monitoring.

The collaborative work of this team reflects a collective commitment to sustainable development and the tangible improvement of living conditions across the territory.



TRIKALA (GR) CORE TEAM working on the URBACT ITN EmPowerIngUs project:

The core team is anchored by e-Trikala S.A., the Municipal Development Agency, with key staff including **Christina Karamberi** (Psychologist – Department of Research & Communication), **George Gorgogetas** (Project Management & Implementation), **George Vallas** (Project Implementation), and **Sotiris Serdenis** (EU Project Management Consultant). Their interdisciplinary expertise ensures robust coordination and knowledge transfer across project activities.

The Municipality of Trikala is actively engaged through support of **Konstantina Zachari**, Advisor to the Mayor on the city's climate mission, who plays a key role in the city's efforts to address energy poverty; **Konstantinos Avdelidis**, Special Assistant to the Mayor of Trikala, who also played a key coordinating role in the "Restart My City" initiative; and Trikala's Social Welfare departments, who are pivotal in the functioning of the URBACT Local Group (ULG), offering both operational capacity and deep-rooted community connections that are essential for inclusive project implementation.

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These professionals are not only responsible for delivering frontline services but also act as crucial mediators between policy frameworks and real-life community challenges. Through their daily interaction with citizens, they bring to the ULG first-hand insights into household-level vulnerabilities and evolving needs. This allows the group to tailor interventions more effectively, ensuring that strategies such as the energy poverty one-stop shop and awareness-raising campaigns are grounded in actual local contexts.

In essence, their role is instrumental not only in implementing social policies but also in enabling the holistic and equitable transformation that the ULG seeks to achieve.



The **POMORIE (BG) CORE TEAM** working on the URBACT ITN EmPowerIngUs project:

Georgi Petkov is appointed ULG Coordinator within the EmPowerIngUs project. She is a manager of the Local fisheries action group (FLAG) Pomorie and an External expert to the Pomorie Municipality.

Sofia Todorova is a PR Expert in the Pomorie Municipality who will perform as a **Project coordinator** within the EmPowerIngUs project.

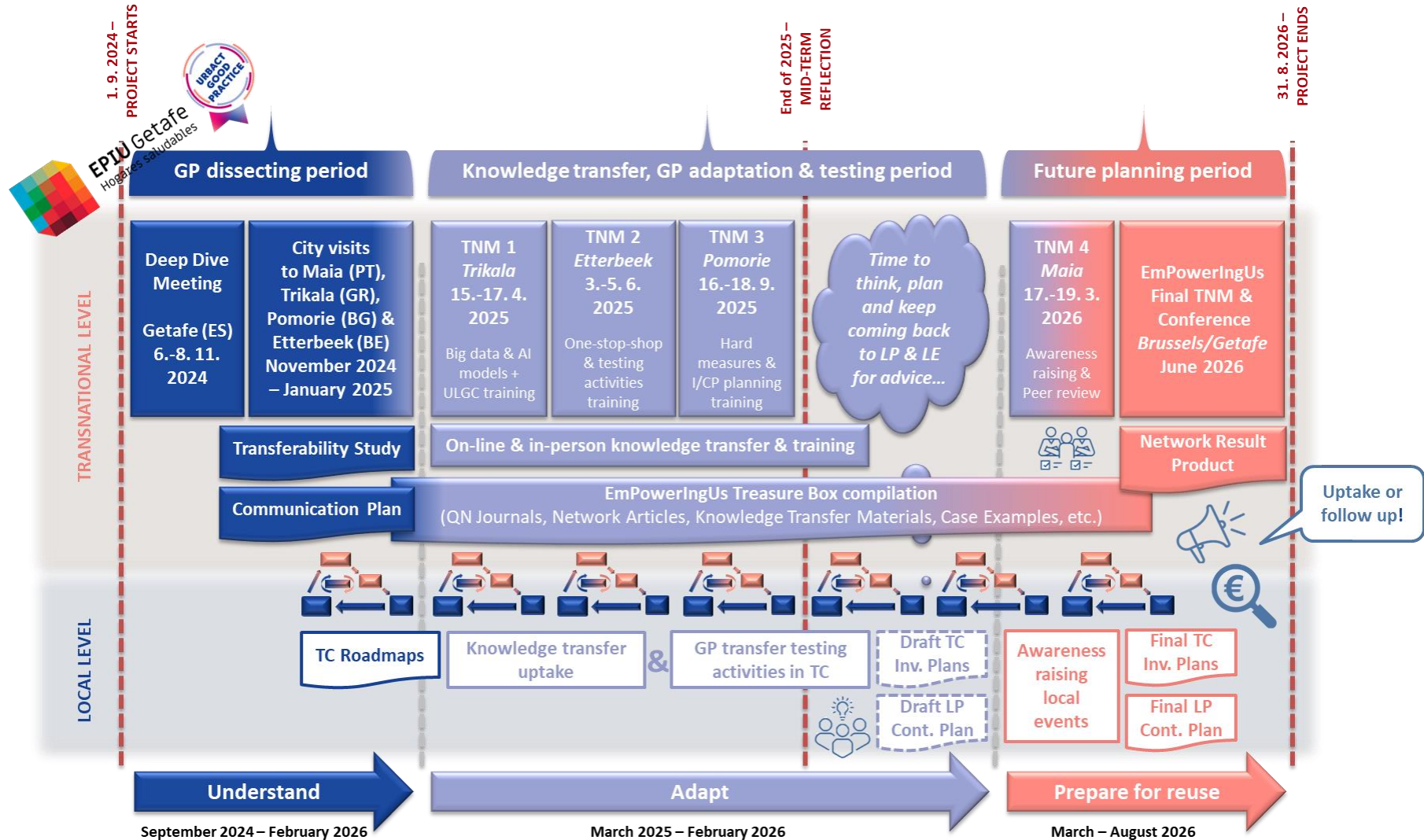
Vanya Vandova is appointed Communication officer within the EmPowerIngUs project. She is an expert of the Local action group (LAG) Pomorie and an External expert to the Pomorie Municipality.

Desislava Boneva is a Chief Accountant of the Pomorie Municipality who will perform as a **Finance officer** within the EmPowerIngUs project.



1.3 ... and this is how we plan to do it!

EmPowerIngUs TRANSFER PROCESS ROADMAP



Those interested in our transfer process concept and methodology, please refer to our Transferability Study that you can find on [our URBACT website](#).

2. ABOUT OUR URBACT LOCAL GROUPS

2.1 How we established our ULGs and how they perform at this point

In this chapter we present the initial steps of our URBACT Local Groups (ULGs) establishment and management process in all EmPowerIngUs cities from the point of view of their ULG coordinators.

At the end of each city sub-chapter, you can find two Stakeholder's Power/Interest Matrixes for Transfer cities – the first one representing the situation before the 1st ULG meeting and the 2nd one representing the current situation in our ULGs. The intent of Stakeholder's Power/Interest Matrixes is not only to show who is sitting around the table, but to use them monitor changes through time in order to understand the dynamics within the individual ULG in relation to the EmPowerIngUs transfer process.

2.2 About the ULG in our Lead Partner city – Getafe (ES)

The ULG in Getafe was formed through a participatory process that built on the partnerships and collaborative networks developed under the EPIU Hogares Saludables project. Its members were carefully selected to ensure a balanced, cross-sector approach to citizen empowerment, energy efficiency, and social inclusion. **The ULG is coordinated by EMSV Getafe**, the municipal housing company, and includes:

- **Ayuntamiento de Getafe**, represented mainly through the Urban Planning, IT, Environment, Education, and Social Welfare departments, providing political support and municipal resources.
- **Public companies such as LYMA** (environmental services and waste management), **GISA** (local economic development and entrepreneurship), and **ALEF** (training and employment programs).
- **Carlos III University and Rey Juan Carlos University**, contributing academic knowledge and research on energy transition and social innovation.
- **Astibot**, a technology company developing digital tools and software solutions for citizen-oriented services.
- **Fundación Naturgy**, promoting social energy rehabilitation through its social fund, in collaboration with **Universidad Pontificia Comillas** to drive actions on the territory.
- **Federation of Neighborhood Associations of Getafe**, acting as a bridge between residents and institutional actors to encourage citizen participation.
- Social organizations including **Murialdo Getafe**, **APANID Getafe**, **YMCA Getafe**, and **AECC Getafe**, which support vulnerable groups and promote social inclusion.
- The directors of **Civic Centers** (Alhóndiga and Juan de la Cierva) and the **Municipal Music School Maestro Gombau**, which serve as community reference points for citizen engagement and cultural activities.
- **Getafe Potencia**, the first residential energy community in Getafe, facilitated through EMSV's One-Stop-Shop (OTC), working to foster collective self-consumption and promote renewable energy initiatives.

This broad and diverse composition enables the ULG to hold targeted, sectoral meetings with specific stakeholders while coordinating all actions centrally through the EMSV team. This guarantees a unified and participatory strategy that leverages technical expertise, institutional collaboration, and citizen involvement to deliver the EmPowerIngUs objectives in Getafe.

We have been very active in the last few months – here are a few impressions from our various activities:



Meeting with Red Cross Getafe



City Visit with Rey Juan Carlos University



Workshop with citizens (CC San Isidro)- Supplies-HHO



Energy Community Meeting



Tactic Urban Action with Red Cross Youth group – La Alhóndiga



Neighbours' rehabilitation workshop in Juan de la Cierva with Neighbourhood association



Energy Communities Workshop

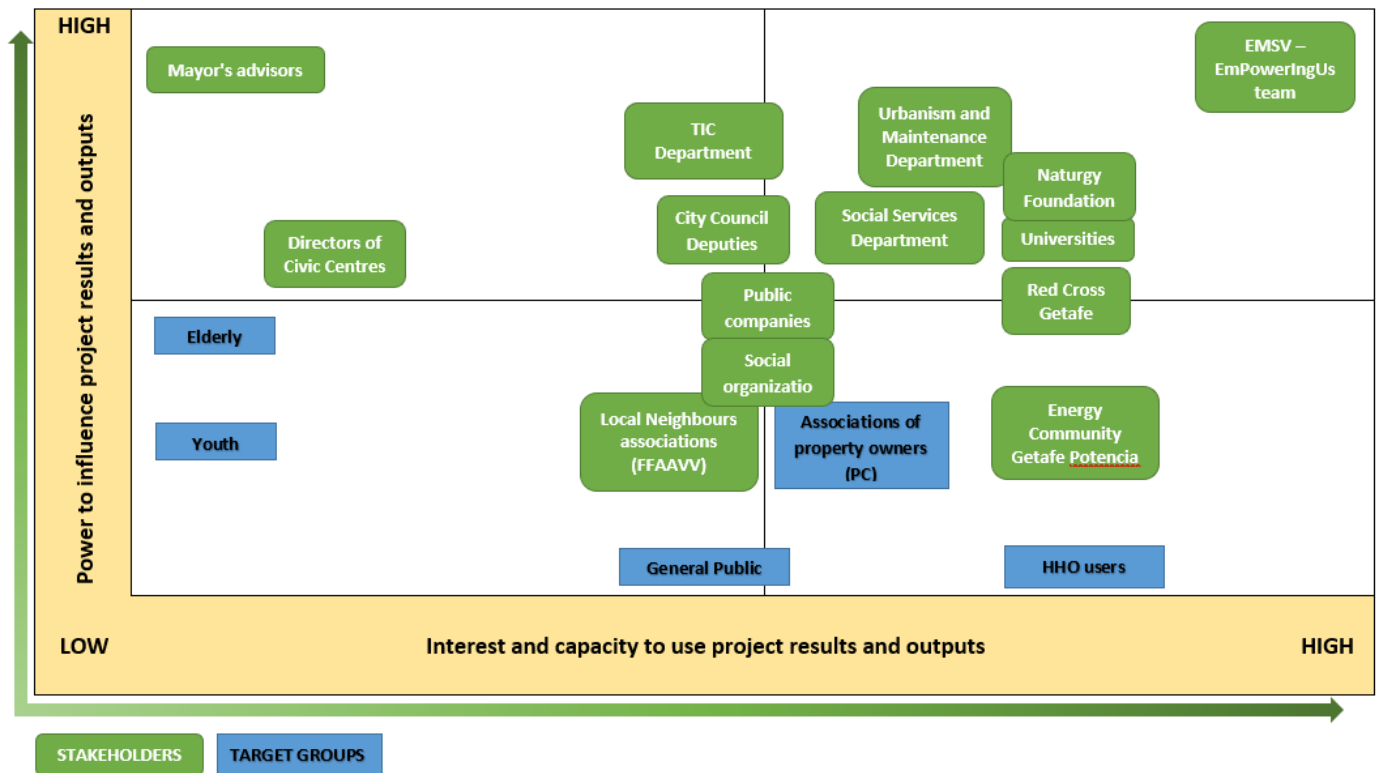


Site visit and agreement of continuity plan for solar installations in Getafe with Naturgy Foundation



Meeting in GISA about energy communities

WHO IS SITTING AROUND THE TABLE IN GETAFE - STAKEHOLDERS POWER/INTEREST MATRIX TODAY



2.3 About the ULG in our Transfer city – Etterbeek (BE)

Etterbeek’s ULG consists of a core group (Level 1) with a stable composition, and a broader group (Level 2) whose membership is more flexible, adapting to the themes addressed and the expertise required.

The core group consists of the following institutions and individuals: the Municipality of Etterbeek (Jean-François Maljean and Valérie Baron, Project Development and Financing; Fabio Barbero, Coordinator of the Climate Plan); the social property agency “AIS” (Yasin Tatou, Head of the Agency); the Public Centre for Social Action “CPAS” (Benjamin Sornin de Leysat, Energy advisor), the Municipal

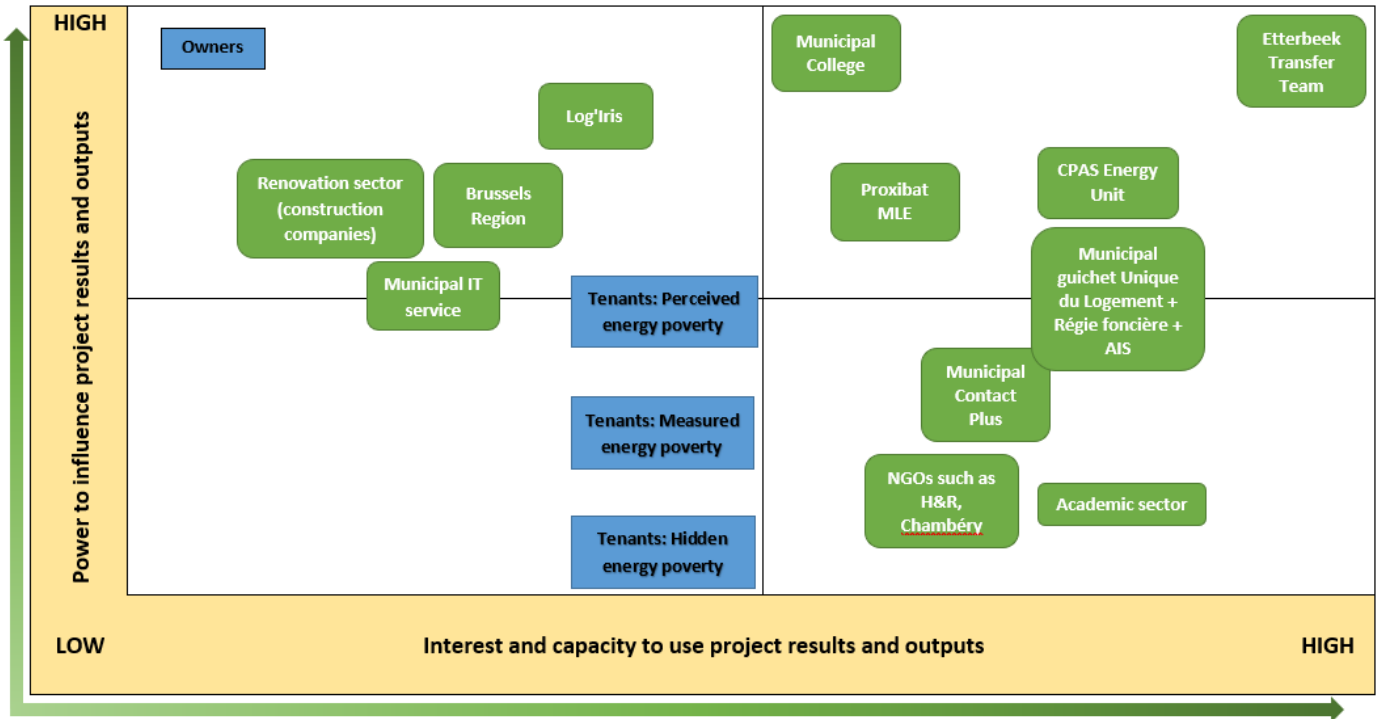


property agency “Régie Foncière” (François Fillatre, Architect). Such a core group brings together complementary expertise, including technical profiles, energy advisors, lawyers, environmental experts, and experienced project managers. The field expertise of our energy advisor and the technical knowledge of our architect provide a solid foundation for our testing activities, including assessments from social and behavioural perspectives. The integration of a climate dimension ensures alignment with the city’s primary environmental policy driver, the Climate Plan. The presence of an elected official sitting on the Municipal Council enables more direct contact and potentially greater political buy-in. The involvement of the Project Development and Financing Unit facilitates the potential integration of these initiatives into the Investment Plan, as well as into future projects and funding opportunities.

Level-2 ULG members. Municipal agents from the buildings and energy units and from the dwellings units are also part of our extended ULG, as well as the Head of the Municipal property agency and the Responsible of the Public Centre for Social Action’s Energy Division. Other members include external stakeholders such

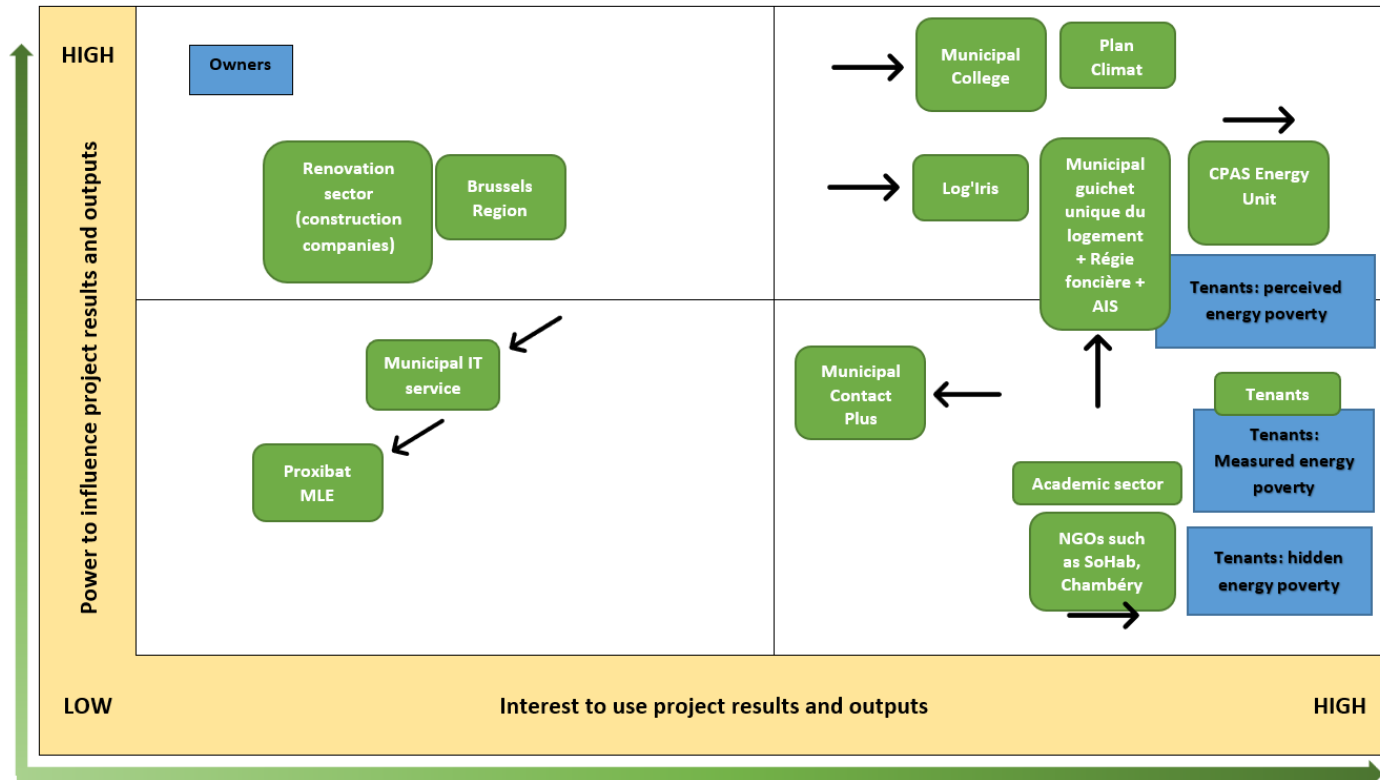
as Etterbeek's Public Housing Company "Logiris", Bruxelles' Social Services Federation "FdSS", "Chambéry" Community Center, Brussels' Research and Innovation Agency "Innoviris", the "Université Libre de Bruxelles", the University of Louvain "UCL Louvain", Renovation and citizens' involvement NGO "SoHab". The regional centre of expertise for territorial development "Perspective.Brussels" and the project manager of the "Empower" project, an EU initiative on energy communities, were also invited.

WHO WAS SITTING AROUND THE TABLE IN ETTERBEEK DURING ITS CREATION



STAKEHOLDERS TARGET GROUPS

WHO IS SITTING AROUND THE TABLE IN ETTERBEEK - STAKEHOLDERS POWER/INTEREST MATRIX TODAY



Arrows show the change of position (back of the arrow = previous position)

STAKEHOLDERS TARGET GROUPS

2.4 About the ULG in our Transfer city – MAIA (PT)

The ULG plays a key role in the successful adaptation, implementation, and transfer of good practices within the URBACT network, with a particular focus on tackling energy poverty. This group is made up of a diverse range of local, regional, and national stakeholders who work collaboratively to ensure an integrated, inclusive, and representative approach to addressing the various dimensions of this challenge.

In Maia, ULG members are responsible for analysing the good practices identified by the network and assessing how they can be tailored to the specific needs and characteristics of the city. To achieve this, it is essential that the group includes representatives from different strategic sectors, ensuring a balanced combination of skills, experiences, and perspectives.

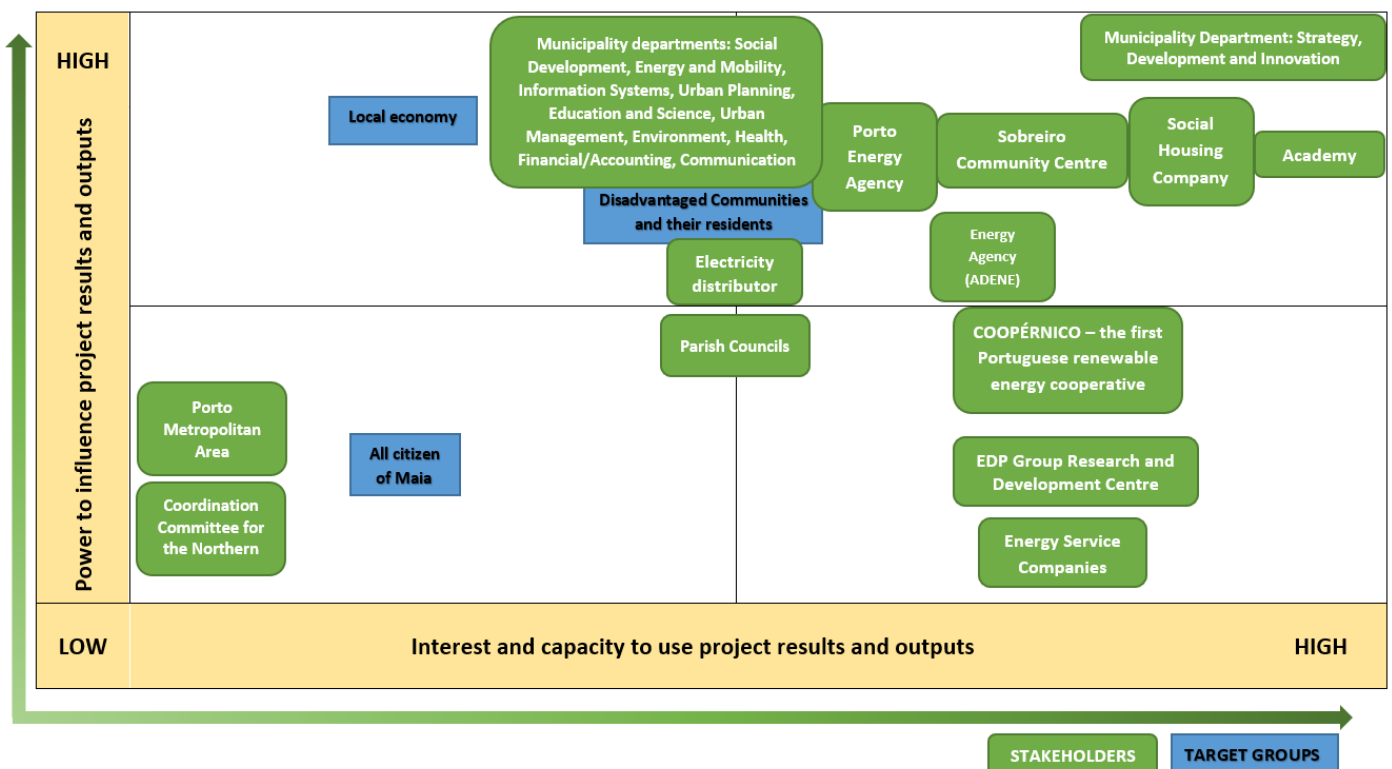


The ULG team includes stakeholders at the national, regional, and local levels, namely representatives from the Directorate-General for Territory (DGT), acting as the URBACT National Contact Point, the Managing Authority (Regional Operational Programme) (CCDR-N), the University of Maia, the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Porto (FAUP), local parish councils, EDP New, social housing municipal company (Espaço Municipal), the Porto Energy Agency (AdEPorto), and a community support social institution (Santa Casa da Misericórdia).

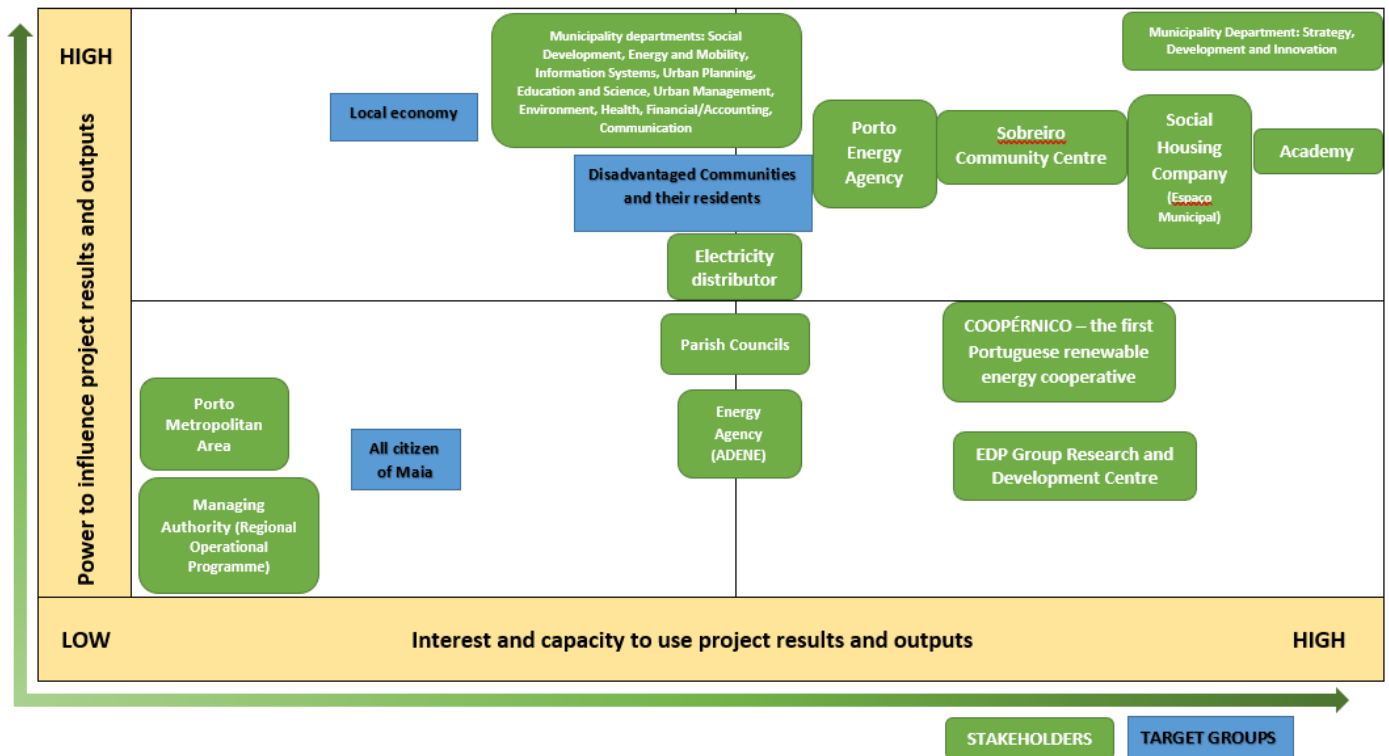
At the internal level, the ULG is supported by an interdepartmental team from the Municipality of Maia, coordinated by the Strategy, Innovation and Development Unit, which manages the project. This team works closely with several municipal departments, including the Quality and Information Systems Division, the Energy and Mobility Division, and the Social Development Division. It also receives cross-cutting support from the Communication Office, the Accounting and Finance Divisions. The involvement of additional municipal divisions is also planned, further strengthening the commitment to a multidisciplinary and collaborative approach.

This governance model enables the ULG to provide an effective, shared, and locally adapted response, promoting the successful transfer of good practices in the fight against energy poverty and contributing to the sustainable and inclusive development of the territory.

WHO WAS SITTING AROUND THE TABLE IN MAIA DURING ITS CREATION



WHO IS SITTING AROUND THE TABLE IN MAIA - STAKEHOLDERS POWER/INTEREST MATRIX TODAY



Note: Energy service companies – the inclusion of Energy Service Companies (ESCOs) in ULG has proven particularly challenging due to various structural and contextual reasons. The municipality faces significant barriers in mobilizing these private actors because these companies tend to prioritize projects that offer scale, predictability, and a clear financial return. As a result, their participation will not be feasible, and they have been removed from the SH.

2.5 About the ULG in our Transfer city – POMORIE (BG)

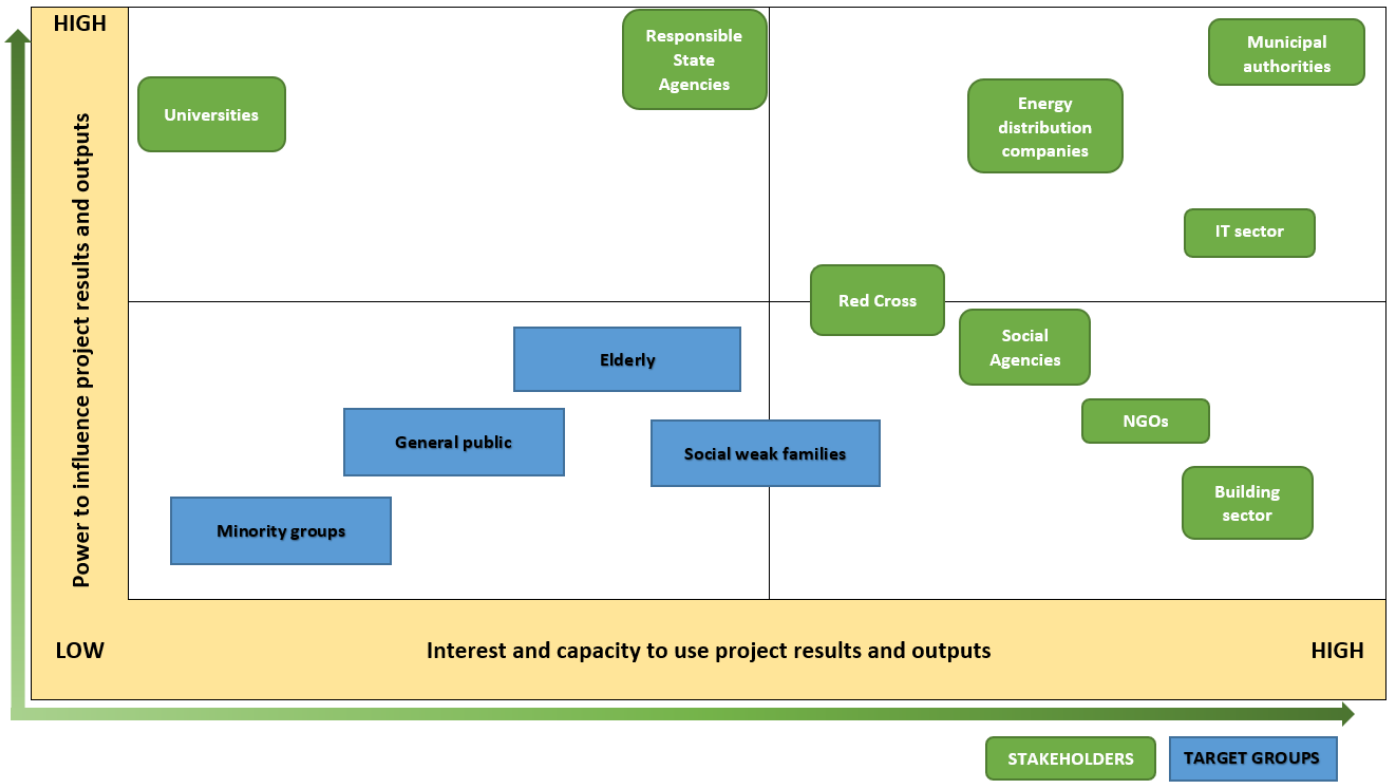
The URBACT Local Group of Pomorie is built on the existing Local Action Groups (LAGs) with representatives of diverse local stakeholders.

In Pomorie Municipality are functioning two LAGs: Fisheries Local Action Group Pomorie and Local Action Group Pomorie. They are established in such a way that they encompass representatives of all relevant and diverse stakeholders, including: local public authority, NGOs, business, citizens and others – all of them relevant to the among which:

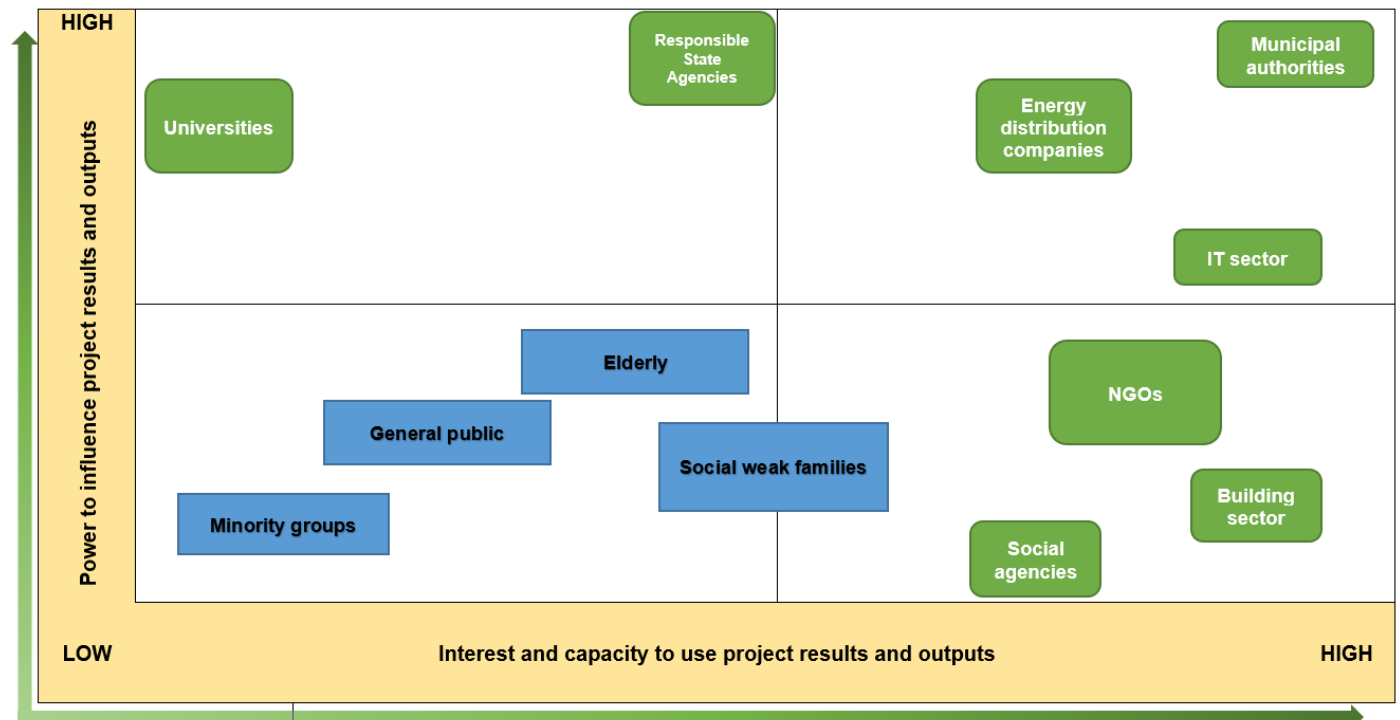


- Private sector: construction companies, innovation start-up company, etc.
- Non-profit sector:
 - Associations of owners of multi-family residential buildings;
 - Prosveta Community centre,
 - Community support centre,
 - Municipal Social Service Enterprise,
 - Representatives of vulnerable groups,
 - Fishing Association, etc.
- Public sector – representees of Pomorie Municipality – urbanist, engineer, lawyer, etc.

WHO WAS SITTING AROUND THE TABLE IN POMORIE DURING ITS CREATION



WHO IS SITTING AROUND THE TABLE IN POMORIE - STAKEHOLDERS POWER/INTEREST MATRIX TODAY



Note: The Stakeholder Red Cross was deleted from the Stakeholder Analysis diagram, because they show low interest in the project and are not able to deliver useful inputs for the project results

2.6 About the ULG in our Transfer city – TRIKALA (GR)

Trikala’s ULG team constitutes a vital component of the EmPowerIngUs project at the local level. It is established with the logic of creating a collaborative framework that brings together key local stakeholders from various sectors, ensuring a comprehensive approach in addressing energy poverty and social inclusion. Our approach concerning the ULG formation was to identify potential stakeholders. A core and a wider group

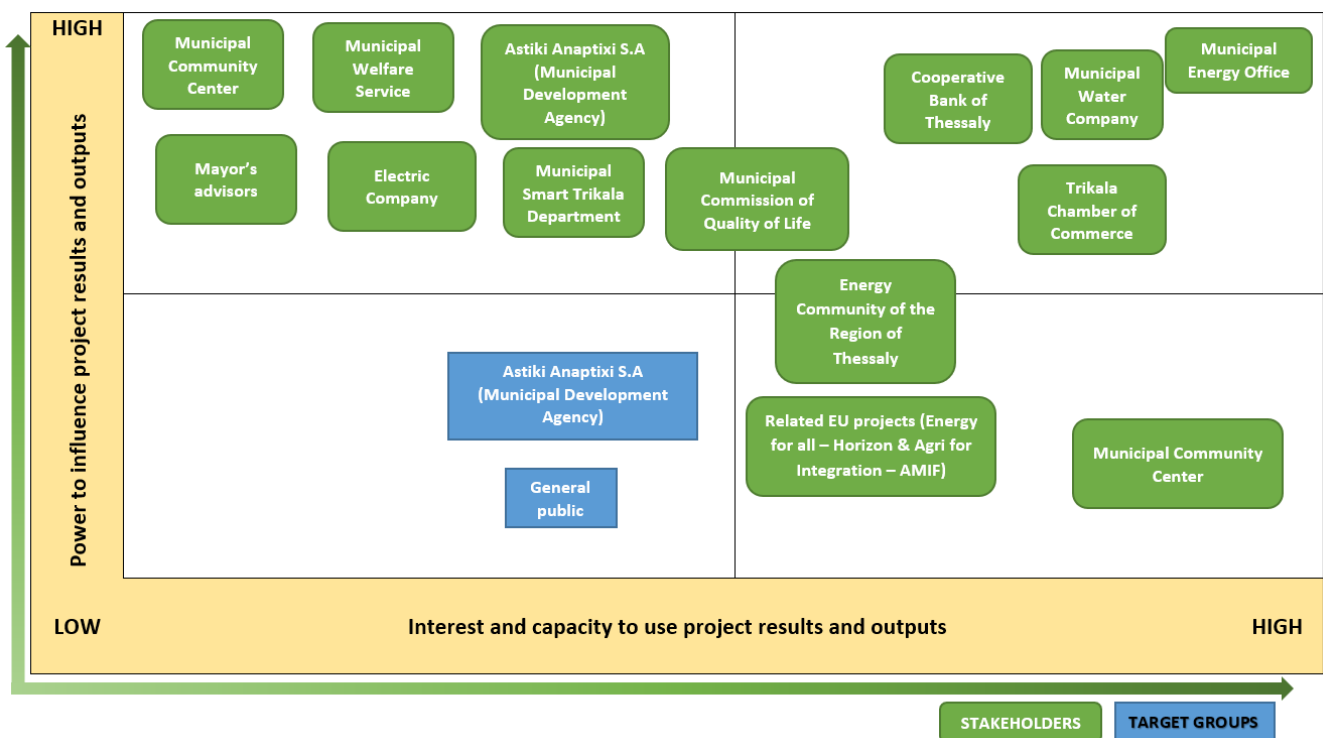
were formed. The selection of the stakeholders took place under an open procedure to ensure broad representation. The core group (representatives from the Municipality, Municipal Development Agency e-Trikala, Urban Development, Municipal Social Services, Municipal Community Centre), holds primary responsibility for the project's best practices and knowledge transfer and implementation on local level. The wider group (public companies, utilities, interested individuals) offers support on specific issues and activities, ensuring broad engagement and expertise.



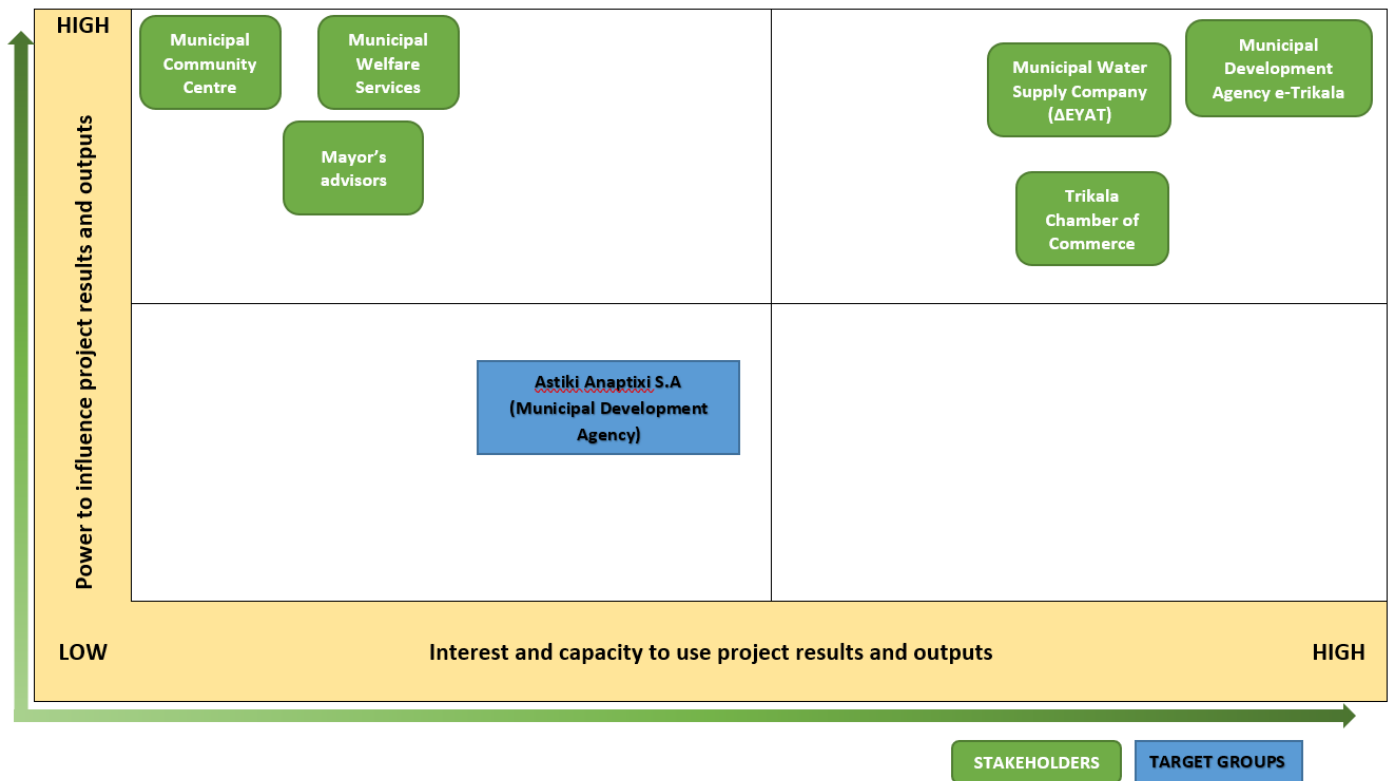
Our criteria for the ULG formation were to consider relevant public agencies, municipal departments, local enterprises, and community organizations based on their essential to the project's success expertise and resources. We aim at organizing multiple ULG meetings, providing participants with ongoing opportunities to discuss project progress, define the local context, identify good practices, monitor implementation, and offer suggestions, where needed.

Two ULG meetings have been held in Trikala so far. To mobilize participants, inform them about the EmPowerIngUs project, and fully understand their interests, capacities and ambitions, the first ULG meeting on 26th November 2024, was held during the Trikala city visit. The meeting was organised in a dispersed form, executed through a series of bilateral meetings with individual ULG members. Key takeaways from this session included the critical role of data collection and analysis in identifying and addressing hidden energy poverty, as well as the need for strong interdepartmental collaboration at the local level. The second meeting, held on 19th February 2025, served to review the progress achieved since the organization of the introductory session and to share updates among participants. It featured an in-depth presentation of the transfer methodology and a detailed overview of the EPIU model. The session concluded with a presentation of URBACT's thematic training program, which includes practical tools such as energy bill optimization, energy-saving kits, awareness campaigns, and home visits. The meeting emphasized the importance of reinforcing local adaptation and introducing practical tools and interventions, as well as preparing for pilot actions and training of local actors. By bringing together diverse actors with complementary expertise, the ULG establishes a collaborative and cross-sectoral environment that strengthens the city's ability to develop and implement effective, locally adapted solutions to energy poverty and social challenges.

WHO WAS SITTING AROUND THE TABLE IN TRIKALA DURING ITS CREATION



WHO IS SITTING AROUND THE TABLE IN TRIKALA - STAKEHOLDERS POWER/INTEREST MATRIX TODAY



Note: Several stakeholders who were included in the initial SH/TG mapping are not currently reflected in the updated influence/interest diagram. This is primarily because, during the early phase of the ULG's work, the focus was placed on engaging a core group of highly relevant stakeholders to ensure continuity, ownership, and coherence in the development process. As the project progresses, particularly with the upcoming testing activities and the preparation of the Investment Plan, we expect higher participation from all ULG member and, therefore their move on the matrix diagram is projected. The engagement of a broader range of stakeholders, depending on the thematic focus and local implementation needs is also expected. This phased approach allows for more targeted engagement and efficient coordination.

3. OUR IMPRESSIONS FROM THE DEEP DIVE CITY VISIT TO GETAFE (ES)

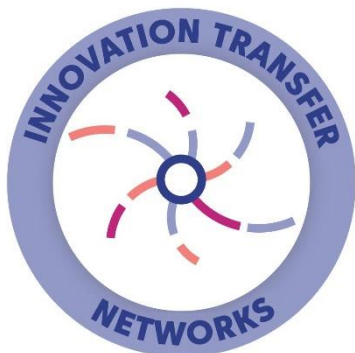


5. "HOT DEBRIEF" – OUR KEY TRANSFER PROCESS MOMENTS FROM THIS QUARTER





EPIU Getafe
Hogares saludables



EmPowerIngUs