WELDI

Albacete, Spain
173 000 inhabitants

Challenge

When Albacete joined WELDI in 2023, the city faced challenges related to seasonal migrant workers linked to its agricultural economy and precarious living conditions. The network provided an opportunity to strengthen access to information and rights through its Integrated Action Plan.

Local heroes

The members of the ULG who provide information about their resources, technicians of public administrations (health, education, and social services).

And of course, the involvement of the IT department of Albacete City Council.

Lessons learnt

Always include migrants in order to understand their priorities and needs, either individually or through social organizations in the city.

Solution

MICADO App

Search for alternative information that is truthful, clear, agile, and effective, about the resources and services offered by the city, both by public administrations and by various social entities.

Since 2023 we have maintained continuous contact with the ULG and technicians from various administrations, and in 2024 we became aware of the MICADO app, which allows us to have all the information we want them to know, for free, in a mobile phone app.



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AYUNTAMIENTO DE ALBACETE

WELDI

Cluj-Napoca, Romania
287 000 inhabitants

Challenge

In five years, Cluj-Napoca's non-Romanian population increased from 8,000 to 22,000. Facing new integration challenges, the city chose to build a welcoming approach with civil society and national partners, moving beyond emergency responses.

Local heroes

The commitment of the new prefect, the national government representative at the county level, has been essential for tackling bottlenecks that have to do with national level coordination, such as a slow processing of residence permits.

The newly created International Citizens Council will be a key resource in developing the Integrated Action Plan together with experts by experience.

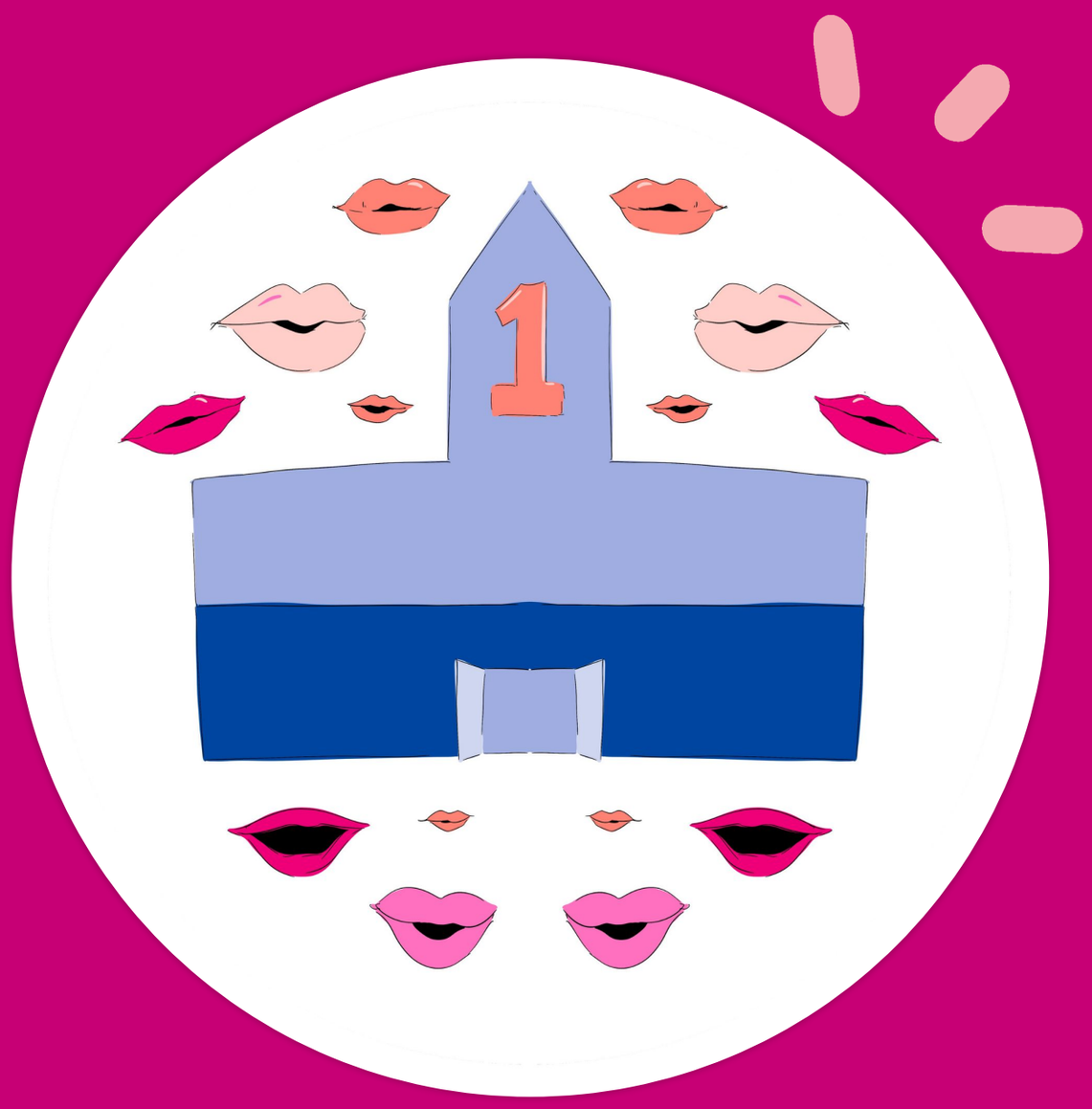
Lessons learnt

Building relationships with key actors in National government and International organisations and incorporating them into existing cooperation structures has been essential in making Cluj's IAP more impactful.

Solution

One Stop Shop

Before the start of WELDI, Cluj city council had already provided a space where the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) provides language training and advice for migrants. Through WELDI and the new cooperation it forged, this space will now be become a fully fledged One-Stop-Shop providing guided support regarding residence procedures, access to the labor market, social services,legal counseling, school enrollment and registration with the family doctor for migrants.



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PRIMĂRIA CLUJ-NAPOCA

WELDI

Fundão, Portugal
27 000 inhabitants

Challenge

In 2022–2023, migrants represented around 4–5% of Fundão's population, driven by labour demand. The main challenge was not the lack of services, but bridging access to rights and social belonging in a rural context.

Local heroes

Shaïsta arrived in Fundão from Kabul with the dream of becoming a doctor. Through the WELDI podcast, her story gained visibility and connected her with key local actors. This led the University of Beira Interior to accept her and open a pathway for her medical studies.



Solution

Conversas a Propósito

In 2025, Fundão launched Conversas a Propósito, a locally recorded podcast sharing real stories of migration and everyday integration.
The action brought together migrants, professionals and local decision-makers around concrete themes such as work, school, health and language.
Produced with community actors, the podcast was widely disseminated through schools, social media, WhatsApp groups and local radio.
It reached over 10,000 listens in a short period, with strong engagement when migrant voices were central.
The initiative showed how low-cost, human-centred communication tools can strengthen social cohesion.



Lessons learnt

For other cities wishing to replicate the action, Fundão highlights key lessons:

- **Listen first. Trust starts with being heard.**
- **Keep formats simple. Podcasts and short stories are accessible and low-cost.**
- **Mix voices. Combining migrant and professional perspectives builds credibility.**
- **Use existing networks. Schools, media and community groups extend reach.**
- **Plan beyond the pilot. Successful tests can support long-term strategies.**

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fundão 365 dias à descoberta

WELDI

Lampedusa, Italy
6 500 inhabitants

Challenge

As a small Mediterranean island at Europe's southern border, Lampedusa faces intense migration pressure, with around 100,000 arrivals each year. Limited infrastructure and insularity shape local responses. Through WELDI, the municipality strengthens health and reception systems with state and regional partners.

Local heroes

In Lampedusa, the model is embodied by Tania, a midwife working from the mobile clinic. Supported by cultural mediators, health staff and emergency responders, she delivers dignified care in complex situations, turning a protocol into a functioning system of care.



Lessons learnt

Local authorities, particularly municipalities, are best placed to bring together all the different stakeholders involved in a joint action. They know better than anyone else the real challenges and needs of local communities.

Solution

The Lampedusa Model

A turning point came with the introduction of a mobile clinic, bringing obstetric and gynaecological care directly to women at arrival and transit points.

This innovation became a cornerstone of the Lampedusa Model, ensuring rapid, safe and differentiated triage for both migrant women and residents.

The model relies on a shared protocol coordinating the municipality, ASP Palermo, the Italian Red Cross and emergency services, improving access to care while easing pressure on local facilities.



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WELDI

Liège, Belgium
195 000 inhabitants

Challenge

As a highly diverse city, Liège entered WELDI with a strong political commitment to inclusion, formalised through the 2017 Welcoming City Motion. The project helped translate this vision into concrete action by strengthening cooperation between the city and civil society.

Local heroes

In Liège, civil society has played a central role in shaping the city's approach to migrant integration, initiating the "Liège, a welcoming city" motion that was later adopted by the city council. These actors remained closely involved in developing the action plan, ensuring that measures were co-designed and that migrant integration became a shared civic project rather than a purely institutional policy.

Lessons learnt

For the City of Liège, it was important to collaborate with civil society organizations to ensure that the action plan would be implemented both by the city administration and by the people living in the city. Therefore, from the beginning of the WELDI Project, civil society played an important role.
For each transnational meeting, Liège sent a delegation made up of representatives from both the administration and civil society.

Solution

Create a Liège City Hospitality Advisory Council

In Liège, a city shaped by encounters and diversity, a shared ambition was born: to turn hospitality into a living public policy. This vision led to the creation of the "Liège, a Hospitable City" Advisory Council (CCLVH). Designed as a space for dialogue and cooperation, the Council brings together public authorities, civil society, researchers, and citizens. The CCLVH formulates proposals, evaluates policies, and stands firmly against all forms of discrimination. It also raises public awareness about human rights, respect, and equality. Driven by the Social Cohesion Plan, the Council will work every day to ensure that Liège is not only a city that welcomes but a city that truly includes.



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Liège

WELDI

Osijek, Croatia
96 000 inhabitants

Challenge

Migration has long shaped Osijek's local reality, from displacement during the Yugoslav wars to its role in receiving refugees since 2015, including people fleeing the war in Ukraine. These experiences fostered strong local solidarity and close cooperation between the city and civil society, forming the core of Osijek's URBACT Local Group within WELDI.



Local heroes

Twana Rasoul's journey highlights the decisive role of civil society organisations in supporting pathways toward stability, inclusion and professional development.

From the outset, local associations were his main point of contact, providing guidance, access to information, training opportunities and community networks. Acting as bridges to institutions, education providers and the labour market, their continuous and personalised support was key in turning opportunities into sustainable outcomes.



Lessons learnt

It is crucial to place civil society organizations at the heart of the initiative. Associations are often the first and most trusted point of contact for participants, making them essential partners in a one-stop shop model where guidance, support, and coordination are provided in one place.



Solution

One stop shop

The one-stop shop concept is currently in the planning phase and has not yet been implemented. It aims to create an integrated system bringing key services together into a single framework to simplify processes and ensure a consistent user experience. A major strength of the initiative lies in the strong and complementary group of engaged stakeholders, who share a common understanding of the project's goals and values. Their collaboration supports effective planning, early identification of challenges, and the definition of operational models. At this stage, the focus is on strategic alignment and partnership-building to ensure the future one-stop shop is sustainable, efficient, and impactful.



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Grad Osijek

WELDI

Seine-Saint-Denis, France
1 645 000 inhabitants

Challenge

Home to 130 nationalities and 177 languages, Seine-Saint-Denis is deeply shaped by migration. Despite strong economic activity, social inequalities and access barriers persist. In a complex institutional landscape, coordination is a key challenge. Through WELDI, the Integrated Action Plan strengthens cooperation for a more coherent welcome.

Local heroes

This action relied on the mobilisation of the Seine-Saint-Denis URBACT Local Group, bringing together civil society, migrants, public services and researchers. ANVITA co-facilitated the process, with Campus Condorcet supporting concrete outputs such as the Maison de l'hospitalité study.



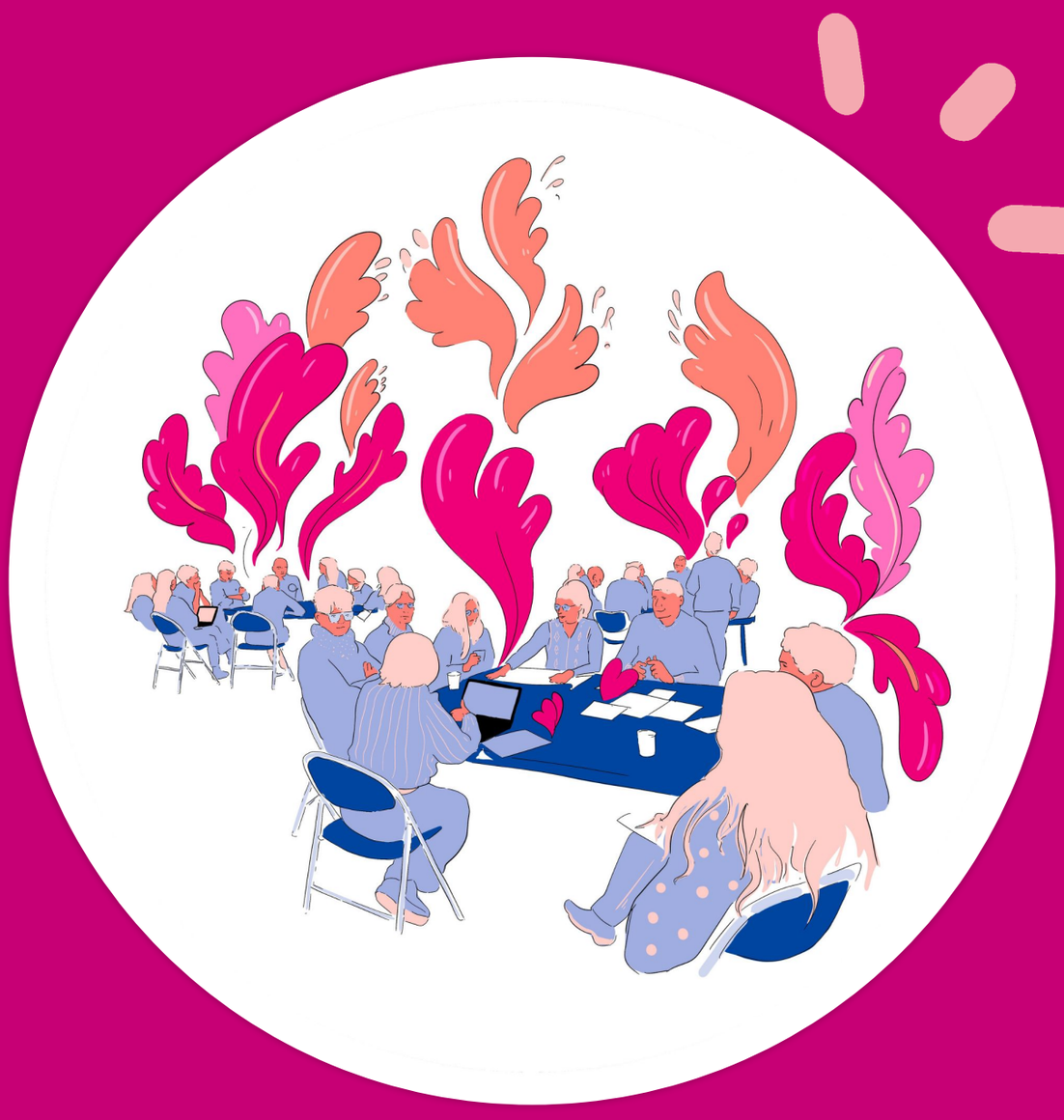
Lessons learnt

- **Secure cross-departmental commitment early.**
- **Build and sustain a strong local stakeholder network.**
- **Share information simply and regularly.**
- **Use meetings to learn, not only coordinate.**
- **Turn cooperation into long-term projects.**

Solution

Supporting the recognition of diplomas

In April 2024, the local URBACT group faced a clear gap: many foreign residents in France work below the qualifications they earned back home. We trained employment advisers on the legal and administrative steps to recognise credentials and launched a partnership with ENIC-NARIC France, a government agency. In spring 2025, ENIC-NARIC joined Seine-Saint-Denis' French-learning professional meetings and ran a webinar. The Department aims to make recognition easier.



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seine-saint-denis LE DÉPARTEMENT

WELDI

Sosnowiec, Poland
179 000 inhabitants

Challenge

The Russian aggression against Ukraine turned Sosnowiec into a city of arrival, with Ukrainian refugees and economic migrants settling in parallel. Through WELDI, the city strengthened coordinated reception policies, surveyed Ukrainian refugees' needs, and explored the One-Stop-Shop model through exchanges with other Polish cities.

Local heroes

This transformation was powered by frontline workers within the ULG, especially in education and social service, who face the realities of migration every day. Their creativity, empathy, and hands-on problem-solving turned lived experience into concrete solutions and laid the foundation for the Municipal Migration Team.

Lessons learnt

Identifying and empowering local change leaders is key to driving lasting impact. Engaged, experienced, and passionate stakeholders, particularly those on the frontline, can inspire and mobilize even the most skeptical actors, turning individual enthusiasm into collective momentum for innovative, locally tailored solutions.

Solution

Turning Crisis Response into Lasting Solutions for Newcomers

The city transformed fragmented crisis actions into a coordinated, locally tailored system by aligning education, social services, employment actors, and NGOs into one synchronized network.

The establishment of a Municipal Migration Team and a City Migration Coordinator became a true game changer at our scale, anchoring migration governance as a permanent city responsibility.



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Sosnowiec

WELDI

Timișoara, Romania
319 000 inhabitants

Challenge

Timișoara's growing diversity brought newcomers with varied legal statuses, languages and needs. Despite existing services, migrants often faced information gaps and inconsistent practices, while stereotypes and misinformation risked weakening public support. The city needed to shift from emergency reception to a welcoming approach fostering belonging and trust.

Local heroes

This action relied on:

- **Migrants and refugees, as peer supporters and co-creators:**
- **Local NGOs and volunteers, acting as trusted intermediaries.**
- **Municipal social and public services, ensuring access to rights and coordination**
- **Schools, healthcare professionals, and employers, adapting practices for inclusion**
- **Cultural and media actors, amplifying real stories and countering stereotypes**

Lessons learnt

Welcoming newcomers effectively requires cities to design clear and coordinated pathways rather than isolated services, to combine practical support with participation and storytelling, and to treat belonging as a long-term policy objective rather than a short-term response to arrival.

Solution

Home in Timișoara
From Arrival to Belonging

Through the WELDI Integrated Action Plan, Timișoara launched Home in Timișoara, a welcoming action co-designed with migrants, NGOs and public institutions. The initiative created a coherent reception pathway linking key services.

As a result, over 500 migrants and refugees received direct support, with 10 institutions and NGOs working together and more than 25 professionals engaged across sectors.

By involving volunteers and migrants as peer mentors and storytellers, the action strengthened trust, reduced misinformation and reinforced a shared sense of belonging.



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Municipiul Timișoara

WELDI

Utrecht, Netherlands
367 964 inhabitants

Challenge

Since 2011, Utrecht has promoted a rights-based approach, providing "bed, bath and bread" to 240 undocumented people each year. Through its Integrated Action Plan, the city supports the estimated 5,000 undocumented migrants with practical tools such as a digital app and a city card, despite a contested national context.

Local heroes

- Undocumented migrants : who are involved in developing the functionalities of the card,
- Local NGOs : thanks to their networks, communities and in-depth knowledge of the undocumented community's needs,
- Municipal departments : especially the Utrecht International Center and our talented graphic designers.
- Businesses, associations, and sports and cultural organisations contributed by accepting the city card, providing access to their services and activities for undocumented users.

Lessons learnt

Don't know where to start? Start small and expand the functionalities, takeup and acceptance of the city card organically over time. Also think carefully about the branding, name and campaign around the city card and consider what might resonate locally. E.g. which symbols, stories and places do residents and entrepreneurs relate to?

Solution

City Card

We had conversations with undocumented migrants, NGO's and churches that supported them, and found that the City of Utrecht had to step forward to give this vulnerable group a sense of belonging and recognition. In 2025, Here to Support, Villa Vrede and Ubuntuhuis were given the funding to introduce the City Rights app in Utrecht, which makes information about undocumented people's rights and support structures in the city easier to find (e.g. shelter, food, health care, education, legal support and return counseling). Another step we took is to develop a city card for vulnerable undocumented people that will be issued by the municipality. This is an inclusive approach so that these people can in the future have more easy access to services and activities in the city.



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