C4TALENT

Alghero, Italy
42.458 inhabitants

Challenge

In Alghero, youth outmigration is driven by rising housing costs linked to tourism, limited shared spaces, and weak connections between skills, jobs and local businesses, making it difficult for young people to imagine a future in the city.

Local heroes

This transformation relies on the municipality, Fondazione Alghero, local businesses, cultural and social associations, as well as young people themselves working together to activate spaces and reconnect education, work and everyday urban life.

Solution

Reconnecting people, spaces and opportunities

Through C4TALENT, Alghero focuses on reconnecting what had become fragmented. Small community hubs were tested, underused spaces are mapped (Atelier#4 and Atelier#5) and will be activated, and training programmes will be better aligned with local economic needs.

The Integrated Action Plan prioritises visible, accessible entry points where young people can meet, work, learn and develop ideas, making opportunity tangible and locally rooted.



Lessons learnt

- **Talent stays where everyday life works**
- **Spaces matter as much as policies**
- **Small, visible actions build trust**
- **Reconnecting actors creates momentum**

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Comune di Alghero

C4TALENT

Alytus, Lithuania
51.340 inhabitants

Challenge

Alytus had an emerging innovation hub, but it lacked clear focus, momentum and coordination. Entrepreneurial support was scarse, pathways for startups, young talent and first-time entrepreneurs remained fragmented and underused.

Local heroes

This shift was made possible by the municipality, political leadership, the URBACT Local Group, educational institutions, business support organisations and local entrepreneurs, whose coordinated efforts helped align vision, resources and implementation.

Lessons learnt

- **An innovation hub needs content, not only space**
- **Political commitment accelerates ecosystem building**
- **Connecting education, mentoring and business support is key**
- **Confidence grows when actions are embedded in strategy**

Solution

From concept to a functioning innovation ecosystem

Through C4TALENT, Alytus transformes its innovation hub into a coherent local ecosystem. Mentoring, acceleration programmes, STEAM education and targeted support for first-time entrepreneurs were brought together into a single pathway. Backed by strong political leadership and stakeholder engagement, these actions were embedded in the Integrated Action Plan, turning experimentation into long-term commitment and making entrepreneurship a visible and supported choice.



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C4TALENT

Centar Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina 45.312 inhabitants

Challenge

Centar Sarajevo faces high youth unemployment (35%+), strong outward migration and structural inequality, making entrepreneurship feel risky and disconnected from everyday support for many young people.

Local heroes

This progress is driven by the municipality, business support organisations, educational institutions, IT companies and young entrepreneurs, working together to create inclusive and resilient pathways.

Lessons learnt

- Focus on conditions, not shortcuts
- Inclusion strengthens ecosystems
- Infrastructure builds confidence
- Resilience comes from long-term commitment

Solution

Making staying a viable choice

As a result of C4TALENT, the municipality focuses now on building enabling conditions rather than quick fixes. Investments in entrepreneurship infrastructure, inclusive access to support, and opportunities linked to the green transition were brought together into a coherent approach. The Integrated Action Plan strengthens local support systems so that staying, building a business and contributing locally becomes a realistic option.



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OPĆINA CENTAR SARAJEVO

C4TALENT

Nyíregyháza, Hungary
116,282 inhabitants

Challenge

For years, Nyíregyháza has faced steady youth outmigration. Young people left to study elsewhere and rarely returned, while local employers struggled to reconnect with former students. Education, employment, and long-term settlement operated as disconnected stages rather than a continuous talent journey.

Local heroes

This shift would not have been possible without strong cooperation between the municipality, local employers, educational institutions, strategic consultants, and the URBACT Local Group.

Political leadership and stakeholder commitment ensured that talent retention became a shared responsibility rather than a standalone policy.

Solution

"Small Sports for Big Achievements"

Through C4TALENT, Nyíregyháza mapped the full pathway of young people – from education to employment to long-term settlement – to identify where connections were lost. The city developed actions to reconnect with former students, align education with local labour market needs, and strengthen cooperation between employers, schools, and the municipality.

Instead of hoping graduates might return by chance, the Integrated Action Plan establishes concrete pathways that make returning, staying, and building a future in Nyíregyháza a realistic and supported choice.



Lessons learnt

- **Talent retention starts long before graduation**
- **Treat education, employment, and settlement as one journey**
- **Reconnecting with former students requires active outreach**
- **Clear pathways matter more than isolated initiatives**

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NYÍREGYHÁZA MEGYEI JOGÚ VÁROS ÖNKORMÁNYZATA

NYÍREGYHÁZA

C4TALENT

Piraeus, Greece
168.151 inhabitants

Challenge

In Piraeus, young entrepreneurs struggled with their first steps. Affordable workspace, mentoring and practical guidance were hard to access, despite the presence of a major university and a strong economic base.

Local heroes

This action relied on close cooperation between the municipality, the university, local mentors, business support organisations and young entrepreneurs who tested and shaped the support in practice.

Lessons learnt

- Start small, act fast
- Test solutions with real users
- Proximity builds trust
- Practical support matters more than promises

Solution

Making support tangible

Instead of waiting for large-scale reform, Piraeus used C4TALENT to test immediate, low-threshold solutions.

A small business hub, mentoring schemes and closer university–business cooperation were piloted to respond directly to real needs.

These experiences shaped an Integrated Action Plan focused on usability, speed and accessibility — making support something entrepreneurs can step into right away.



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PLUS ΠΕΙΡΑΙΑΣ

C4TALENT

Pula, Croatia
52.220 inhabitants

Challenge

Pula's economy relies heavily on tourism, leading to seasonal jobs, rising housing costs and limited career prospects for young professionals. At the same time, large underused spaces offers potential but (so far) remained disconnected from talent development.

Local heroes

This shift was driven by close collaboration between the City of Pula, the URBACT Local Group, the university, business support organisations, civil society and urban development stakeholders, working together to align space, skills and opportunity.

Lessons learnt

- **Space can be a catalyst for economic change**
- **Diversification requires long-term vision**
- **Talent strategies work best when linked to urban planning**
- **Opening places can open opportunities**

Solution

Turning a closed place into an open future

Through C4TALENT, Pula centres its action on the revitalisation of Vallelunga, a former military area. The city connected entrepreneurship support, innovation activities, housing considerations and spatial planning into a single vision.

Vallelunga is being transformed into an innovation district with incubation, training and collaborative spaces, helping diversify the economy beyond tourism and create long-term opportunities for talent.



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GRAD PULA
CITTÀ DI POLA

C4TALENT

Roeselare, Belgium
67.240 inhabitants

Challenge

Companies in Roeselare face growing labour shortages and increasingly recruit workers from non-EU countries. When these workers settle in the city, they often struggle to find clear answers to practical matters (e.g.: housing, schooling) and to integrate socially, highlighting the need for targeted labour market and integration support.

Local heroes

This approach depends on close cooperation between the city administration, employer organization (and ULG member) VOKA and companies.

Solution

International House

An International House can meet the needs of companies who (are willing to) recruit expats and expats themselves by acting as a(n):

- **Information centre for these target groups to give advice and answer questions**
- **Service centre (organizing activities in order to build an ecosystem)**
- **Knowledge centre to gather data and expertise on this topic**



Lessons learnt

- **Talent Expats participating in International House activities report very high satisfaction, with an average score of 9/10. Feedback highlights a clear demand for a broader and more diverse range of activities in the future.**
- **The information centre is valued, particularly because it provides guidance in English, this reduces barriers.**

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ROESELARE is 'r voor jou

C4TALENT

Rzeszów, Poland
196.636 inhabitants

Challenge

Rzeszów faces the challenge of strengthening its academic and development potential in the context of demographic change and high youth mobility. A key task is to create coherent development pathways that enable students and graduates to link their professional and personal future with Rzeszów.

Local heroes

The project was implemented through the cooperation of the Rzeszów City Hall (Urban Innovation Centre - Urban Lab), higher education institutions, business support organisations, and the Local URBACT Group.

A key factor was the joint co-design of solutions, testing of actions, and the institutional embedding of the implementation of the Integrated Action Plan.

Lessons learnt

- **Talent retention requires a systemic approach, not isolated projects.**
- **Institutional integration is more effective than creating new structures.**
- **The study period is crucial for building a long-term relationship with the city.**
- **The sustainability of actions requires institutionalisation and permanent cooperation mechanisms.**

Solution

"Small Sports for Big Achievements"

The solution for Rzeszów's local ecosystem is the Integrated Action Plan (IAP), developed within the framework of the C4TALENT project through a collaborative process involving experts from the academic, business, social, and administrative sectors. The document is the result of the work of the Local URBACT Group and project partners, serving as a shared, agreed framework for fostering entrepreneurship and retaining talent in the city.

The Integrated Action Plan organises the area of business support, integrates institutional actions, and provides a foundation for long-term coordination of policies, initiatives, and projects within the local innovation and startup ecosystem.



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rzeszów capital of innovation

C4TALENT

Varberg, Sweden
67.800 inhabitants

Challenge

Varberg is rapidly transforming through the development of the Västerport district. To fully seize this opportunity, the city must strengthen its ability to attract and retain talent and investment while addressing competition and key structural challenges.

Local heroes

This transition relies on cooperation between the municipality, the campus, local businesses and the innovation stakeholders in the region, working together to connect education with the city's economic and spatial future.

Lessons learnt

- **Talent attraction is an urban issue, not only an educational one**
- **Strong ecosystems grow from cross-sector cooperation**
- **A strong brand attracts talents, investments and residents!**

Solution

An Innovation district

The idea of creating an innovation district in Varberg has been gradually taking shape, and the development of the new district Västerport has made the need for such a platform—and more coordinated stakeholder efforts—increasingly clear.'

Through ongoing dialogues between Varberg Municipality, businesses, academia, and property owners, a shared curiosity has emerged to establish an Innovation district in Varberg. A collaborative environment, supported by a shared brand identity, will enhance Varberg's appeal for talents, business establishments, and investments.



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Alexandersoninstitutet

VARBERGS KOMMUN

C4TALENT

Vilanova I la Geltrú, Spain
71.000 inhabitants

Challenge

Vilanova i la Geltrú had many initiatives supporting entrepreneurs and digital talent, but the ecosystem was fragmented. Potential users struggled to navigate services, making opportunities hard to find and limiting the impact of existing support structures.

Local heroes

The transformation relies on strong cooperation between Neàpolis, the municipality, educational institutions, business associations and members of the URBACT Local Group, who jointly aligned services and shared ownership of the ecosystem.

Lessons learnt

- **Too many initiatives can feel like none at all**
- **Clear entry points increase participation**
- **Coordination can be more powerful than new funding**
- **User perspective should guide ecosystem design**

Solution

Making the ecosystem visible and coherent

Instead of creating new programmes, the city focuses now on coordination. Through C4TALENT, Vilanova redesigned the entrepreneur's journey, clarified institutional roles and repositioned Neàpolis as a key infrastructure for entrepreneurship, innovation, and talent development.

This improved accessibility, reduced confusion and ensured that talent knew where to start and what support to expect.



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AJUNTAMENT DE Vilanova i la Geltrú

neàpolis