

The Vilawatt UIA energy transition project, born in 2016 as a result of the city of Viladecans' commitment to fight climate change, is one of the Transfer Networks approved by the URBACT-UIA (Urban Innovative Actions) program in Europe, which aims to transfer a UIA good practice to 3 European cities: Seraing (Belgium), Nagykanizsa (Hungary) and Trikala (Greece). Through this Transfer Mechanism program (TM), URBACT seeks to define and make available to all cities in Europe a methodology that helps them to adapt to their territories successful experiences in other cities. In the case of the Vilawatt UIA-TM project, it will be transferred from March 2021 to September 2022.

The Vilawatt UIA-TM project's priority, as its slogan "Empowering people through energy transition" commendably puts it, is to increase citizen commitment and sense of belonging to promote a sustainable energy transition process in all three partner cities. It is based on 5 interconnected main pillars that promote an energy shift: a local energy governance structure in the form of a public-private-citizen partnership (PPCP) –where citizens and main social actors play a key role–, training and mentoring through learning communities, retrofitting of private and public buildings to make them more energy efficient, the creation of a local currency, and the supply and aggregate purchase of green energy.

The goals that were pursued with each pillar during the Vilawatt-UIA project in Viladecans and that were bound by the PPCP, were to drive behavioural change and create communities of green energy consumers, develop a stronger position in the energy market and greater citizen engagement, provide advisory support, and energy as well as money savings in the case of the retrofitting of buildings, and to incentivize energy savings through the creation of a local currency. These goals will also be pursued by all Project Partners (PPs), adapting them to their local realities and needs.

For Seraing, the Vilawatt project complements its current URBACT Alt-Bau network, which deals with energy efficiency solutions, and it is expected to catalyze, with Partners' transfer inputs, the creation of a "1 one-stop administration" for its energy currency initiative; more consulting and learning for citizens; the creation of group purchases and a local incentives linked to energy savings; and more synergies with its citizen approach actions.

In the case of Nagykanizsa, the relevance is found in its energy transition goals as laid out in Hungary's OP Green Infrastructure and Climate Action Program, the Competitive Hungary Operational Program, and its need to upgrade its Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP) and work on its Urban-Adaptation Support Tool in regards to climate change.

Finally, for Trikala, the relevance stands out in its proven interest in the policy perspective of the Vilawatt project, and in terms of operational implementation.

At the conclusion of the project, each Transfer Partner, Seraing, Nagykanizsa and Trikala, will have to produce an Investment Plan co-created at local level with relevant stakeholders, setting a guideline for reuse of all or parts of the UIA project and exploring funding options for this plan. In the case of Viladecans, they will have to develop a Springboard plan, whose objective will be to keep on building on their initial Vilawatt project and ensure its sustainability in the future. All partners will work together involving

local stakeholders to define the best way to transfer the Vilawatt project to their respective areas, taking into account their realities, resources and potentials.

With URBACT's commitment to the Vilawatt project, European cities are making further progress in their commitment to the 2030 Agenda by helping to strengthen partnerships between cities, one of the keys to achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Vilawatt UTM (UIA-URBACT Transfer Mechanism) is an URBACT III Programme project with the financial support of the European Regional Development Fund.

