

JOURNAL

PROJECT

Urban Growth-GSIP
Vantaa - Growth and
Social investment Pacts
for Local Companies in
City of Vantaa

📍 Vantaa, Finland

TOPIC

Jobs and skills in the
local economy

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The GSIP Project story during 2021 - Journal 3

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This is the third Journal of the EU (Urban Innovative Actions - UIA) funded GSIP (Growth and Social Investments Pacts) Project, one of the main instruments used by the City of Vantaa in Finland to develop a solid local jobs and skills agenda applying a labour market innovation discourse that interrelates innovation with inclusive business growth. It was compiled by the UIA Expert of the Project within the context of the Task B' "Capturing knowledge" (development of documentation and outputs that will capture and disseminate the lessons learnt and good practices for a wider audience) that UIA Experts shall perform during their activities.

UIA Expert Professor Gabriel Amitsis discusses the performance of the GSIP Project during 2021, and he highlights its major achievements and accomplishments in the light of key implementation challenges defined by the UIA Secretariat: Leadership; Public procurement; Organizational arrangements within the urban authority; Participative approach for co-implementation; Monitoring and evaluation; Communication with target beneficiaries and users; Upscaling. The objective of the Journal is to make readers understand how an innovative and integrated urban project in the local jobs and skills sector is not only overcoming the challenges related to its implementation, but also introduces new concepts, principles methodologies and tools of national and transnational interest.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Journal concerns the implementation of the EU (Urban Innovative Actions - UIA) funded GSIP (Growth and Social Investments Pacts) Project during 2021. It summarizes the findings of a multi-level analysis of key Project deliverables (the Annual Project Report No. 3, the Milestones Review Report of June 2021, thematic Reports, Work Packages, research articles and briefs) and first-hand experience of the Project life, as evidenced particularly during various on line meetings between the UIA Expert, the Project Management Team and selected Project Partners.

The GSIP Project started in November 2018 and will continue till April 2022, subject to a 6 months extension agreed with the UIA Secretariat to allow additional time for implementation of the revised WP No. 6 (GSIP Intelligence)

and conclusion of the impact survey (evaluation of the impact of the three GSIP models on companies through randomized assessment tools). In this context, the performance of the Project during 2022 will be subject of the next issue of the Journal (Project Journal No 4); more thematic focused aspects and cross-cutting dimensions shall be dealt with in other deliverables of the UIA Expert (Zoom-in and Web articles), published in the UIA Knowledge Lab (<https://uia-initiative.eu/en/knowledge-lab>).

The GSIP Project is focused on the topic “Jobs and skills in the local economy”, a key challenge for sustainable inclusive growth in Europe. It reflects the vision of the City of Vantaa to promote growth and competitiveness of local companies, and to improve level of education of workforce and offer better training possibilities for low-skilled employees, employees with outdated skills and unemployed persons through the design and implementation of a new, innovative and exceptional service and incentive model (Growth and Social Investments Pacts - GSIPs).

GSIPs are defined as a new instrument for municipalities to reach the maximum impact on public investments, subsidies and services (including training and vocational education) offered to local companies. GSIPs gather information and expertise about jobs and skills from different national, regional and local institutions and support interested local companies to take in a productive way advantage of them. To increase interest, companies’ employees are offered short free training programmes (partly in class), which deal with different topics on future employment demands (the content is based on previous surveys and interviews).

The GSIPs - as discussed in the Journal No.1 of the GSIP Project (<https://www.uia-initiative.eu/en/news/gsip-expert-journal-1-get-know-project-and-what-happened-first-6-months>) - are tailored for Vantaa based companies employing 10-200 people, particularly companies involved in wholesale and retail, manufacturing, logistics and services, which have workforce of outdated skills caused by rapid changes in technologies and future business. They focus on three interrelated policy priorities: Recruitment of unemployed persons with low skills and education – The GSIP 1 model; Training of existing staff – The GSIP 2 model; Use of digitalization processes in the business routine – The GSIP 3 model.

The GSIP Project Partnership includes the City of Vantaa (acting as the Main Urban Authority) and representatives of the following sectors:

- academia (the Metropolia University of Applied Sciences and the Laurea University of Applied Sciences);
- research community (the Research Institute of the Finnish Economy “ETLA” and the Labour Institute for Economic Research PT);
- vocational training sector (the Vantaa Vocational College Varia);
- business networks (the Helsinki Region Chamber of Commerce);
- market (ISS Services Ltd, Infocare Ltd, Solteq Plc., Finnair Cargo Ltd and Vantti Ltd).

The Project is at the final implementation stage; key Work Packages have been completed in line with the agreed timetable and Partners are currently discussing opportunities to capitalize results and develop new local initiatives to address challenges linked to lack of skills and unemployment risks in the Vantaa economy.

This Journal has three thematic Chapters across a number of sections. The first Chapter provides a brief presentation of the Project implementation progress during 2021, highlighting the major achievements and accomplishments. The second Chapter discusses the development of the Project through the lens of the seven implementation challenges and identifies lessons of interest to local leaders and urban practitioners. The last Chapter summarizes key learning points and presents the next steps during 2022.

2. STATE OF IMPLEMENTATION

1. The first major Project achievement during 2021 was the full completion of the GSIP model No. 2 “Updating skills for employees”, subject to three phases: initial design, validation through tests in two Partner companies and pilot implementation in 20 Vantaa based companies employing 10-200 people. The key target groups of the GSIP 2 model services are a) low-skilled employees and employees with outdated skills, b) higher qualified employees, managers, executives and entrepreneurs.

Despite the strong challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and their impact not only on the broader Vantaa economy and social fabric but particularly on the demand of companies for human development services, the GSIP model No. 2 was performed in a very effective way:

- a) 43 employees from 24 companies received tailor made services through the Executive Coaching sessions;
- b) 260 managers, team leaders and employees from 27 companies received tailor made services through the

Growth Coaching;

c) 137 employees from 16 companies received tailor made Services for developing professional skills;

d) 87 apprenticeship contracts were signed;

e) 56 persons attended the 'Growth Clinic' event in April 2021;

f) 200 persons participated in the Morning Coffee Webinars.

2. The second major Project achievement during 2021 was the accomplishment of the GSIP model No. 3 "Technological Shift", subject again to three phases: initial co-creation, validation through tests in Partner companies and pilot implementation in 20 Vantaa based companies employing 10-200 people. The draft GSIP model No. 3 was finalized in January 2021, and the provision of supportive services to companies was completed as scheduled between February - June 2021.

Due to effective account management work, the Project succeeded in getting more companies joining available services than preliminary targeted. Account managers continued to approach potential customers and arrange meetings online. They analyzed experiences and needs and conducted closing interviews with pilot companies.

The clients were generally very pleased with the services received. There were approximately 260 sales meets organised in total, whereof 126 company needs were mapped in a general level (meaning interested in our services or the offered services were relevant to the company) and whereof 40 companies' needs were analysed in detail.

In addition, Project Partners organized:

- the Growth Clinic event in April 2021 (45 participants registered for the event, and the recording on YouTube was viewed 92 times so far);
- a company-specific consultative coaching service for 19 companies (i.e. the boosting for technological leap), focused on producing company-specific investment plans for a technological shift);
- a company-specific coaching programme for 246 employees from 22 companies (i.e. "Competences for Growth!");
- additional competence development services for employees (sessions about vocational education and apprenticeships, as well as information about open UAS studies; access to TrainingOnline, an online platform with courses for self-study provided by the Helsinki Chamber of Commerce; upload of a thematic online course titled 'Clarity in Growth through Communication').

3. The third major Project achievement during 2021 was the development of the so called automated/digital "GSIP" services, defined in the Project Application Form as an "automated data-driven future model for local authorities' business, employment and education services", which "can assist and propose in which companies the biggest growth results will be achieved, who are the most potential target groups amongst employees, unemployed or students, which coaching or training or recruitment programs will work the best and how to reach the best value for the public development investments".

The initial scope of the GSIP automated concept was revised in consultation with the UIA Secretariat and the Project proceeded with a new strategy, focused on a development/pilot platform environment that allows agile Proof-of-Concept (PoC) type of concept creation, agile and lean testing of selected Proof-of-Concepts in cooperation with PPs. The PoC approach would generate a reference implementation tested with selected functionalities, findings for technical architecture design options and general user stories. Furthermore, the POC cases would be shareable to any city across Europe, and recommendations for requirements (ie. characteristics) of any technical versatile ICT-platform that is not a vendor specific can be utilized as reference in any European city or operator.

Taking into account the results of all GSIP models, Project Partners were able to design and provide the following Proof-of-Concepts (PoCs):

a) The Personal Digital Coach (PDC), a mobile app to help individuals clarify their career goals, to map out their existing skills and plans to develop their skills to match their goals. The idea of the PDC application is to support and encourage the self-efficacy of interested employees aiming for their competence development goals during inter-related phases (<https://uia-initiative.eu/en/news/personal-digital-coach-could-application-help-competence-development-worker>): First the users set their goal in the application. Then, twice a week, they respond to a short questionnaire to report how they are doing. The application will send messages according to their responses, trying to help them reach their goal.

This phone application was tested with 36 users during November 2020 - January 2021. Feedback from users was collected during the testing and at the end with a questionnaire.

The questionnaire results in addition to observations made during the testing confirmed that there were certain challenges with PDC PoC. The context of supporting any kind of personal skill development was too wide, causing trouble with setting the goal in the application and message content framing. Therefore, plans were made to address these issues with further development of PDC.

In this context, a second version was developed and tested with Finnair Cargo during Spring 2021, concluding that users preferred to receive support from people rather than from the app. Concept ideas of different contexts for PDC were made and discussed, until suitable concept and companies interested in testing were found. Planning for changes needed was started in March 2021, implemented from March to May 2021 and testing was started in the beginning of May 2021. A next testing process with further development of PDC and larger test group was performed in September 2021.

A third and final version is scheduled to be tested with Vantti during December 2021. It focuses on creating a link between the users and the people who can help them, thus providing the social support the previous version lacked, in addition to gathering the data meant for development of the training.

b) The Competence Mapping, a tool that matches employees' skill profiles with open positions within the company concerned, supporting individuals to recognize and verbalize their skills and to consider developing them. Planning and design of the competence mapping application (called also as a sound career path planning application) started in January 2021.

The idea behind Competence Mapping is to find out the competence gaps that an employer might have in relation to position (s)he would like to proceed. When critical gaps are identified, the application recommends suitable education opportunities.

c) The Dashboard, a platform that combines data from different sources and supports a growth team at the local level to offer services to interested companies. Dashboard PoC was planned to form a tool for city employment services to support companies on business development and employed or unemployed people to find appropriate job positions in companies. However, Dashboard PoC implementation requirements have been increased since the initial planning phase as employment services stakeholders have shown strong interest to use it, and now there is need to evaluate what will be the role of Dashboard eventually and how city IT and development capabilities can support the requirements. For this reason, and taking into account that municipal employment services have shown a great interest in the Dashboard tool, the PoC implementation process was decided to follow two interrelated phases:

- the Dashboard design process as user interface Minimum Viable Product (MVP);
- the actual software development, scheduled for future City of Vantaa initiatives after the conclusion of the GSIP Project.

Two relevant workshops with potential users were organized and critical responses received related particularly access to sensitive information within employment services.

3. Key GSIP project implementation challenges

The implementation of the Project during 2021 was subject to a few challenges that have been identified and addressed in a rather efficient manner by the Project Partners. They are summarized as follows, using the methodological framework provided by the UIA Secretariat. Table 1 at the end of this Journal summarizes the findings of the risk assessment process in relation to the implementation challenges of the GSIP Project during 2021.

a) Political and administrative (senior management) leadership

The commitment of the local policy leaders (Mayor, City Council and City Executive Board) is still very high and reflects their strong interest to promote the City of Vantaa jobs and skills agenda. The thematic Deputy Mayors

also follow the implementation of the Project and provide support when needed.

b) Public procurement

The City of Vantaa (acting as the Main Urban Authority of the GSIP Project) has used traditional public procurement procedures for the provision of public services in line with the EU acquis (Directive 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on public procurement and repealing Directive 2004/18/EC) and national legal framework (for contracts below EU thresholds). In this context, under a procurement process in January 2021 for a 60.000 EUR contract value, the Project managed to provide to 19 SMEs company-specific plans (project proposals) for investment in technological shift supporting digitalization of business functions.

No reserved contracts, innovation partnerships models or socially responsible public procurement processes (SRPP) were used.

c) Organisational arrangements within the urban authority (cross-department working)

Given that the Project is coordinated according to strict administrative rules at the municipal level, turnover of Project Management Team members has been a constant challenge affecting timely Project implementation, as new member should be oriented to their tasks. It is evident that the risk of turnover of staff is greater during the final implementation stages of complex and ambitious initiatives, as the GSIP Project. To address relevant challenges, Project Partners invested resources and time to guarantee team cohesion and collective spirit through on line communication / networking processes, ensuring training courses on communication and interpersonal skills in favour of the Project Management Team.

d) Participative approach for co-implementation

Apart from the use of three interrelated models to advance the participation of internal and external stakeholders in the design and implementation of key activities during 2019 (as discussed in the Journal No.1 of the GSIP Project: <https://www.uia-initiative.eu/en/news/gsip-expert-journal-1-get-know-project-and-what-happened-first-6-months>), Project Partners re-affirmed during 2021 the value of Co-creation in designing and delivering services within the GSIP models No. 2 and No. 3.

The Co-creation approach was validated during the Project implementation as a strategy to develop new business models, products and services with customers, clients, trading partners and other stakeholders. Given that co-creation is the act of creating together, co-creation projects bring different parties together, in order to jointly produce a mutually valued outcome. In this context, co-creation essentially involves three steps: (i) obtaining contributions by customers, (ii) selecting the best of these contributions, and (iii) incorporating these selected contributions into products, processes, or services.



Picture 1: Project Partners and clients in co-creation mood

e) Monitoring and evaluation

1. Due to the COVID-19 measures, the Project adopted on line processes for monitoring and coordination of implementation activities (Work Packages) performed at different levels:

a) The City of Vantaa is responsible of the project management through Business Vantaa, which focuses on overall monitoring and coordination; consultative internal evaluation for supporting the Project to follow its objectives and reach its outputs; and capitalization (implemented together with the UIA expert)

b) All Project Partners are members of the Steering and the Executive Committee, acting as the main bodies for coordinating project activities

c) All active Project Partners participate in the Implementation Working Group meetings, which serve closer day-to-day planning and coordination.

d) The Project Management Team is responsible for collecting and using standardized information to assess progress towards objectives, resource usage and achievement of results and impacts. Effective coordination between Project Partners was ensured through weekly project team meetings, which were complemented with various co-creation and planning workshops and working groups. Additionally, weekly management team meetings consisting of project managers from Vantaa, Laurea and Metropolia continued.

2. The Project has not adopted since its initial phase an overall external evaluation model (a systematic and objective assessment carried out by independent evaluators of an ongoing project, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results). But the new Project Management Team supported Project Partners to agree about the use of an external Evaluation Plan of the Project, which will be commissioned by the City of Vantaa as a final evaluation process, in order to provide reflection on the performance of the Project and enable the Partners to receive independent feedback on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the Project.

The objectives of this process are twofold:

a. The first objective concerns the development of an independent evaluation through the use of pre-defined evaluation criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impact).

b. The second objective concerns the development of evidence-based proposals and recommendations for continued Project interventions, replicability and scale-up.

The terms of reference for the evaluation tender were completed in October 2021 and the procurement process is expected to be finalized by December 2021; the final report will be available in March 2022.

3. Two Project Partners (the Research Institute of the Finnish Economy “ETLA” and the Labour Institute for Economic Research PT) have designed and applied (as discussed in the Web-article No. 7 of the GSIP Project: <https://uia-initiative.eu/en/news/how-could-independent-research-organizations-contribute-development-local-jobs-and-skills>) an internal system to assess the impact of the three GSIP models on companies through randomized assessment settings (surveys). Participating companies were divided in two groups (the control and the comparison group) and researchers made evidenced based comparisons using questionnaires and public data sources.

ETLA and PT presented a preliminary note about this impact evaluation process on June 2021 (related to the first two surveys) and conducted a third survey in October 2021. Project Partners are currently discussing initial findings and recommendations.

f) Communication with target beneficiaries and users

GSIP Project Partners have invested a lot in the design and implementation of communication and dissemination activities during the development of the Project. This process was smoothly developed during three steps, which may be used as reference actions for cities interested to implement local jobs and skills agendas (as discussed in the Web-article No. 6 of the GSIP Project: [“Communication and dissemination strategies of local jobs and skills agendas - Lessons from the Vantaa GSIP Project Communication Plan” \(uia-initiative.eu\)](https://uia-initiative.eu/en/news/communication-and-dissemination-strategies-of-local-jobs-and-skills-agendas-lessons-from-the-vantaa-gsip-project-communication-plan): design of the Communication Strategy conceptual background; identification and contact processes with key external Project stakeholders; implementation of the Communication Strategy.

The Communication Strategy with key target groups (i.e. Vantaa based companies; employers and employees active in the City of Vantaa; organizations that provide skills and employment development services; unemployed jobseekers; students of the Laurea UAS and the Metropolia UAS) was implemented in a rather effective way - despite of the strong challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic - by the following tools:

1. A thematic website in Finnish (<https://urbaaniakasvua.fi/>) with a section in English (<https://urbaaniakasvua.fi/about-project/>)
 2. Social channels on twitter (twitter.com/urbaaniakasvua) and linkedin (www.linkedin.com/company/urbaaniakasvua-vantaa-hanke/)
 3. The GSIP Project own blog (<https://urbaaniakasvua.fi/category/blogi/>)
 4. An online keynote event “Growth Clinic”, which took place on 30 October 2020 to attract enrolling SME participants to pursue growth in their business operations
 5. A launch event for the GSIP model No. 3 “Markers for Technological Shift”, which took place on 10 February 2021 to motivate SMEs to adopt technological shift processes in their key operations
 6. An experience event “Knowledge makes you fly! GSIP-2 Learnings and insights”, which took place on 17 March 2021 with the aim to highlight challenges, obstacles and opportunities for companies to develop social responsibility initiatives when implementing personnel’s knowledge programmes
 7. A GSIP 3 experience event on October 2021
 8. A Growth Tale story in Finnish (<https://urbaaniakasvua.fi/2021/04/15/osaamisen-kehittamista-ja-tukea-johtamiseen/>) and English (<https://urbaaniakasvua.fi/2021/05/10/competence-development-and-management-support/>)
 9. Articles published in the UIA Knowledge Lab (<https://www.uia-initiative.eu/en/uia-cities/vantaa>)
 10. Videos about the implementation of the GSIP No. 1 and No. 2 Model uploaded in the UIA Knowledge Lab (<https://www.uia-initiative.eu/en/uia-cities/vantaa>) and the Project website ([Videos - Urbaania kasvua Vantaa](#))
 11. A Discussion Paper ‘Motivation and Incentive Model for Career Long Learning’ (published in 2021, available at the Project website: <https://urbaaniakasvua.fi/discussion-paper/>)
 12. A Report in English with the Project learnings and (field) experiences (published in 2021, available at: <https://urbaaniakasvua.fi/2021/04/21/urban-growth-gsip-vantaa-experiences-so-far-the-from/>)
 13. A digital leaflet on GSIP3 services, which the account managers have used to promote the services to companies
 14. Academic articles published in Finnish Journals and Books
 15. Articles on blogs (available at: <https://urbaaniakasvua.fi/category/blogi/>)
 16. Articles in magazines and stakeholders’ journals
 17. Articles in local newspapers
 18. Seven newsletters sent to 847 company representatives and 97 stakeholders (<https://urbaaniakasvua.fi/uutiskirje/>)
 19. News releases
 20. Eight Podcasts on MythBusters for Life-Long Learning (available in Finnish at: <https://urbaaniakasvua.fi/jatkuvan-oppimisen-myytinmurtajat-podcast/>).
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g) Upscaling

Project Partners completed during Spring 2021 the formulation of a sound Continuity and Sustainability Plan (to boost the continuation and scaling up of good GSIP practices, models or services) and are currently involved in its sound implementation. In practice, this Plan is promoted by adapting the developed GSIP services / models based on lessons learned and feedback obtained, and if relevant continue testing in selected SMEs by implementing additional small-scale interventions. As a result, selected GSIP services will be confirmed through integration of

GSIP best practices/service models in existing services offered by the City of Vantaa and its partners, and/or through new follow-up projects. Progress towards the latter has already been achieved, as a funding proposal integrating selected lessons learned from the GSIP Project was submitted to a European Social Fund+ call in April 2021 by Laurea UAS, in partnership with Metropolia UAS and the City of Vantaa. The proposal received a positive funding decision and the new Project entitled “Skills driving business in green transformation” (MUUVO) started in October 2021, supporting companies in the green transition by strengthening their capabilities for change.

In addition, a co-creation workshop was held in June 2021 to initiate the Project conceptualization process for other upcoming EU calls for proposals, while Project Partners are discussing new funding opportunities through national and EU financial instruments (particularly through ESF+ 2021-2027 and the EU Recovery and Resilience Plan 2021-2025).

In this context, the GSIP Management Team promoted during 2021 meetings with Project managers from four other cities implementing UIA Projects in Finland (Tampere, Lahti, Lappeenranta and Helsinki). The idea was to get to know the other UIA Projects in Finland to share lessons learned on sustainability and continuity aspects, evaluation etc. and explore the possibilities to cooperate to some extent during the project implementation period, or when scaling up. Further, a separate meeting was arranged in May 2021 for the finance coordinators from these five cities to share lessons learned on UIA specific requirements related to financial reporting. Finnish UIA Projects will organize during Spring 2022 external on site and on line capitalization events.

Project capitalization processes were developed during external events and meetings: Project Partners participated in the SuomiAreena event (July 2021, <https://www.norden.org/en/information/suomiareena-2021>), a popular, large annual public debate forum in Helsinki, and organized a thematic panel entitled “Utilizing new technology requires a skilled professional” fitting well to SuomiAreena’s mission to raise important themes by discussing current affairs and societal issues.



Picture 2: The 2021 SuomiAreena main stage

Table 1. The risk assessment process of the GSIP Project

Challenge

Observation

1. Leadership for implementation

Strong commitment of the local policy leaders (Mayor, City Council and City Executive Board)

Challenge level



2. Public procurement
Challenge level ● Effective use of traditional public procurement procedures for the provision of public services

3. Integrated cross-departmental working
Challenge level ● Development of internal co-ordination processes between the Mayor Office, Business Vantaa (Business Development Services), Employment Services and the Vantaa Vocational College VARIA

4. Adopting a participative approach
Challenge level ● Project Partners used specific models to advance the participation of internal and external stakeholders in the design and implementation of key activities

5. Monitoring and evaluation
Challenge level ● The implementation of an overall external evaluation model is under way

6. Financial sustainability
Challenge level ● There have been no indications of financial concerns throughout the Project

7. Communicating with target beneficiaries
Challenge level ● The Communication Strategy with target groups is implemented in a rather effective way, despite of the strong challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic

8. Upscaling
Challenge level ● Project Partners have actually revised the original scope and timeframe of the automated GSIPs and consider ways to develop relevant activities based on the capitalization process of the GSIP models

4. CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

1. Despite the strong challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and their impact on the broader Vantaa economy and social fabric, the GSIP Project entered its final stage as a flagship initiative of the City of Vantaa to develop a solid jobs and skills agenda during difficult times. Partners have invested resources and time to mitigate the effects of the pandemic on the smooth fulfilment of their tasks and address problems not ever foreseen. They were able to proceed according to the planned schedule to a great extent, and the Management Team introduced new strategic approaches that improve the continuity and sustainability of the good practices created.

2. Based on the experience deriving from the design and implementation of the three interrelated GSIP models, it is clear that there is no any single solution that would promote a career-long learning agenda for employees with limited / outdated skills in a way that strengthens both financial growth and social justice, as situations, needs and motives between and inside interested companies to take advantage of local jobs and skills agendas vary. Taking into account relevant evidence-based complexities, the Vantaa Project is bringing forward a growth partnership/team concept to act as a catalyst to implement the GSIPs.

In this challenging context, Project Partners highlight the value of developing an incentive model that might increase business demand for understanding and using the GSIP services. This approach is strongly linked to a key Project finding: the most effective additional incentive for companies to get involved in GSIPs corresponds to the

introduction of a service incentive process with strong financial and social impact on the urban economy. Subsequently, calculations to demonstrate the financial impact of GSIP services through five different variants related to the status of different target groups have been developed and presented to City of Vantaa representatives for further discussions and approval. Project Partners continue the analysis of the incentive modelling process using primary and secondary data (implementation of proof of concepts, impact evaluation, etc.).

3. During 2022, Project Partners will finalize the use of the Proof-of-Concept (PoCs). The final output will consist of a reference implementation tested with selected functionalities; findings for technical architecture design options and general user stories; POC cases shareable nationally in Finland and to any city in EU; and recommendations for requirements (ie. characteristics) of any technical versatile ICT-platform that is not a vendor specific and can be utilized as reference in any European city or operator.

4. During 2022, Project Partners will also capitalize the results of the three interrelated GSIP models through:

a) The provision of the so-called Growth Service 2.0, introduced in August 2021 as a client follow-up service for the piloted companies to ensure greater impact of the offered coaching and training services. Project account managers (or key focal points) shall make an effort in transferring interested SME clients to other available services in Vantaa.

b) The publication of the so-called Knowledge Report that will summarize the Project key findings / lessons learned, and develop specific recommendations for local policy makers and stakeholders on advancing the career-based/life-long learning agenda.

5. Efforts will be also made to boost the continuity of the ecosystem that has been established through the GSIP Project using a mutual continuous learning approach. This goal will be achieved by contributing to setting conditions and/mechanisms to continue cooperation among Project Partners after the Project conclusion.

6. The implementation of the Project during 2022 will be subject of the next issue of the Journal (Project Journal No. 4), available at the end of 2022; more thematic focused aspects and cross-cutting dimensions shall be dealt with in other deliverables of the UIA Expert (Zoom-in and Web articles), published in the UIA Knowledge Lab (<https://uia-initiative.eu/en/knowledge-lab>)

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