



USEAct

Urban Sustainable Environmental Actions



USEAct Baseline Study
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Connecting cities
Building successes



USEAct Baseline Study Urban Sustainable Environmental Actions



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Part 1

“State-of-the-Art”

Introduction to the USEACT issues

/ The focus of the USEACT project: linking “urban growth management” policy, with high quality intervention to reuse urban areas and buildings

The general scope and aim of the USEACT project can be summarized as follows: detecting how to achieve opportunities for people and businesses to settle, in a sustainable way, in existing urban areas, without further “land take”.

This target is expected to be met through integrated policies and tools aimed at improving the “urban growth management” planning framework coupled with implementable, sustainable urban “interventions” for the re-use of underutilized, vacant or abandoned areas of land and existing settlements, both in historic districts and more recently built areas.

Such an approach is targeted at confronting the obsolescence of urban areas and sustaining the “urban change”, and through city recycling, also improving the city’s environmental, social, economic sustainability, to provide more urban quality to urban communities and, at the same time support the local economy in the short and long-term, to help overcome the effects of the current down-turn.

/ The conceptual “pillars” of the USEACT project: linking urban planning tools to the support of interventions and to the “quality” of the effects

The scope and the mission of the USEACT project is surely wide and challenging; however, today the issues faced by the project are crucial for the European development, and in line with the most recent European strategy for sustainable economic growth and governance, defined by the titled “Europe 2020 strategy” (European Commission, 2010).

Focusing and facing these issues correctly and effectively, defining immediately the field of

research and the “conceptual pillars” of the project are the first priority.

To help define the project scope and the issues and themes to confront in the next phases, three conceptual pillars (to be integrated with each other) have been considered.

These conceptual pillars can be summarized as follows:

1. planning framework and urban planning tools aimed at an effective “urban growth management”, with reduction of urban sprawl and re-use of urban areas;

2. managerial and regulatory frameworks to induce, support, control and manage (also in partnerships with other stakeholders) “area based” interventions of urban re-use;
3. specific tools to guarantee “quality” of interventions , to cater to communities’ requirements from a long -term perspective.

combine such a restrictive policy with “proactive” policy components, oriented to boost interventions aimed at sustainable re-use of underutilized or vacant urban spaces with significant effects on the reduction of the demand for new “greenfield” take.

This approach is certainly more effective than implementing an independent framework policy for the reduction of “urban sprawl” and on the other hand on policies focused on sustainable urban re-use.

/ Stressing the link between “urban growth management” (UGM) and “interventions”

As already seen, the main focus of the USEACT project is to support cities (at different scales, in different situations and with different functional targets) implement integrated policies. These policies are on one hand aimed at reducing the pressure of free land consumption (“restrictive” policy component) and on the other hand, to

Focusing on “links” between “urban growth management” (UGM) and “interventions” and enabling them to become a clear working field for administrations can help overcome many typical problems which often arise. Some possible features of this link are shown above.

<p>“Spatial – economic” link</p>	<p>An effective capability to contain demand for consumption of new land without blocking investments proposed by land-owners and investors is linked to the ability, by public administrations, to integrate planning regulatory frameworks with area-targeted packages of fiscal and non fiscal incentives. Such packages, when correctly designed, can encourage developers and investors usually interested in investing on “greenland”, to re-direct investments to specific areas to be re-developed. Tradable Development Rights are just an example of tools which strongly link the UGM with the “Interventions”, in addition well-designed levy schemes could be exploited.</p>
<p>“Administrative” link</p>	<p>Land use containment policy, on one hand, and power to implement specific re-use interventions are usually managed at different administrative levels (e.g. county/municipality levels). The lack of a formal integration between “restrictive” and “proactive” components, results in any cooperation and convergence between different administrative levels (i.e. at the “municipal associations” level) as potentially more difficult, because “targeted local compensations” or “technical support to manage interventions” are not integrated within the policy-framework by design.</p>
<p>“Community involvement” link</p>	<p>Programs for recycling urban areas, e.g. with densification in the inner cities, can be accepted by local communities and perceived as a socially fair solution , only if communities have a clear understanding of the “values” and “quality” gained, in the long-term, through a good link between the “greenfield preservation” policy and high quality interventions in urban areas. Land preserving schemes and communication on the possibility of providing “good density” interventions should be carried out in integrated way. .</p>

Examples of different “mechanisms” which would require integration between restrictive and proactive policies aimed at reducing “free land” consumption

/ The quality issue

Finally, as a cross-sectional issue, the quality aspect of the urban recycling process is fundamental for the effectiveness of the integrated policies, pursuing the containment of land take and the economic/social growth in urban areas.

“Quality” issue is a multi-faceted issue, concerning different aspects:

1. economic sustainability
2. social aspects + community involvement
3. spatial quality
4. sustainability + energy efficiency:
5. heritage + identity

In relation to this, **addressing and controlling the quality** of re-use interventions is a fundamental aspect both in the design phase and in the long-term, in order to also guarantee social acceptability of the possible consequences (e.g. urban densification) of UGM policies.

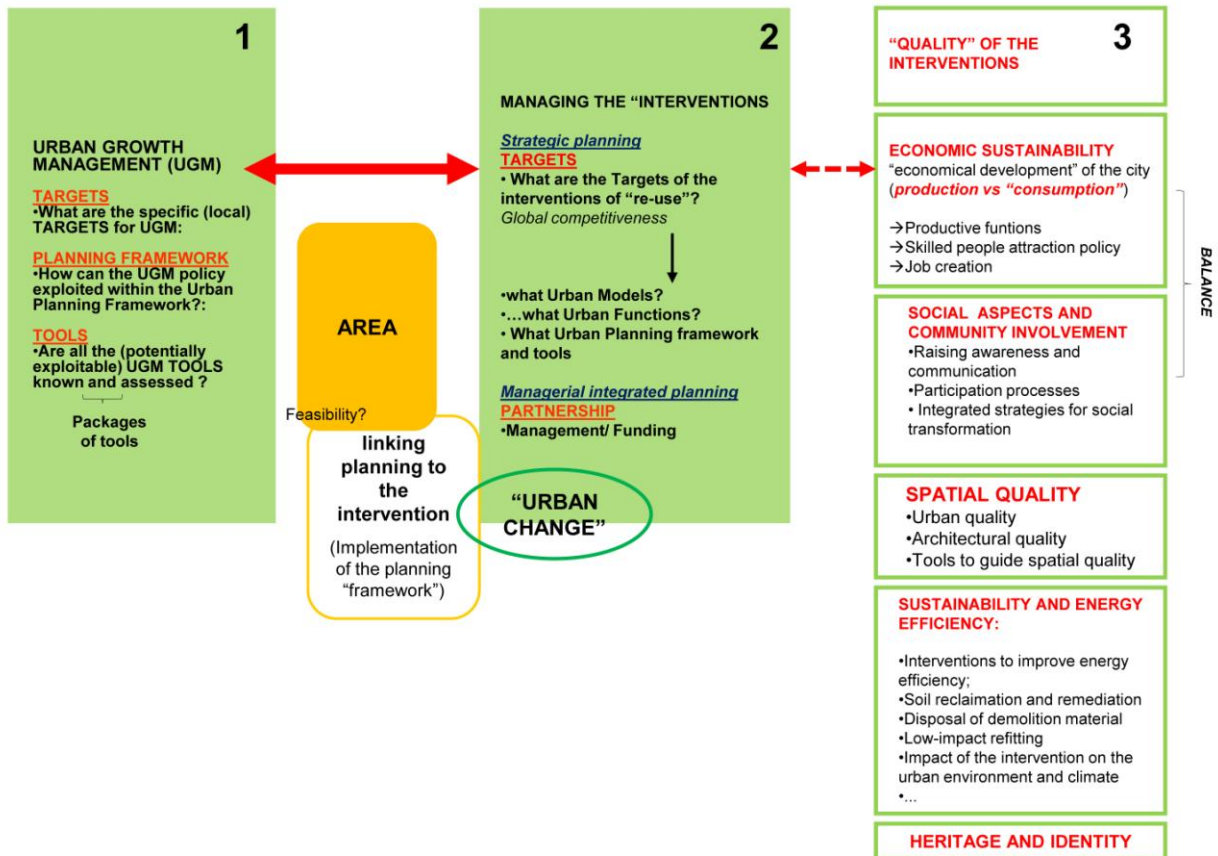
In particular, when the quality issue is discussed, it is fundamental to have a fully developed evaluation framework to correctly “anticipate” the different impacts of the interventions and better address it from a long-term perspective.

In short, “quality” can be added to the first two pillars of the USEACT project (namely the urban growth management and the intervention) as shown in the conceptual project-scheme below (table below).

The structure of the “state of the art” paper

The contents of the state of the art paper are organized as follows. After an introduction focused on the “conceptual pillars” of the USEACT project, in chapter 1.1 the “land take” problem due to urban sprawl is analyzed. After chapter 1.2., which is dedicated to the UE policy framework to tackle “sprawl”, the paper focuses the different tools to effectively link Urban Growth Management policies with sustainable interventions to reuse underutilized or vacant urban areas. Specifically, chapter 1.3 focuses the fundamental “multi-level governance” issues, chapter 1.4 planning tools for the “urban growth management”, chapter 1.5 the management and implementation of interventions through adequate partnership, while chapter 1.6 discusses the role played by the “quality” to driven in interventions.

The conceptual pillars of USEACT project



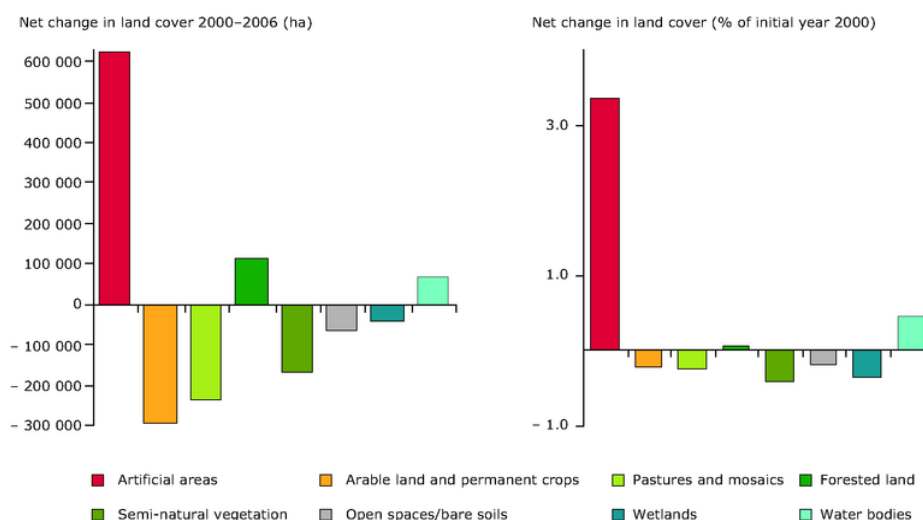
1.1 The “land take” issue in Europe

1.1.1 / The “land take” through urban activities in Europe

The EEA, European Environmental Agency monitored land use changes between 1990- 2000 and 2000-2006 (EEA, 2006; EEA, 2010) in 36 European countries; the latest data is unavailable.

EEA documents recall that urbanized land has grown dramatically after the mid 1950s until 2000, as the “European cities have expanded on average by 78 %, whereas the population has grown by only 33 %” (EEA, 2006).

However, a relevant expansion of the “artificial surfaces” has also occurred over the period 1990-2000, as 8000 km² were urbanized with an increase of 5.7% over the decade. Over the following six-year period 2000-2006, land taken through urban uses increased in Europe by another 3.4%: this represents an incremental trend in annual land take, from 0.57% for 1990-2000 to 0.61% for 2000-2006 (EEA, 2010).



Net Land-cover changes 2000-2006 in Europe (In hectares and percentage change)

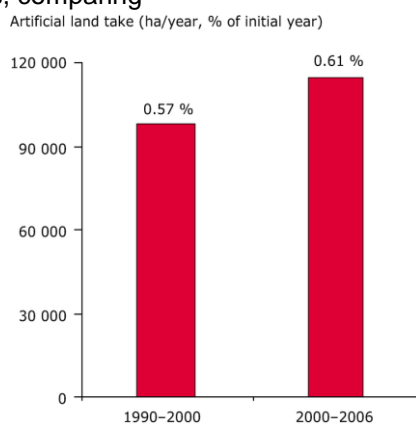
Source: http://www.eea.europa.eu/soer/synthesis/synthesis_2010

Housing, services, recreation facilities and industrial, commercial units accounted for more than 93% of the artificial surfaces in Europe in 2006.

In line with 2006 EAA data, urban growth has differed strongly between countries: between 2000 and 2006 the residential annual growth of

urban land take ranged, for different countries, from an average of 0.1% to 3.25. During the same period, the growth rate per year of “economic areas” has been more than twice the residential urban growth rate.

Figure above shows growth in residential and industrial areas in selected countries, comparing growth from 1990-2000 and 2000-2006.



Annual land take by artificial surfaces in the 36 European countries in the Corine land cover 2006 data set. Source: EEA, 2010.

Where and how much cities have grown in Europe? The measuring challenge

Following the EEA Thematic Report on Land Use and the calculation carried out by the European Environmental Agency, supported by the ETC-LUSI, the European Topic Centre for Spatial Information and Analysis (EEA, 2010), growth of commercial and industrial sites (between 2000 and 2006) has been mainly concentrated in Western Europe, with dense concentrations of growth in the Netherlands, Poland, Italy, along the Mediterranean Coast in Spain and in the surrounding areas of the major western European cities (Madrid, Paris, Dublin, Toulouse, Rome, and also in Portugal). Significant linear features of artificial sprawl along highways constructions occur in Spain, Poland and Croatia. Residential area growth (2000-2006) has been typical for France, especially in Britain, in the Cote d'Azur, (around Marseille) and around Lyon. In Germany, areas of residential growth have been scattered over the whole western region.

Measuring the land take at supra-municipal level

Measuring and continuously monitoring, accurately and officially, the "land take" due to urban growth is a challenge not only at European Level (macro-figures) but also at local level, given that precise quantitative and qualitative knowledge on that issue is not widespread, in general.

The supra-municipal bodies and planning levels can be an appropriate stage for setting-up these land take monitoring systems. In France, the new legislative framework designed by the so called "Loi Grenelle", which reinforced the power of the SCoT ("Schémas de Cohérence Territoriale") of enforcing space-saving planning schemes, opens the door to progressive improvements in land use monitoring systems. A debate on: how to define the "space consume", what parameters, indicators, data-sources and data-bases to be integrated and that technologies can be used is in progress at present. In general, such GIS-integrated data-bases, should be able to provide data on the land take progression (distinguishing sealed soil and other land-covers types) and other parameters (uses, housing and population density, economic values, etc.) (Ministère de l'Écologie, de l'Énergie, du Développement durable et de la Mer, 2009).

1.1.2 / The weak role of land “recycling”

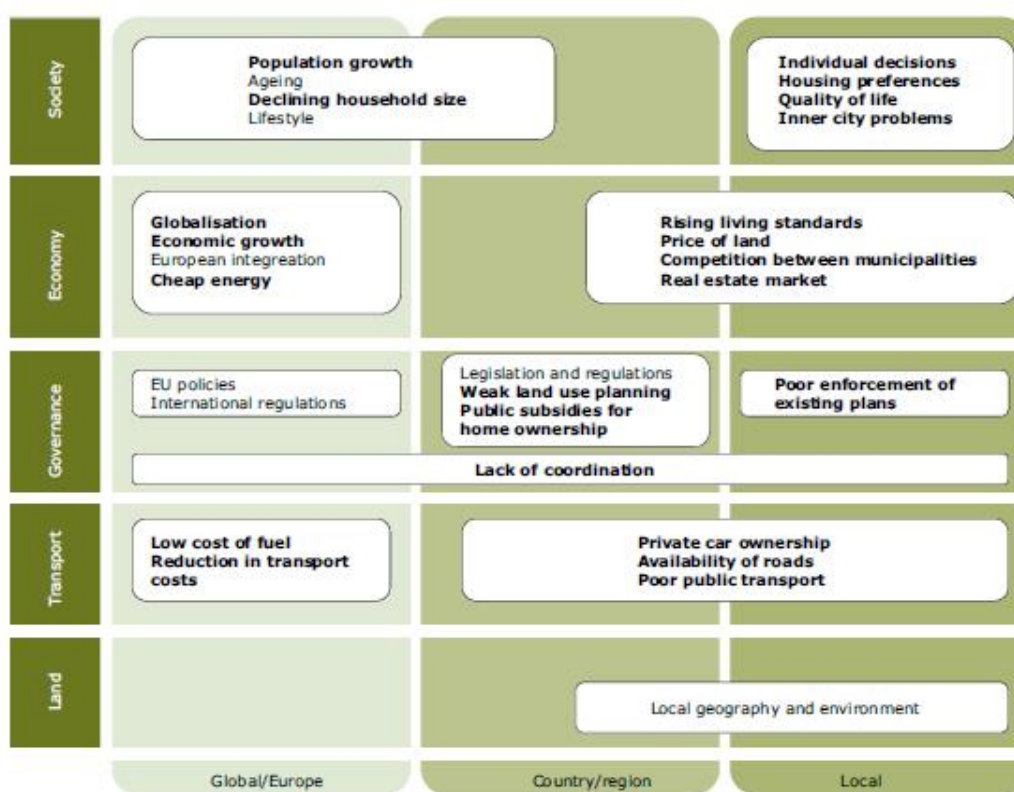
Brownfield recycling has not been a very relevant factor in reducing land take: as the EEA report points out, “land cover analysis for 2000-2006 shows that there was more diffuse residential sprawl than brownfield development. The comparison is even worse if sprawl concerning commercial and industrial sites is included.

The area where ‘recycling’ of artificial surfaces occurred was only 18.2% of the total of land taken, and in 17 countries it remained below 10%. Furthermore, European population has increased but built areas have increased even more, in particular commercial and industrial areas (economic sites)” (EEA, 2010).

1.1.3 / Back to the roots of urban sprawl: the downturn does not resolve the problem!

Factors of urban sprawl

According to the EEA, the main drivers of sprawl in Europe are linked to a variety of factors, at different scale (Global/Europe: country/region/local) and linked to different sectors (Land use, Transportation, Governance, Economy, Society) which are often interrelated. In many cases, always in accordance with the same reference, identifying a clear relation between urban sprawl phenomena and their instigators is not possible (see fig. below).



Main drivers of current urban sprawl in Europe. Source: EEA, 2010.

In general terms, there is agreement around the fact that a rapid economic growth can lead to higher land consumption and that often a slowing-down of the economy can reduce urban expansion. In some cases, a rapid growth of GDP is linked to a rise in sprawling trends, such as in countries where strong investments in real estate

were carried out like Spain or Ireland, or in other less populated countries, such as the Baltic countries, in which the attraction of the capital area has provoked a mono-centric and rapid expansion around the capital core).

A faster increase of economic activities can be a strong driving force, but in many cases a weak economy can lead to widespread economic (and residential) sites, when keeping investment costs low is fundamental and when municipalities compete to attract business (and people) in their areas. In several EU-12 urban sprawl rates are weakly or not correlated with GDP.

Some database show a (inverse) correlation between new settlements and (relative) prices of houses and apartments in the city-core. People tend to move out of inner city areas, where prices are not as affordable (European Commission, 2005, EEA, 2010, p.22), especially as family finances reduce in periods of economic downturn. During the downturn, for example, job opportunities can be easily found in main cities, with a “pressure” for new low-cost residential settlements.

Finally, in general, there is no relationship between “concentration”, to be defined as “increase” of density, and “population growth” in the city-region: concentration and de-concentration are both happening in growing as well as declining cities; moreover, concentration/de-concentration/no changes in density gradients cases are rather equally distributed among European cities (EEA, 2010). This means that even in “demographically stable” contexts sprawl can occur.

New trends in family composition: looking for low-price dwellings

Another important driving force, which is rather independent of economic growth, is the demographic structure of the population, in particular the increase of smaller households, which requires more space per person.

This means that demand for new building areas does not necessarily tend to drop during recession or low-increasing demography contexts.

This trend can be highlighted in many urban and peri-urban territories, especially in relation to the following trends and requirements:

- Social changes towards smaller households, with new demand;
- More living space required by individuals;
- Spatial transfer of population, due to immigration/emigration or to re-allocation (e.g. from peripheral areas, to main urban areas, even in economic downturn);
- New typologies for manufacturing /office-related buildings, requiring low rents and low costs solutions

The expected growth of cities and the role of the main urban attractors

The driving forces that shape recent land use trends are also likely to determine future trends; it is hard, however, to predict the development path of urban land use over the coming decades.

According to data reported by the Green Paper on the Territorial Cohesion (European Commission, 2008) and confirmed by recent elaborations (EEA, 2012), the population living currently in urban areas accounts for 75%, but this trend is likely to rise up to 80% in the next 15 years, by 2030. This could happen independently of the economic downturn.

Projected patterns of annual land-use changes for a 10-20 year time horizon in EU-15 and in EU-10 show an annual growth assessed between 0.2% and 0.7%. The demand for non-developed land is therefore expected to be a permanent trend, at least in urban areas with some “attraction-potential”.

In these areas, the pressure for new land consumption is expected to develop in any case, independently from the real-estate market trends that have characterized the urban-sprawl model in many European urban contexts until the recent downturn and that have contributed to generating the so-called “hyper-city” city (Corboz, 1998), the completely urbanized or controlled territory, where the concept of “city” overlaps with the idea of “territory”.

The downturn effect on the building sector in Europe

Recent data from Eurostat

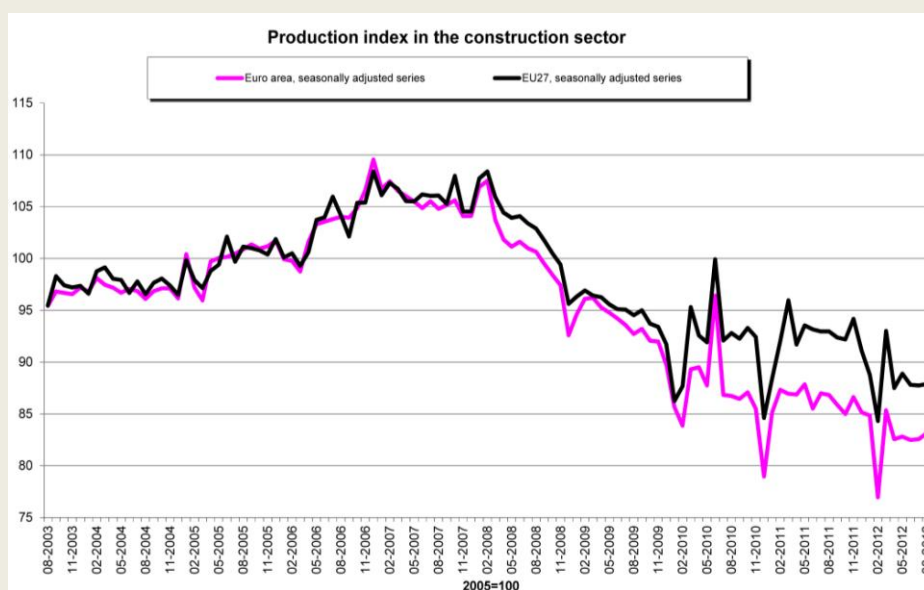
Despite the driving factors of urban expansion on greenland active today in Europe, there is evidence that the recent crisis, in absolute terms, provoked in some countries a slowing-down of urban expansion linked to the building sector, with negative consequences also on the job market and on the local “income multiplier”.

The table reported below shows the trend evolution for the building sector, for the different European countries (EU 27), according to data published by data in August, 2012. In general terms, it is not possible to clearly link the building sector development and the evolution of land consumption, as the building sector relies on different building models (with higher or lower density and “horizontality”) and also on the retrofitting of existing built heritage, implying no land consumption. However, data can at least show the trend of demand in the sector.

Seasonally adjusted series show a significant drop in production over a nine-year period, from 2003 to 2012: graphs report a fall from a 97 to an almost 82 index for the countries in the Euro area. A relatively lower drop is shown for the EU27 area, where similar starting index fell up to 87.

Over the August 2011- August 2012 period, production in the building construction sector in Europe fell by 5.5% (Euro-region) and by 6.8% (EU27). Worse performances are highlighted for the civil engineering sector, decreased by 7.9% in the euro area and by 7.5% among EU27 countries

The production index, seasonally adjusted, decreased by 0.3% in the countries of the euro area and by 0.2% in the EU27 in July 2012, compared to June 2012. Over the same period, worse peaks are registered in Italy (-2.2%), Spain (-2.1%) and Sweden (-1.1%), while the highest increases are in Hungary (+8.7%), Germany (+1.9%), Bulgaria and the Czech Republic (both +1.6%). Data appears sharper if analysed annually. Best performances are shown by Hungary (+7.7%), Bulgaria (+3.0%) and Germany (+2.2%), while countries in the Mediterranean area experienced the lowest falls, accounting for a -18.3% (Slovenia), -18.2% (Portugal), -16.1% (Spain) and -14.2% (Italy).



Production in construction data 2012. Source: Eurostat, 2012.

The role of renovation and retrofitting in the building sector

Despite the fact that forecasts for the next decades in the building sector are, generally speaking, not optimistic, and show serious differences according to different countries, positive trends are expected in the other sectors which go beyond traditional investments and look for different market sectors, such as retrofitting operations and renovations for the improvement of energy efficiency in existing buildings.

For example, in Italy, recent research (Cresme, 2012) reports that while the traditional building sector experienced a drop in up to 30% between 2006 and 2012, private investments for renovations and refitting grew over the same period, covering 55% of the whole sector in 2006 and growing to 65% in 2011. This increase is surely linked to the significant public incentives granted to investors for such operations, refunding up to 55% of the initial costs of the intervention.

1.2

Reduction of land take and urban growth management: Policies, targets and tools in the EU policy framework

1.2.1 / Recognizing land consumption and urban sprawl as an European “problem”

As pointed out in 2001 by the “Expert Group on Urban Environment”, urban sprawl can be related mainly to residential development in some countries but more to industrial development elsewhere and “growth management” is not an issue in all countries. Moreover, “land use issues are not the same in small and medium-sized towns as in the largest cities”.

Furthermore, in downturn periods, discouraging new developments is widely perceived as a strongly counterproductive policy from the local economic development and building sector jobs

point of view, as the recent debate on “green belts” in England clearly shows.

However, in spite of an actually differentiated European pattern, draw-backs of the sprawled city and of the related soil sealing impacts have been increasingly recognised as an relevant European scale problem.

As a consequence, since ninetenths, the urgency to focus the sprawl issue, defined as the “ignored challenge” (EEA, 2006) and causing more negative impacts than expected (Expert Group on the Urban Environment, 2001; EEA, 2006; EEA 2010) has been officially acknowledged.

Drawbacks of the “land take”, soil sealing and urban sprawl

- Climate Change (reduction of CO₂ sequestration capacity, with release of carbon dioxide and methane)
- Reduction of space for biodiversity, habitats, ecosystem services
- Reduction of protection from floods;
- Reduction of space for agriculture and long term food production
- Degradation and pollution of water and soil
- Higher energy consumption and emissions per capita (due to housing and transport)*
- Threats for quality of life of citizens

Source: Elaboration from EEA, 2010 and further UE sources

Density (population + jobs per hectare)	Annual energy consumption for travel (mega joules per inhabitant)	Cost of transport (% of GDP)
< 25	55 000	12.4
25 to 50	20 200	11.1
50 to 100	13 700	8.6
> 100	12 200	5.7

Population density, energy consumption and cost of transport. Source: EEA, 2006.

1.2.2 / The path of EU policy framework for UGM and “brownfield” reuse and its challenges

“Urban Growth Management” and “brownfield reuse” appeared, in fact, as a distinctive UE policy issue in with the 1991 “Green Paper on urban environment” and was definitively focused by two significant UE communications, namely “Sustainable Urban Development in the European Union: A Framework for Action” (CEC 1998) and ESPD – “European Spatial Development Perspective” (Committee of Spatial Development, 1999).

The Lisbon Strategy (2000) concerning sustainable growth and economic, social and environmental renewal, reinforced the attention to the reduction of “land use” and a more sustainable urban growth.

In 2001 the “Expert Group on the Urban Environment”, published the document “Towards more sustainable Urban Land Use: Advice to the European Commission for Policy and Action” (Expert Group on the Urban Environment, 2001) that included several policy recommendations for the 6th Environmental Action Program (2002-2012), at the time going to start.

Twelve years from the time when it was published and after the recent conclusion of the EAP (2011), the document still remains a milestone in identifying the most relevant policy targets and challenges to take the sprawl due to urban growth in Europe and to “link” the land use planning policies with the “brownfield” re-use processes.

At the origins of the 6th EAP 2002-2012: the document “Towards more sustainable Urban Land Use: Advice to the European Commission for Policy and Action” (2001).

A still valid thematic agenda for Europe

1. The difficulties of implementing UE policy, the strategic role of the states and the lacks at national levels

The document recognised, in general, the difficulty of implementing policy at EU level, since “*the impact of EU policy and instruments on land development processes relating to brownfields, greenfields, infrastructure and urban sprawl is not straightforward, since the Commission has substantial influence, but very limited direct competence, in this area*”. The working-group accurately identified the lack of “basic tools” at national level, to limit urban sprawl through UGM policies and to re-use brownfields. Some strategic advices are absolutely still valid today.

2. The need to give attention to the “market processes”

One of the most relevant points arisen by the 2001 document was the need to give “*much greater attention to the processes (especially market processes) through which urban land becomes vacant and is then re-used, and to the blockages in these processes*”.

As far as the “market based tools” is concerned, after recognising that there are limits to what regulation” can achieve in terms of restraining urban sprawl and securing the re-use of brownfields in the face of market pressures, the document particularly suggested that the States should seek to develop, at national level, market-based approaches, as “fiscal instruments to complement existing arrangements and placing more emphasis on working in partnership with the private and community sectors, often within the context of broad strategies to manage urban change”, for “whole urban areas”.

Special attention was also given to the chance to develop tools as the “Eco Management and Audit Scheme” (EMAS) and the use of “voluntary agreements” and “tradeable permits” (Transferable Development Rights) in the area of urban land remediation and re-use and the possible application local taxes to discourage green field development.

Further tools to influence the market were suggested, for example to reduce rates of VAT on land remediation and the renovation of property in urban areas, an issue which could be explored with DG Taxation and Customs Union.

The document also stressed the need to provide a legal mechanism to promote the establishment of effective

national regimes to protect and remediate land and soil.

2. The “Mapping urban brownfield” issue

“The problems of urban sprawl and the existence of extensive areas of brownfield land in urban areas are well known but poorly defined and mapped”, given the lack of any international obligations on national governments to maintain registers or maps of “brownfield land” in urban areas and introducing suitable indicators for sustainable land use was also stressed.

3. Convincing citizens, involving operators and spreading good practices to municipalities

A further advice provided by the document was to give “*greater emphasis to questions of the density and character of development – as well as to location - and especially to the need to find ways of convincing citizens to adopt different kinds of urban living*”. The need to spread best practice to developers, builders and, in particular, municipalities on how to achieve high-quality, high-density development was also stressed. “Horizontal measures, especially support for networking and the exchange of experience” also at local level” were also identified as a pillar of any UGM and re-use policy.

The finally also focused the potential role of cultural heritage within cities issue, “*in particular in relation to the creative renovation and re-use of historic urban cores for mixed-use development*”.

4. Facing “mismatch”, “involving all levels of government” and the “higher level blockage” problems

A further strategic problem clearly identified in the document was the “lack of a coherent UE policy frameworks to tackle urban sprawl involving all levels of government” and the need to “select strategies with territorial relevance”. For example, the document points out that the somewhat rigid UE rules on state aid tend to reduce the chances to engage the private sector in urban regeneration, through PPP.

The need of a “greater horizontal integration of policies and instruments at all levels of government and of improved vertical integration” was stressed too, to ensure, in particular, that “the good efforts of local and regional authorities are not impeded by higher levels”. The allusion to the national legislative frameworks which often “mismatch” with local requirements and impede the use of appropriate UGM and urban re-use oriented tools (in particular market based ones, as local taxes) is rather evident.

Finally, a better understanding of how “the various instruments work in combination – whether they are mutually supportive or contradictory – and how EU policy and instruments are mediated through national systems of spatial planning and environmental protection was required.

The 6th Community Environment Action Programme (EAP), concluded in 2012, has helped ensure that environment legislation is in place to tackle most environmental challenges in the EU, reduction of land take. In general, the 6th EAP obtained “good result but not always as good as expected”, as Commissioner Janez Potočnik affirmed in 2011, and this is likely true also with reference to the USEACT issues, in particular for the difficulties to implement effective and coherent frameworks at national levels.

In 2007, being the consciousness about the strategic role of cities for the European enhanced, further policy guidelines aimed at reducing sprawl and promoting the “compact city” were proposed within the “Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities” (2007), approved by the European Member States’ Ministers responsible for Urban Development.

With the 6th EAP over, many issues related to the reducing land consumption issue are reasserted within the Europe 2020 strategy (ec.europa.eu/europe2020), the EU strategy

guidelines for sustainable growth, published in 2010 (European Commission, 2010), to address economic potential and improve conditions after the economic downturn for the next decade,

prioritizing the features for a “smart”, “sustainable” and “inclusive growth”, supported by an effective economic governance.

Ue policies and general guidelines

In this box, the main policy guidelines concerning sustainable growth in relation to the USEACT issue are summarized. Generally speaking, in these documents, attention is often given to the “complementary” role of the so called “restrictive” components, concerning Urban Growth Management regulation, and “proactive” ones, aimed at supporting interventions for the reuse of “brownfields”.

ESDP - European Spatial Development Perspective.

Towards a balanced and sustainable development of the Union territory (1999)

Author: European Commission

Form: Paper

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/reports/pdf/sum_en.pdf

Spatial planning is not regulated by European Community organs; however, the document, defined as the “document with most direct relevance for the use of land” (Expert Group on the Urban Environment, 2001) collects guide lines and orientations for the sustainable physical development of cities of European state members. The ESDP underlines the importance of the spatial vision in EU policies, programmes and funding. The main themes to be involved in the spatial policies of the single nations concern: a. the development of **rural areas**; b. transportation and enhancement of **sustainable transportation modes**; c. the **natural and cultural heritage** as key point to renovate social and economic aspects.

The new spatial approach of EU policies

Territory is interpreted as a new dimension of European policy to achieve “the balanced and sustainable development of the territory of the EU” **policy**.

The guidelines have to be implemented, according to various policy options suggested in the documents, at national level, but also in transnational cooperation, between different cross-border areas.

New challenges for the European territory

The documents also highlights the trends in Europe concerning, demography, economy, environment, territorial development and their related opportunities and challenges.

In contrast to the problems connected to inefficient use of territorial resources, the document proposes:

1. **Compact city development**, in opposition to urban sprawl, as a challenge for planning policies to “better control over further expansion of the cities”, improving urban cohesion in terms of increased social quality and economic opportunities;
2. **Recycling** and/or restructuring of underused or derelict urban sites and areas” as a method encouraged by spatial policies to reduce uncontrolled urban expansion.

Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities (2007)

Author: European Member States’ Ministers responsible for Urban Development

Form: Policy guidelines

http://www.eukn.org/E_library/Urban_Policy/Leipzig_Charter_on_Sustainable_European_Cities

The Charter, approved by the European Parliament, gives general principles and guidelines which should be used by the Member States as a base to create national and local strategies to improve urban environment and social cohesion in cities, the “**engines of social progress and economic growth**”, in combination with incentives and financial tools.

The thematic focuses are:

- **integration of urban development policies:**

Coordination of planning strategies, laws and technical plans to carry out the interventions is a tool to create high-quality public spaces; improve energy efficient infrastructure networks; involve the private sector and the community in interventions;

- **focus interventions on deprived neighbourhoods:**
Planning tools and architectural design are to be addressed in areas where to create positive social conditions and improve the social and economic attractiveness of cities;
- **“compact cities”:**
Priority has to be given to settlements with high energy efficiency and compact structure, to avoid urban sprawl and related transport inefficiency, towards a sustainable “use of resources”.

Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion (2008)

Author: Commission of the European Communities

Form: Communication to From The Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee.

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2008:0616:FIN:EN:PDF>

With this document, the Commission tackles the factors of **policy design** pursuing sustainable development and territorial cohesion, as concentration and urban growth may provoke situations of exclusion and unbalances. Especially, the document highlights some focus points concerning governance towards increased territorial balance and cohesion:

- **Better cooperation:** the need to face territorial cohesion issues through an **integrated approach** which “may require local, regional and even national authorities to cooperate”;
- **Better coordination:** the coordination between sectoral and territorial policies and improved coherence between territorial interventions;
- **New territorial partnerships:** participation between different actors may be required in the design and implementation of policies;
- **Improving understanding of territorial cohesion:** appropriate indicators should be identified to monitor and understand various aspects of territorial cohesion.

Cities of Tomorrow. Challenges, Visions, ways forward (2011)

Author: European Commission, Directorate General for Regional Policy

Form: Thematic paper

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/studies/pdf/citiesoftomorrow/citiesoftomorrow_final.pdf

The document presents a series of guide lines for future sustainable development of cities, as key aspect of European growth, towards the targets promoted by the **Europe 2020 Strategy** (2011). Each aspect is further supported by case studies and best practices which can be especially useful for the USEACT project.

The report focuses on:

- **Need for a shared European vision on the urban issues**
The territorial vision of the European Community for the urban development as a key aspect of the EU Agenda;
- **Current trends in urban areas**
Description of current urban phenomena and trends, with particular attention on the negative effects of urban sprawl and inefficient land take; on the pressure and congestion in urban areas with related social exclusion and environmental problems;
- **Models and challenges for the urban growth**
Planning policies should pursue different models of growth: the “compact city” with increased social, functional and economic attractiveness; the “green city”, offering a lower impact on the environment and pursuing energy efficiency; a city offering innovative and increased business and job opportunities; a regional approach in planning towards a balanced and polycentric development;
- **Governance**
An integrated approach to urban planning and multi-level governance is claimed, in order to manage properly urban growth and development. The regional or metropolitan approach to city management is fundamental for a balanced territorial growth.

1.2.3 / Past European projects and networks concerning the USEACT issues.

Over the last two decades, many European Projects and Network, funded by UE, focused

issues which are of interests for the USEACT projects.

In the following box, an overview on some of the most interesting EU projects dedicated to the land use management and brownfield reuse topics are

summarized; they can be a source of knowledge and a “library” of good practices.

As it can be observed, many of these projects focused the specific operational issue of brownfield recycling” while a few of them was dedicated to the land use planning tools issue.

Focus on land use management

CircUse- Circular Flow Land Use Management (2010-2013)

<http://www.circuse.eu/>

CircUse project is part of the CENTRAL EUROPE Programme and co-financed by the ERDF. The project relies on the definition of **Circular Flow Land Use Management**, for which a deprived or abandoned area is put to better use, linking it to existing urban dynamics, also controlling urban sprawl and reducing land consumption. The strategy for land use management takes as “model” the recycling process, which can be adapted to land use: “building land, development, use, abandonment and reuse”.

The project underlines **the lack of coordination between different tools** to control land consumption. Therefore, strong [analysis of current planning and financial tools](#) is one of the aims of the project; moreover, interesting frameworks for the land use are set, such as the [Land Use Database](#), a “GIS based transnational database concept with common parameters and the implementation of the data management concept in the pilot regions”. Information concerning tools for “re-use” is rather area-based, according to the different pilot-areas involved in the project.

PLUREL - Peri-urban Land Use Relationships - Strategies and Sustainability Assessment Tools for Urban-Rural Linkages (2007-2011)

<http://www.plurel.net/>

The research project, involving 31 partner organisations from 14 European countries and China and led by the University of Copenhagen, analyzes the contemporary theme of “**peri-urban areas in cities**” from a particular point of view: urban growth management in connection to the **monitoring of land uses**, trying to develop new **tools for the creation of “rural- urban land use relationships”**.

Large amount of documents, publications and geo-referenced tools are important outcomes of the research project and can stimulate interpretation especially in reference to the use of **GIS tools for the analyses of land-use patterns** oriented to policies for urban growth management.

The **computer applications** (<http://www.plurel.net/Products-54.aspx>) developed to monitoring land use and applied to some case studies (Warsaw-PL, Leipzig-DE, The Hague Region-NL, Manchester-UK, Montpellier-FR and Koper-SL), can be downloaded from PLUREL website.

MILUnet - Multifunctional Intensive Land Use Network (2004-2007)

<http://urban.nl/en/project/milunet-multifunctional-intensive-land-use-network>

MILUnet network is part of **Interreg IIIC** Programme of the European Union.

The strategy of MILU- Multifunctional Intensive Land Use was elaborated first in 2000 by the IFHP (International Federation for Housing and Planning, www.ifhp.org), asserting the importance of **breaking mono-functional interventions** in the city. “One of the biggest challenges facing urban managers today is finding contextual ways to make all urban development more sustainable. Much of this revolves around rethinking how cities plan and use their land for (re)development, and finding **appropriate and multiple reasons to use the spaces**, we build and occupy

across time and function. Clearly, to properly acknowledge land as a scarce commodity, we must stop using it for single use (mono-functional) purposes.”¹

URBACT PROJECTS (2002-2013)

The Urbact network has been intensively working on the issues of land use management and the intervention on urban areas, to improve sustainable redevelopment (energy efficiency, soil drainage, environmental issues) and to promote social inclusion (community involvement in deprived areas; enhancement of city attractiveness to offer better job opportunities; support social cohesion and community awareness). However, an overlook on the projects which are closely related to USEACT project is needed and reported below.

Urbact / USER- Urban Sustainable and Efficient Regeneration (2012- ongoing)

Partners: **Grenoble-Alpes Metropole (Lead Partner, FR)**; Pescara Municipality (ITA), Barakaldo Municipality (ES), City of Malaga (ES), City of Lublin (PL).

<http://urbact.eu/en/projects/urban-renewal/user/homepage/>

The project has just set. However, its principles are clearly declared: “In the context of metropolisation and increasing complexity of cities, urban planning and management are challenges. A new strategy is needed to create the **Sustainable City of Tomorrow**. USER (Urban Sustainable & Efficient Regeneration) wants to build **new processes and partnerships**, by integrating the expertise of uses from inhabitants and field workers in urban regeneration processes. USER wishes to work on **innovative tools** to find new ways to **design and manage the City** in order to improve efficiency of the urban governance of the Sustainable City.”

Urbact / LUMASEC –Land Use Management for Sustainable European Cities (2008-2010)

Partners: **Universitaet Karlsruhe – TH (D)**, CERTU, Lyon (FR), City of Bristol (UK), University of Ljubljana (SLO), Baia Mare Municipality (RO), Kavala Municipality (GR), Epures – Agence de l’Urbanisme de la Région Stéphanoise (FR), Bytom Municipality (PL).

Lead Partner: : **Universitaet Karlsruhe – TH (D)**

<http://urbact.eu/en/projects/metropolitan-governance/lumasec/homepage/>

Land use management is a key aspect for the competitiveness, attractiveness and sustainability of sustainable cities. The project aims at finding tools and strategies to improve the efficiency of interventions on urban brownfields. Results are particular interesting for USEACT partners².

Two of the main focuses of the project:

- Monitoring **land use patterns**;
- Managing the **interaction of stakeholders** and different administrative sectors

The document offers an useful overview of “**policy implications**” and the “**tools**” in connection to land use management both for the “cities in Europe” and for “European Institutions”, trying to define a “**toolkit for sustainable land use**”.

Focus on Brownfield reuse and urban integrated interventions

Cobraman – Brownfield regeneration management (2009-2011)

¹ <http://www.iiinstitute.nl/milu-principles-practices-projects-policies>

² LUMASEC project final publication “Sustainable Land Use Management. Providing strategies and tools for decision makers” available at:

http://urbact.eu/fileadmin/Projects/LUMASEC/events_media/final_products/LUMASEC_Book_final_short.pdf

<http://www.cobraman-ce.eu/Default.aspx>

The project has been developed through the Central Europe Programme and co-financed by ERDF.

Taken the growing importance of brownfields regeneration for European cities, the network tried to detect the instrument needed by professionals who deal with brownfield regeneration, towards an integrated approach to support and advise local administration.

The creation of a “**new job profile**” requires careful evaluation of the potential and risks of an area, so to better address the intervention. The complex knowledge required involves skills in management; communication; planning and design; environmental and civil engineering; legal and administrative aspects.

The project is particularly interesting for its careful approach on the components of brownfield “revitalization” management and the large amount of case studies analysed in its [database](#).

Outputs of this project can be useful for USEACT partners: the aspects highlighted and categories detected can be a further approach for the analysis of USEACT case studies.

EUBRA Agenda- European Brownfield Revitalization Agenda (2007)

Authors: EUBRA Team- Luc Broos, Thomas Ertel, Andrew Gray, Bettina Schug, Joop Vegter

http://www.et-ertel.de/fileadmin/medien/download/EUBRA_Agenda.pdf

The document is produced by **EUBRA**, a transnational platform detecting strategies and issues for the revitalizations of brownfields within European territories. The experience has been developed within the **Interreg IIIB framework**, and especially **REVIT** and **PROSIDE projects**. Especially, three aspects are detected as key issues for “sustainable” brownfield revitalization:

- the **social dimension** (community involvement);
- the **economic dimension** (finance, marketing, PPP);
- the **urban environmental dimension**, claiming for an integrated management of planning processes related to brownfields (environmental preservation, soil drainage, waste prevention and recycling, ...).

Cabernet - Concerted Action on Brownfield and Economic Regeneration Network

<http://www.cabernet.org.uk/>

Cabernet is an international network which consists of 55 Members, including 8 Team Leaders and 4 Coordination Team members, originating from 21 countries across Europe. The network is aimed at consolidating an international framework for sharing and disseminate **experiences on “brownfield regeneration”**. The network has been sharing tools and case studies for “**sustainable and effective redevelopment**” of brownfields. Cabernet defines interesting models concerning the “dynamics” of brownfields; the interrelation between typologies of brownfields and related form of PPPs; the importance of “drivers” and the role of “stakeholders perspectives” affecting the “regeneration process.

The key objects of the project can be described as follows:

- **Awareness and shared understanding of brownfield issues** across stakeholder groups, trying to build shared visions to find effective goals in the regeneration;
- **Models for brownfield** issues to involve drivers and pressures, long-term aims for the sustainable development, shared participation (citizens and professionals to be involved in the process);
- **Coordination of research**, to foster transnational dissemination of experiences, to establish an information base and updated state-of-the-art on brownfield regeneration;
- Identification of **best practice approaches** and other tools.

REVIT - Revitalising Industrial sites (2002-2007)

<http://www.revit-nweurope.org/>

The REVIT project is part of **Interreg IIIB** North West Europe and aims at working towards more effective and sustainable brownfield revitalization policies, as an opportunity to contrast urban sprawl and foster sustainability in urban development.

The project focuses on:

- the importance of **stakeholder engagement** processes to build effective partnerships;
- financing techniques, in particular **Public Private Partnerships**;
- the **marketing** approaches and the communication for the interventions of re-use;
- the protection and promotion of **industrial heritage**;
- the **techniques for a sustainable approach** to re-use, investigating remediation, natural assets and water managements innovation.

Interesting outputs are the **REVIT Stakeholder Engagement Toolkit** to help practitioners in elaborating effective involvement plans, identify and involve stakeholders. In the [Results document](#), useful information is given to understand models of interaction between public and private sector to build effective PPPs.

Urban Pilot projects (1989-1999) and URBAN and URBAN II (1994-2006)

The importance of the Urban pilot programs is not arguable. “The Urban Pilot Programme aims to support **innovation in urban regeneration and planning** within the framework of the broader Community policy for promoting economic and social cohesion. Cities are today's main focus of economic growth and development, technological innovation and public service. At the same time, they all too often offer the worst examples of congestion, pollution, industrial decay and social exclusion. Cities in less developed peripheral areas, as well as urban regions in decline, strive for economic development. On the other hand, areas of acute poverty and urban decay exist within even the more prosperous EU cities.” Supported by the **European Regional Development Fund**, the projects aimed at finding connections between the European Commission and the Member partners to create integrated local projects improving the physical structure of the city (historic heritage, accessibility system, public spaces) and consequently raising economic attractiveness, employment opportunities and social cohesion.

1.2.4 / From “brownfields” towards integrated interventions for urban “reuse”

The approach on reuse of inner areas has evolved over time: firstly, the intervention in inner cities was led with an environment-oriented approach. As many European projects show, the reuse of brownfields was addressed towards soil reclamation and the remediation from pollutants, to preserve the environmental resources and limit the impact of the industrial heritage in a long term perspective.

Today, this perspective has changed. Indeed, reuse is addressed towards a broader *ensemble* of target areas, in which environmental targets are only one aspect of the intervention. At the same

time, reorganization of obsolete functions to produce a urban change with effects on economic, social and physical components and to reduce of the city, strongly limiting land consumption imply a new prioritization for interventions' agendas.

Indeed, recently, after focusing on “special” contexts such as industrial areas (often polluted brownfield) or commercial waterfronts, the philosophy of urban re-use has been widely applied also in other contexts and at a smaller scale, often with an “infill” approach, and in areas often characterized by obsolescence and needing regeneration approaches.

Terms to define urban transformations: a categorization from CoUrbIT

The general idea of urban “reuse” often goes hand with a number of different terms which are used as “synonymous” (Della Longa, 2011).

Indeed, some outputs of the CoUrbIT project offers a useful categorization of terminology used as “urban reuse” is

concerned, according to the aim of the intervention, its prevalent effect on the “physical” or “social” features of the city, to the area involved and to the partnership managing the intervention, providing different types of “urban change”:

- **Renewal:** (physical) Renovation of parts of the city by substituting functions and structures;
- **Redevelopment:** (functional with social effects + physical) Change in the use of town space;
- **Regeneration:** (social) Regeneration of the social fabric, trying to improve an economically and socially exhausted area;
- **Recovery:** (physical) Recovery of existing physical structures through their requalification;
- **Revitalization:** (physical / partially social) Economy-oriented interventions with significant social effects;
- **Gentrification:** (functional and social) economic and social valorization; cultural uplifting of a certain area, so to cause a change in population which results often in phenomena of social exclusion;
- **Restructuring:** (functional + physical) Radical modernization of town spaces through a plurality of interventions. Model developed in Eastern European countries (with rapid developed during the post-socialist era).

Source: Della Longa, 2011.

1.3

Horizontal and vertical coordination for reducing the “land take”

The Leipzig Charter on sustainable European cities declared that policymakers “must stop looking at urban development policy issues and decisions at the level of each city in isolation”. The Leipzig Charter at local and member state levels offers “real possibility for a new recognition of the need to adopt a more active and integrated approach to urban governance” (EEA, 2009).

Chapter three (“Towards integrated urban management”) of the EEA Report No 5/2009 “Ensuring quality of life in Europe's cities and towns - Tackling the environmental challenges driven by European and global change” recalls that, within the EU framework, “authority has become increasingly dispersed through a variety of different levels, actors and agencies, creating a multilevel basis for governance” but “despite the widely recognised need, general commitments and the availability of many tools and good practice examples, the reality is that integrated management across Europe is still a matter for a few pioneers”.

The European policy on Territorial Cohesion also recognized the importance of **horizontal and vertical coordination of policies** for the effectiveness of the measures towards sustainable growth: policy coordination at various geographical scale, between neighbour localities at local level, between cross-border areas within the EU or other countries is required to implement the strategies in a long-term perspective (EC, 2008). These general statements can be easily referred without doubt to the USEACT issue too.

1.3.1 / The three “urban area” (plus the “national level”) dilemma

As far as the USEACT project issue is concerned, integration between the different local authorities of the three different “urban areas typologies” (see above) is recognized as a crucial factor.

The “three urban areas”

Urban areas, in fact, can be defined according to different criteria. As summarized in a EAA report (EEA, 2009), it is possible to distinguish the **Administrative Urban Area – AUA** (the territorial expression of the political and technical framework of governance), the **Morphological Urban Area – MUA** (the spatial dimension – irrespective of administrative borders - and form of cities and towns in physical terms) and the **Functional Urban Area - FUA** (the socio-economic reality of town and cities expressed in terms of the territorial influence of the town or city across its hinterland).

As the EAA above mentioned report affirms, “the relationships between administrative, morphological and the functional urban areas is critical to the effective governance of the forces creating the social, economic and environmental challenges. Due to inertia in the re-definition of administrative areas, the functional urban area typically extends well beyond the administrative and morphological boundaries of the town or city”. This “mismatch” between “real forces” and “administrative boundaries”. “highlights the need to secure both vertical and horizontal policy integration for the effective governance of towns and cities”.

Source: EEA, 2009.

The degree of overlapping of AUA, MUA and FUA depend, indeed, on the national (or regional) administrative frameworks. However, in several contexts, a sufficient integration is far to be reached.

A first problem level is the vertical integration: in general, in several European countries, a key level for UGM policies is the “regional” level”. However, land-use plans at regional level have often the power to safeguard just specific typologies of land (farmland, environmentally sensitive areas, etc) but are not endorsed to impose to the municipalities further land-use and developments restrictions. Regional plans, for land which is not specifically to be preserved, often can provide just general UGM guidelines which municipalities can refuse to put in force.

Only a good vertical integration could in principle guarantee a full exploitation of an effective land policy, essential “to assist city centres through urban renewal and organize development in the outskirts”. Moreover, since three are the essential “laws” to address and implement re-use

interventions in the city areas - namely, the “land law”, referred to the use of land and areas; the “direct action by the public authorities” and the “financial and fiscal instruments” to fund the interventions (Moulin, 2008) - without integrating these factors, the capability to implement effective UGM and reuse interventions is heavily reduced.

Horizontal integration is a problem too: “isolation” can induce, among others, perverse heavy “land take” effects, as many recent cases of “over-competition” between municipalities for developing real estate commercial areas show. Often, no relation is found ex-post between the numbers of real estate areas and local economic development. Instead, as a East German case show, the areas provided can exceed demand by three to four times (EEA, 2009).

These problems can further exacerbated and amplified because of the local authorities lack of legislative power, if the “state level” controls potentially strategic factors, as taxes and other fiscal tools.

Tackling the effectiveness of policies on the spatial structure: the InterMETREX Project.

Several European projects have focused the effectiveness of the governance for territorial management. Among others, the **InterMETREX Project** (1999-2007), developed within the INTERREG IIC programme in cooperation with METREX, the “Network of European Metropolitan Regions and Areas”. The project was aimed at developing a benchmarking tool for the evaluation of planning and governance tools in European regions and metropolitan areas, in relation to their results.

As recalled by the EEA (EEA, 2009), the project highlighted the following factors:

- the importance of the coherence of the areas in terms of social, economic and geographical features;
- the administrations’ skills in the management of integrated policies, in terms of financial resources and organization;
- the strength and role of the national planning framework and its implementability at local level;
- the level of stakeholders- and communities’ support along the different phases of planning implementation;
- the technical skills of technicians involved and responsible of the interventions.

More information: <http://www.eurometrex.org>

1.3.2 / Overcoming (some) “integration problems”: the role of the “cooperative frameworks” among planning authorities

Several case studies show that common supra-municipality cooperative frameworks for the implementation of policies, or, more generally, associations of different administrations (set on a

voluntary base or established according national/regional legislations) can effectively improve existing situations and have long-term results and benefits (EEA, 2009).

Voluntary based associations of local authorities (especially municipalities) is a particularly promising formula. In some cases these

“associations” – which can assume a “public agency” feature - develop without any specific legislative framework and often involve private stakeholder as well. In other cases, a legislative framework (for instance at national level) provides room and general guidelines to realize them,

giving to the municipalities the freedom to accept or refuse the opportunity to join together. Indeed, governments should “shift to new forms of governance through partnership”, which implies inter-administrative collaboration and involvement of interested stakeholders.

The recently enhanced planning power of French “associations of municipalities” and of “metropolitan poles”

In France, as in many other European countries, the “ultimate” authority in charge of urban planning is, in principle, the Municipality, which adopts the “Plan Local d’Urbanisme (P.L.U.)”. However, a recent national legislative framework (the so called “Grenelle II” Law, 2010) proposed to reinforce the planning authority role of the associations of municipalities (“associations de communes”), assigning to these “inter-municipality” bodies, constituted on a voluntary base, more decisional power with regard to the P.L.U.

This power, at association level, was before recognized only to few associations of municipalities located around the most important cities and to the “agglomeration communities”. The French associations of municipalities (“associations de communes”) has developed over the years a good experience of inter-municipality planning schemes (“Plans locaux d’urbanisme intercommunaux”) which can be considered as a good practice for other European Countries (Certu, 2010). In France, the recent legislative framework have also assigned to the “metropolitan poles” a substantial power to approve the P.L.U. at metropolitan level.

At a regional and county level the most significant planning regime in French is the **Schémas de cohérence territoriale (SCOT)**. The purpose of the SCOT is to delineate the major spatial development priorities for the area under examination over the medium to long-term, included the land-use pattern (farmland, natural spaces) and specific targeted urban renovation areas. SCOTs have a key role in Urban Growth Management and are hierarchically superior to the municipal planning schemes.

1.4

Tools for the Urban Growth Management and reuse of inner city: paying attention to market based tools

1.4.1 / Planning tools: definitions and “checklists”

One of the primary targets of the USEACT Project is improving the knowledge and the implementation of planning tools for UGM.

Generally speaking, planning tools for Urban Growth Management (UGM) and preservation of greenfield can heavily differ according to the context, urban planning culture, legislative frameworks, the governance frameworks other local characters.

However, literature recognizes the possibility to categorize UGM tools (Bengston, Fletcher, Nelson, 2004). Categorization can be useful at the USEACT Project level too, to stimulate the partners to explore the great quantity of tools at disposal (at least in theory) and to raise awareness on the possibilities to innovate the usual approaches towards UGM tools.

In the reality of planning contexts, of course, “standalone tools” are not commonly adopted, in fact, since **suitable articulated packages of tools are required** to improve the efficiency and ensure multi-target effectiveness (Bengston, Fletcher, Nelson, 2004).

A first distinction in UGM tools has to be made between:

- **urban planning tools**,
- (market based) **financial tools**, (e.g. tax-based approaches, incentives, tradable permits, etc).

The nature of these two tool categories is different, also from the “implementation” point of

view: incentive-based regulations, “need a tight regulatory planning framework to produce positive environmental effects”, while non market based tools do not need that (Nuisl, Schroeter-Schlaack, 2009).

For the USEACT Baseline study, further in depth analysis of the “UGM Planning tools” would be superfluous.

Trough selected cases studies, it will be possible to realize how and under what conditions these tools may work (or not work) in different contexts to reach very specific targets.

1.4.2 /“Market based tools”

It seems important to recall that several UE documents stress the fact that in general, in many UE countries, “market based tools” are not sufficiently developed, hampering the potential role of private partners or, if developed, are often not always able to reach the targets due the change of external condition.

In some cases, for example, existing national taxes regimes deeply interfere with the possibility to introduce specific finance tools; in other cases, a poor tool design (or a design that does not fit more the existing market situations) makes the tool have “perverse effects” – as is the case of tax incentives for building near metro-stations that, in fact, consent to the investors to retain a large share of the rent, if the demand is higher than expected by the planning authority.

In general, market based planning tools require compatibility with other tax or regulatory frameworks, very good knowledge of the market

mechanisms and a certain flexibility over the time

to adapt them to the market changes.

Tools for Urban Growth Management

1. Public acquisition of land

- Public acquisition of land can be pursued to preserve open spaces and environmental areas (as long as the acquired areas are open spaces). However, within urban areas, it can serve other goals, such as the development of public services or green areas, or controlling interventions on existing built heritage (van der Krabben, Jacobs, 2012).

2. Planning Tools (regulation)

- **Development moratoria:** prohibition on the issuance of building permits (regulation usually associated to rapid growths);
- **Rate of growth controls:** Ordinances determining a cap on the number of building permits issued annually;
- **Urban Growth Boundaries (UGB):** Lines dividing building land areas from rural ones;
- **Green Belts:** Physical space – consisting in farmland or other kinds of open spaces - acquired through public acquisition or TDR which divides building land from non-building areas;
- **Buffer zones** (es. Netherlands): Fringe areas, between urban and rural area, or areas under environmental regulation (e.g. areas close to transport infrastructure, etc.);
- **Zoning, small lot zoning:** “Completion areas”, to increase density (on residual empty spaces) in already urbanized or partially urbanized areas, already having good level of infrastructure facilities.

3. Financial Tools (incentives, taxation)

- **Development impact fees/taxes:** The state (or the local administration) can use financial tools to address development in certain areas, by imposing high fees (taxes) in areas which are not served by infrastructures, while encouraging the densification of already infrastructure zones;
- **Tradable development rights (TDRs):** “TDRs are market based instruments that allow a right to develop a parcel of land to move from one parcel to another” (Karanja, Rama, 2011);
- **Infill and redevelopment incentives:** Incentives encouraging interventions on already built areas (e.g. de-taxation on building activities);
- **Historic rehabilitation tax credits:** Incentives to intervention on city centres with historical value.

Tools to protect open spaces

1. Public acquisition of land: (see above)

2. Planning Tools (regulation)

- **Zoning:** Planning tools at territorial level provide spatial identification (zoning) of areas for farming, forestry, preserving environmental qualities and blocking or regulating building activities in such areas;
- **Subdivision exactions:** Imposing “landscape exactions” can preserve “green” open spaces, in terms of containment of land consumption; on the other hand it aims at other environmental or population-protective targets (e.g. in hydro-geologic risky areas, landscape areas, safety buffer zones...).

3. Financial Tools (incentives, taxation)

- **Purchase of Development Rights:** Land owners selling building transferable rights (see above) are rewarded with fiscal/tax exemptions;
- **Transferrable Development Rights (TDRs):** Transfer of building rights from a parcel (or area) to another, so that the “sending areas” can be preserved and defined as “non-buildable”;
- **Capital gains on land sales:** Taxes are imposed on the “profit” obtained from selling land parcels, to disincentive the speculative character of the land market
- **Preferential or differential tax assessment:** Incentives or tax exemptions are granted to owners of green-fields, to prevent them to build or sell the land, so to preserve its status of natural or agricultural areas
- **Agricultural districts, agricultural preserves, agricultural incentive areas.**

Source: *Adaption from Bengston, Fletcher, Nelson, 2004.*

1.4.3 / Linking the UGM with proactive and sustainable interventions to reuse the city

Some previously described tools are especially suitable to strictly link urban growth management policies and “area based” interventions in the inner city..

Especially, these are tools offering incentives to stakeholders interested in greenfield development (e.g. land-owners) to re-direct investments into specific areas to be renewed.

Research points out, for example, that Tradable Development Rights were successful in some cases, even if they require favourable conditions for their application.

Important European cities recently approved town plans which introduce approaches based on TDR and financial incentives: Rome and its General Urban Plan (2008) are only an example among others.

One of the mostly applied approaches is a “packaging” of the following strategies:

- 1) Urban planning regulations for the protection of green-field;
- 2) Specific incentives (taxes, volumes) for the re-use of internal areas, aimed especially at involving different land-owners (in situation where the propriety of the focus area for the intervention is fragmented);
- 3) Application of Transferable Development Rights

1.5 Managing the “reuse” interventions in partnership

1.5.1 / The role of the public sector in Public Private Partnerships for urban reuse

Developing urban reuse integrated within policy for UGM requires a sound management and the capability to deal with the extremely complex and varied Public Private Partnerships” issue.

Literature analysing public-private partnerships often highlights that the role of public administrations in encouraging and managing the partnerships is absolutely fundamental, despite different contexts require different strategies (Moulin, 2008).

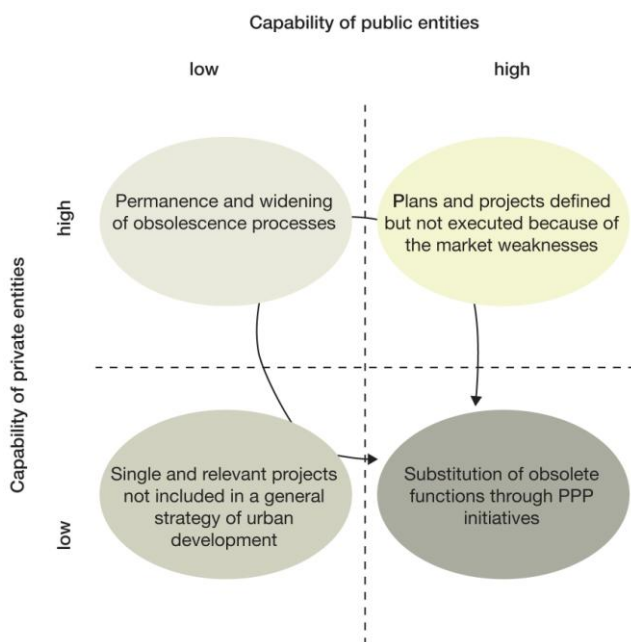
Stanghellini and Copiello (in Della Longa, 2011) point out that “philosophy” and the outcome of the intervention vary not only in relation to the starting “physical”, economic and social features of the area, but also according to the “balance of power”

and the interaction scheme between the public and the private sector.

In general, the most common conditions can be schematized as follows:

1. Pro-active initial stimulus by the private sector supported by an efficient local government;
2. Strong “hegemony” and ability of the local administration to develop planning schemes, with a private sector used to follow it
3. Weak private sector with supplementary intervention by public authority;
4. private sector (not used to PPPs) combined with a dynamic public sector capable to progressively integrate the private sector.

Each of these conditions require a different approach by the public administration, to be based on a lucid “self.positioning”.



Different types of initiatives’ capability shown by the public and private sectors. Source: Della Longa, 2011

European Commission's Green Paper on Public-Private Partnerships

In 2004 the European Commission published a green paper which tries to better define features and mechanisms for public-private partnerships. According to the paper, PPPs are characterized by some factors which are summed up as follows:

- Duration of the collaboration between the public and the private sector
- Entity of the financing by each sector
- The role of the public actor in the definition of the targets of the project
- The distribution of risks between the private and public partner.

Relevantly, the document distinguishes two types of PPPs schemes, according to analyses on several case studies in Europe:

a. **Purely contractual PPPs:** the partnership between the public and private sector “is based solely on contractual links”.

b. **Institutionalized PPPs:** 1) “this form of PPPs involves the establishment of an entity held jointly by the public partner and the private partner” with major shares owned by prevalently local public capital. 2) The establishment of an institutionalised PPP may also lead to a change in the body or shareholders of a public entity”. In this case, the “control of a public entity by a private operator” occurs, so that the entity has to manage and provide the service to the community. This type of PPPs can be used for the management of any kind of service.

1.5.2 / Further fundamental issues for PPP: learning from the CoUrbIT model

To improve knowledge on how PPPs can work, considering several aspects is important.

An interpretative model of PPPs provided by a recently developed European Project (CoUrbIT) on the urban reuse in Europe, is extremely useful for this purpose, as it focuses the most relevant managerial and implementation challenges for the PPP aimed at providing “Urban Change”.

Noticeably, as far as typical “management” interpretation is concerned, the model describes the processes of “activation” of the interventions according the following features:

- urban functions proposed as a “substitution” of obsolete functions
- Nature of intervention (targets and scope)

- Structure, features and dynamics of the partnerships between stakeholders involved (PPPs)
- planning tools and planning frameworks
- new “subjects” as drivers of the interventions

The CoUrbIT model, to support urban authorities to face the managerial challenges of PPPs, provides some specific advices:

- importance of the innovation of the relationships frame, rules and of introducing common “languages” driving the partnerships between public and private sector;
- difficulties and delays (timing management) in the implementation of the processes and interventions have to be recognized within a strict Project Management approach;
- new balance between “production” and “consumption” are required at urban level, with the need to reduce (through new approaches to the relationships between

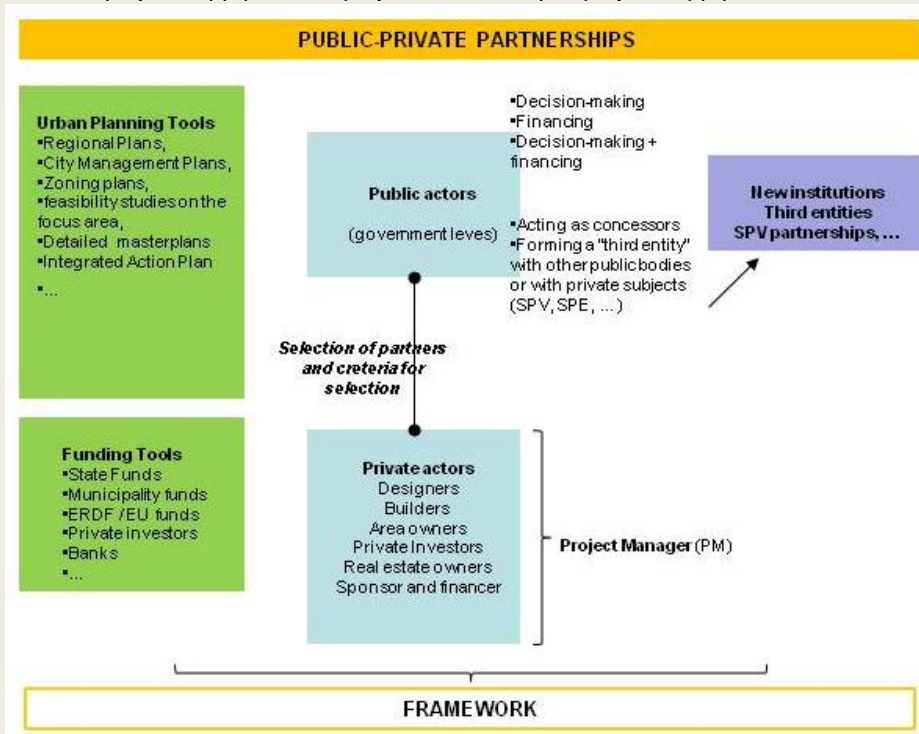
public authority and private partners) the amount of housing or commercial areas schemes, which are “more profitable for the market in the short term” but not in the long term;

- importance of identify new “leaders” ad drivers able to manage complex processes with different types of networks of actors and subjects, avoiding the traditional separation between interests of “political and administrative subjects” and on the other hand of “speculative actors”;
- designing new tools to define accurately effective targets and to manage the process;

- set ting new roles for the public administration, fostering the importance of “interdisciplinary approach”, and defining interdisciplinary professional profiles to lead the interventions;
- accepting a radical change in the definition of actors involved in PPPs, avoiding traditional “neo-liberal elite”;
- promoting appropriate levels of interaction according to the different cases of application.

CoUrbIT – Complex Urban Investment Tools.

<http://www.cadses.net/en/projects/apprpro.html?projectId=1558&topic=projects/apprpro>



Elaboration from: Della Longa, 2010

The European project **CoUrbIT Complex Urban Investment Tools** was developed during the Interreg III B Cadses Programme (2005-2008).

This model originates from the idea that globalization and contemporary global market as “new scenarios” cause obsolescence of existing urban functions (“economic, social and physical) in cities, driving the intervention of “re-use” of urban areas.

Understanding the structure and the organization of the partnerships and how the partnership can manage in an integrated way the “process” is also important. The CoUrbIT model gives key analyses on this issue, too, offering an interpretative model of the partnerships, in terms of intervention-management dynamics.

Numerous case studies show relevant differences according to existing condition and environmental features: however, some common categories can be used, as in the CoUrbIT model, to “describe” and “give interpretation” of the different case studies paying attention on how PPPs work.

At the same time, the CoUrbIT research framework recalls that the EU guide lines on PPPs can only partially deal and represent the large variety of models and issues occurring for partnerships aimed at urban interventions.

The project aims at identifying an appropriate “managerial model”, to be applied for the description of case studies offered by the partners; moreover, another element is the definition of innovative tools for the governance of the interventions process, to be submitted to administrators, and of benchmarking frameworks to evaluate the management and carrying out of the projects.

The interest of CoUrbIT relies not only in the theme and in the complexity of the case studies but also in the organization of collected materials and observations in high-quality academic publications, which can be surely become a common base for USEACT partners to start wrking on the subthemes of USEACT on PPPs.

The parameters required to describe and study the PPP accorded to CoUrbIT model are showed in figure below.

1.6

Implementing UGM through interventions: the quality issue

As briefly recalled in the project presentation, the **quality of the intervention** aimed at reusing spaces in the inner city is a fundamental aspect to be considered. Quality can depend both on the planning tools (tax and levy schemes included) and on the design and managerial approach, controlled by the local authorities.

The “urban quality” has significant effects not only on the quality of life but also on the economic opportunities offered to investors and city “competitiveness” (Rogerson, 1999).

In general, urban recycling often needs to be affordable to increase density. This aspect is often very critical for the acceptance of the UGM and recycling policies; therefore the “quality” aspect, together with the ability to communicate it to the citizens, has a strategic role in facilitating the implementation of such a densification policy.

The quality of interventions in urban areas does not only refer to the “problematic concept” of design quality (Carmona, 2010), but to a wider set of factors, such as environmental, energetic, functional, economic, social and identity factors.

1.6.1 / Different aspects of quality for the USEACT project

Different “**quality**” features which are useful as a point of reference to manage effective UGM and proactive urban recycling policies can be identified:

1. **economic sustainability**: it refers, on one hand, to the ability to attract and maintain, in the long-term, the “best” urban functions in terms of local economic impact; on the other hand, economic sustainability deals with the economic and financial feasibility and with “budget” savings, both for public and private stakeholders involved;
2. **social aspects + community involvement**: raising awareness, participation processes, location of community facilities increasing social cohesion;
3. **spatial quality**: urban and architectural quality in the interventions (with particular attention to densifications);
4. **environmental sustainability (and energy efficiency)**: evaluation of building techniques and energy systems to limit the impact of the interventions on the environment;
5. **heritage + identity**: preservation of local identity especially in historical contexts

1.6.2 / Controlling quality of city recycling through planning, management and operational tools

Working on the link between UGM policy and “interventions” also requires identifying the tools, which can be adopted by the public authorities to induce and control the “qualities” throughout the planning/implementation process.

Authorities involved at different levels should be able to:

- set unambiguous and clear “quality” targets (possibly through indicators) for any relevant quality feature;
- to develop technical capabilities and skills (autonomously or through cooperative frameworks with other authorities at the same or at a different level) to deal with all relevant quality issues;
- to develop an effective participation and communication policy towards communities, to raise social awareness about the quality targets;
- to develop procedures (tenders, contracting etc.) to select the “best” partnerships and manage the development process by an “influential” position;
- to enhance the capability to “drive” the stakeholders involved towards these targets, in the “post-development/management phase” as well;
- to cooperate, with other authorities, to remove the contradictory legislative/planning frameworks (e.g. national tax schemes) which reduce the freedom of setting quality targets at local level.

“Driving” the quality: the role of the public administration

> Assessing the quality throughout the re-use process through a “quality chart”

The Italian association “AUDIS – Associazione Aree Urbane Dismesse” (Associations of Vacant Areas), in its “Chart for Urban Regeneration” (2008) has selected a set of **indicators for assessing the “quality”** of the interventions, to be used during the initial phases (feasibility, evaluation phase), during the development phases and post-intervention, as a final assessment. The “targets” and indicators proposed refer to **urban quality**, as the integration between the target area and the city; **architectural quality** for the creation of attractive sites; **quality of the public space**, including the design and management of high-quality, comfortable and safe open spaces; **social quality**, that offers suitable social facilities to promote social cohesion and encourage social mix in the area; **economic quality**, defining conditions for economic gain for investors and administrations; **energetic quality**, implying increasing the energy efficiency in built and non-built spaces; **cultural quality**, to preserve the identity and cultural features of places; and **landscape quality**, involving high quality landscaping and integration with urban morphology (AUDIS, 2008).

> Full Public quality control for private investment

An explicit goal declared by the “**Leiedal**” **Community** (Belgian voluntary associations of municipalities aimed at boosting the economic development of their region) is developing the capacity to fully control and manage the quality issue for the redevelopment projects “from the start to the end”, including details at a “building scale”.

Buying the land – through bank mortgages - on the basis of affordable business and design plans, looking for the investors interested in the development, organizing (as a land-owner) multi-step tenders to select the most appropriate designers and builders, working together with them to improve every qualitative detail of the project, involving the community in a participative process, selling the already developed land back to the investors, defining the contracts to guarantee a long-term effective management and maintenance process, are the steps which characterize the Leiedal approach to underutilized or vacant land development. This framework allows the Leiedal community to guarantee a full control of the “qualities”, and, at the same time, involve private investors (as owners), avoiding any public expense.

1.6.3 / Some strategic “quality issues” for the USEACT project

Each component of the “quality” framework is important in implementing UGM policies and interventions. However, as far as the scope of the USAECT project is concerned, the below aspects appear especially relevant.

1.6.4 / The economic quality and the “market based” incentives

Reusing urban areas is not a cheap operation in general. Recent research, carried out in the Italian real estate market shows that in order to make a “reuse” intervention affordable for investors, a density increase between 1,45 times in volume (central areas) and 6,11 times (“external” urban areas) compared to the “prior” situation, is required (Micelli, 2011). This means that, to avoid dramatic (and probably socially unacceptable) density increases, it is essential the public sector plays a strong financing role.

As the CABERNET model points out (CABERNET, 2006), the economic affordability of “brownfield reuse” can differ according to indirect/direct costs of regeneration; expected revenues/return from the site; the type of financing and the associated financial risks; national and local taxes and the perceived risk of forthcoming fluctuations; any development agreements between the land owner and / or the municipality and the developers. Each of these parameters should be carefully evaluated.

However, if the intervention is successful in the long-term and therefore able to attract “values”, and offers the possibility of reducing the long-term management costs (i.e. energy, maintenance or water supply costs), the public financial contribution can be reduced without need to exceed with volume incentives. “Fine tuning tools” capable of precisely addressing the above “qualities” are therefore essential.

1.6.5 / Attracting and maintaining “local economic impact”

Given the importance of cities for the creation of “economic and business opportunities, as recognized for example by EU Regional Policy (EU, 2011), the interventions on the inner city have to be considered also in terms of “economical local development” potential. This target has not always been sufficiently pondered.

In the UK (Communities and Local Government, 2011) the annual core regeneration expenditure according to activity (based on 2009/10 and 2010/11) accounts for 69.9% for “Homes, communities and environment”, and only 11.3% for “Industrial and commercial property and infrastructure”.

Operating on existing parts of the city means carefully evaluating which new functions - for those areas - could be most suitable for optimizing the local economic impact in the long-term and to improve the attractiveness of the city itself in the global market and at regional level, enhancing its competitive potential.

In recent years, in many European contexts, the spaces formerly occupied by industrial activities have been mainly replaced with housing developments or “consumer” activities, such as shopping centres and leisure or service centres, which use a lot of space and do not guarantee long-term relevant economic impact.

Hence, introducing innovative planning and operational tools able to stimulate the development of “mixed-use areas”, by integrating residential and “production” functions, could become a further goal to pursue long-term economic sustainability (Altes & Tambach, 2008) and legitimate density increases.

Moreover, these tools should be designed to really “select” the most efficient “businesses” (ratio between expected local economic impact and floor space consumed).

It should also be recalled that developing business activities on underutilized land requires

approaches and “plans” at a wider scale than municipality level.

1.6.6 / Social awareness, communication and (not populist) participation

To sprawl or not to sprawl? Towards land use containment

“Urban growth management” and “anti-sprawl” policies have not been considered as a socially valuable approach at all times and everywhere.

“Concentration” and “limiting urban expansion” can have their drawbacks too: perceived “low-quality” of the so called “compact city”, reduced opportunities for households to build its individual home, less opportunities for local municipality to get tax revenues for using land, “high-rent” effect and reduction of opportunities to develop new settlements and activities at a lower cost, are the most common points in favour of urban expansion, when the densification is not correctly driven.

International literature on planning (Karanja, Rama, 2011), recognizes the need to clearly define and communicate the targets for preservation of soil and open spaces, even at different territorial scales.

This approach goes in the direction for:

- Clearly choosing between different trade-offs with social benefits;
- Create a common ground to share choices with the communities and the stakeholders involved in the process, clearly communicating their “values” as opportunity.

Strong “social movements” against the re-use of underutilized urban areas are frequent in many European urban contexts as developments which induce densification are often perceived as

generic “speculation”, or at least, as operations which are not environmentally friendly or socially compatible.

On the other hand, “land protection” and UGM are usually not very high-ranked as a priority for individuals and communities, whereas sensitivity towards this issue has grown in the last decade.

Quality targets and expected quality outcomes of urban recycling policies should therefore be communicated to citizens and stakeholders, in a transparent way, to raise social awareness on the positive nature of UGM policies linked to re-use schemes of the inner-city.

A variety of advanced communications tools are today available (photography, videos, 3d visualizations, models) to “publicize”, and the use of these tools should be promoted among authorities, also by means of “common platforms” at supra-municipality level.

Including social, cultural and environmental targets in the governance of interventions of re-use (CABERNET, 2004) also implies community participation in the planning process. The community has values, identities and needs to be taken into account and it can play the role of the “third actor” in PPPs (Moulin, 2008).

However, some authors (Bryn, Della Longa, 2010) point out that “participatory processes” in “networking forms of governance” are only one component of the governance itself. This implies the “importance of optimizing, but not necessarily maximizing, importance of community”. Otherwise, there is the risk that participation runs the risk of becoming a “populist” tool, appearing to be purely rhetorical in the governance of interventions and not showing its potential effects. Hence, the success of the participatory process largely depends on its leadership, selecting and guiding information, and action.

BIMBY – Build In My Backyard. A French research project to communicate the urge and the feasibility of densification in low-density areas

The **Bimby project** was set at the end of 2009 by a French research group within the ANR- Agence National de Recherche framework “Ville durable 2009” (Sustainable cities 2009), to investigate strategies for the densification, diversification and regeneration of urban fabrics in the “*cité pavillonnaire*”, the low density settlements and “sprawled areas” of French cities. The point of the research is how administrations can programme and manage densification in low density settlements, by building individual houses in large, private lots, to be fragmented in sub-parcels.

The project tackles the importance of a dialogue between residents, technicians and administrators, to effectively promote densification and build in private “backyards”, fact which could raise opposition and hostility from the residential population.

The issue is further addressed with a special interactive online platform, **Bimby+**, launched in 2012, which helps practitioners, administrators and the community to discuss proposals and themes for densification. Mapping tools, articles, news, press release and a selection of blogs are available for consultation.

More information: <http://bimby.fr/>

1.6.7 / Environmental sustainability and energy efficiency

Environmental quality and energy efficiency are essential targets for urban recycling. The relation between sustainable interventions and energy efficiency, which implies a good environmental quality significantly differ in cases of:

- renewal of brownfield areas, implying demolition and reconstruction of the existing heritage, in combination with soil remediation and treatment of the pollutants in the area;
- refitting interventions in already urbanized and inhabited areas (included heritage in historic centres) with low-efficiency building stock.

In the first case, advanced sustainable solutions to reduce building emissions or to produce energy locally, are fairly easy to implement since the buildings have to be developed “ex novo”.

In the second case, the refitting is aimed at the existing building stock with poor energy performance, whose impact on the environment is to be reduced by locating new technology and substituting energy inefficient parts of the structure.

Despite research still debating the effectiveness of these interventions or the real “benefit of this investment” due to the high costs of technological components (Menassa, 2011), such interventions are currently a booster for the construction sector, likely to increase in the following decades, with positive effects for the job market, and acting as a tool to increase the market value for the building.

In some cases, it can be considered as an occasion in which to involve communities in wider “regeneration” programs, extended to public spaces and social aspects as well.

Setting quantitative sustainability targets for integrated projects of city recycling (e.g. creating the so-called “eco-neighbourhoods) is easier if official standards and values are utilized, at least at national value (Bondonio&Callegari, 2002). Many well-known evaluation certifications are available, such as CasaClima, (Italy), LEED (U.S.A), PIMWAG, (Finland), 48 Pressure indicators system (France), BREEAM (UK), etc., in addition to directives including for example SEA – Strategic Environmental Assessment, and EIA – Environmental Impact Assessment for the evaluation of the impacts of a project on the environment in its implementation phases.

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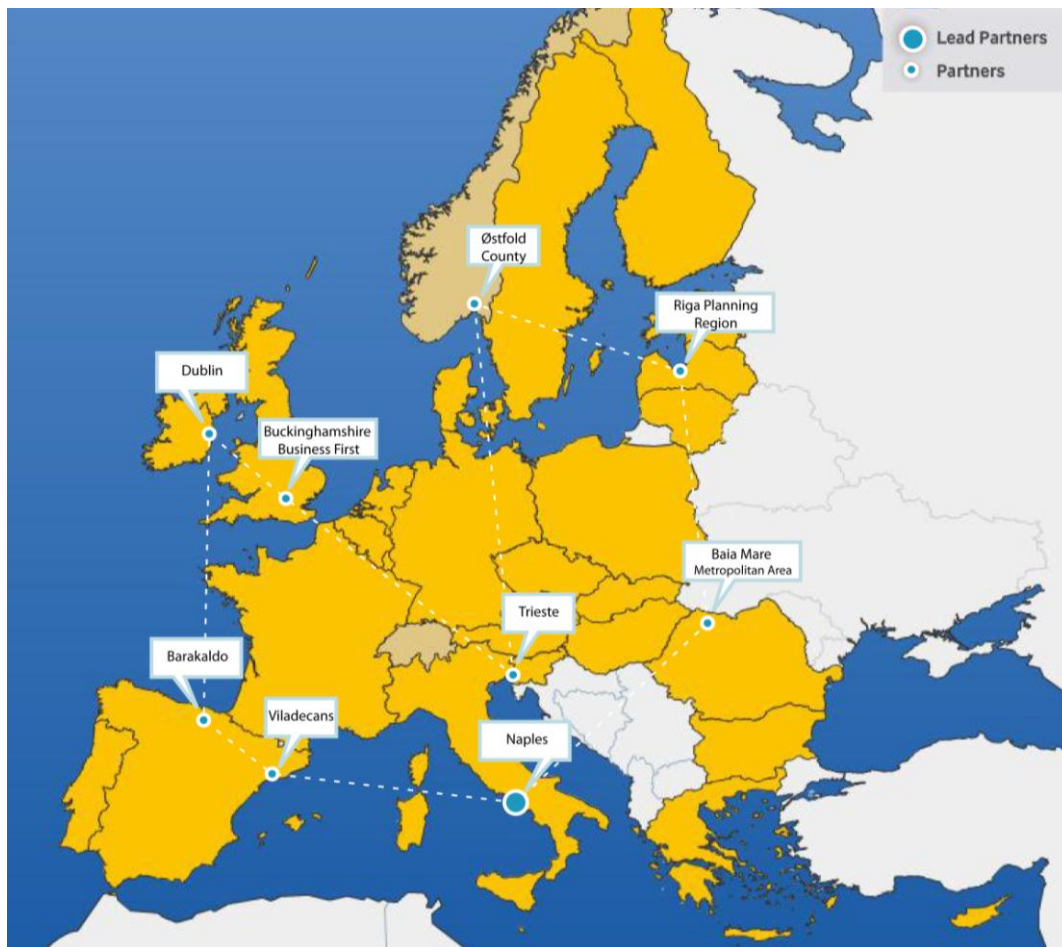
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Part 2

Partner Profiles



The partners of the USEACT project.

The USEACT Partners

- Baia Mare Metropolitan Area – Romania
- City of Barakaldo – Spain
- Buckinghamshire Business First - UK
- City of Dublin – Ireland
- City of Naples – Italy
- City of Nitra – Slovak Republic
- Østfold County - Norway
- Riga Planning Region - Latvia
- City of Trieste – Italy
- City of Viladecans – Spain

Observer Partners

- London Borough of Southwark (United Kingdom)
- Metropolitan Area of Istanbul (Turkey)

Baia Mare Metropolitan Area

Romania

Size (metropolitan area)	1,382.43 km ²
Size (city area)	234.7 km ²
Inh. (metropolitan area)	220,000
Inh. (city area)	120,000
Density (metropolitan area)	162 inh/km ²
Density (city area)	599 inh/km ²

5.1 An overview



Source: Baia Mare Metropolitan Association

The metropolitan area of Baia Mare, accounting for almost 25% of the Maramures county, is a northwestern region in Romania. The Maramures county comprises other localities (administrative territorial unit), which include the Baia Mare City and 17 neighbour localities located in a surrounding area of 30 km, both in the south and west of the city.

General information on
the Metropolitan Area
of Baia Mare

The partner communities of the metropolitan area of Baia reinforced their link and relationship by signing an association agreement concerning the sustainable development of the region. In 2006, the **Baia Mare Urban System Association** was created as a “territorial cooperative partnership” lead by Baia Mare City. Its functions were to manage cooperation between the local communities, create cross-cutting policies on topics such as economy, territorial cohesion and development, and finance the priority programs and projects of joint interest.

**The Baia Mare
Metropolitan Area
Association**
Political, administrative
and decision-making
process

The legal framework for the association is Law 215/2001, relating to local public

administration, which defined metropolitan areas as “Associations of inter-municipal development”, formed through an agreement of a county capital city (e.g. Baia Mare) and the close localities. These associations are public equivalent bodies, and have multiple purposes, like:

- defining a common strategy of development for the metropolitan area
- attracting funding to implement metropolitan programs and projects
- developing public services at metropolitan level (water, transportation, waste etc.)
- management of the real estate patrimony, with specific taxation systems.

Recently, a modification in Law 215/2001, recognized the associations established by any county capital city as metropolitan areas, and the Baia Mare Urban System changed the Statute of the Association to “**Baia Mare Metropolitan Area**”.

Baia Mare City – the leading community of the metropolitan area and the administrative centre of Maramures is the main economic pole of the Maramures County in Romania, offering its interesting cultural and traditional heritage and rich landscape to the tourist sector. The city is located about 600 km from Bucharest, the capital of Romania, 70 km from the border with Hungary and 50 km from the border with the Ukraine. The airport together with good rail and street infrastructures facilitate the link with major European cities and regions, integrating the metropolitan area in the European network of metropolitan areas.

During the communist period, the main economic and productive sector was the mining industry, which started rapidly declining after 1989. The rapid change in industry, from “massive” industry to small-medium enterprises and services also caused a quick territorial development, which often results in land management problems.

General information on Baia Mare City

- Location
- Strategic importance
- Accessibility system

Effects of the industry sector change on the development of the city

Further information:

http://www.subm.ro/en/site_map.html

5.2 Key problems, challenges and potential.

The status quo of the project theme

The metropolitan area of Baia Mare has borne the load of rapid development during the transition period after the communist regime. This has resulted in problems at a physical level due to the number of abandoned industrial and mining areas, and at planning level on account of some inefficient planning tools increasing land use.

Currently, the development has to cope with external and internal pressures: at international level, pressure is caused by the process of globalization, the enlargement of the European Union and the related increase in territorial competition. Internally, the transition period resulting in changes in production often brought about the unequal distribution of wealth and environmental

problems, such as increasing and inefficient land consumption.

In particular, the **metropolitan approach** to the management of the territory is considered as a strategy to reduce pressures and social or economic unbalances among different localities, and therefore considered a tool to enhance the attractiveness of the area for investments.

In short, the **key problems** highlighted by the Baia Mare Metropolitan Area are:

- **Increased amount of brownfield areas** (mostly mining settlements), due to functional change in the industrial sector after the communist period;
- Administration reorganization processes and fragmentation of the communities creating **land management problems**, due to an overlapping of planning tools and regulations, that has been causing inefficiency in land use (sprawling, etc.);
- **Land property fragmentation** between Baia Mare City and other neighbour localities, preventing integrated and efficient land use for the development of new industrial and economic areas

Key problems

- increased amount of brownfield areas, due to change in the industrial sector
- overlapping of regulations, provoking land management inefficiency
- fragmentation of land property

The **challenges** facing the Baia Mare Metropolitan Areas are:

- The need to identify and develop integrated policies in order to obtain the “**sustainable redevelopment**” of the areas in decline;
- An **integrated approach to planning**, enhancing the role of the Urban System Association, connecting the city with other municipalities to increase the efficiency of land use, beyond administrative borders and local plans.

Key challenges

- strategies for the redevelopment of former industrial areas
- integrated metropolitan approach to planning

Currently, there is a need for more **social housing**, and the local administration is encouraging new constructions. The municipality also aims to support the preparation of new **areas for business** start-ups and developments. Moreover, other interventions, on which the construction sector could be addressed, should be the improvement and **refitting** of existing patrimony, to increase the energy efficiency of the buildings.

In relation to these targets, the **potential** of BMMA in relation to the USEACT themes relies on:

- The opportunity to access structural funds for the decontamination and rehabilitation of the polluted sites, to prepare the ground for their next renewal;
- Involving the private sector in the rehabilitation of declined industrial areas through public private partnerships.

Potential

- funding for soil decontamination;
- involvement of private stakeholders in the processes

5.3 Planning tools and strategies supporting interventions in the city and managing urban growth

As required by the law on territorial planning and urbanism (350/2001), each metropolitan association has to develop a **metropolitan territorial strategy**, and a related **metropolitan territorial plan**, that has operational power. At local

level, the municipalities' local urban plans involved in the metropolitan associations have to be linked to the general metropolitan plans.

Further details about the plans are highlighted below:

- **Baia Mare Metropolitan Area Strategy for 2010 – 2020.**
The strategy for the whole metropolitan area of Baia Mare developed by the communities involved in the BMMA, aims at working on different inter-municipality themes, such as land management at territorial level, industrial and production development, and transportation. The metropolitan projects specifically are: the **Baia Mare City Belt**; the development of the Metropolitan Industrial Park; and the management of the Metropolitan Public Transportation System.
- **Baia Mare City Sustainable Development Strategy**
The general strategy involves the City of Baia Mare and is aimed at interventions on public services and network facilities (rehabilitation of water and sewage system), and the upgrade of the transportation network. The tool is supported by the Baia Mare City Administration in collaboration with local population and companies.
- **General Urban Plan of Baia Mare City**
The plan manages the administrative territory of Baia Mare City, regulating building activities and the use of city land (greenfield and brownfield). The stakeholders involved are the City of Baia Mare and investors in the real estate sector.
Among other sectors, the plan focuses on **areas to regenerate** and on urban areas with social problems, where to plan cultural infrastructure and address specific social policies
- **Integrated Urban Development Plan of Baia Mare City (PIDU)**
The plan, to be implemented through urban projects within 2015, is managed by Baia Mare City with the local population and companies, and is a local tool at city level. It is aimed at the rehabilitation of the Vasile Alecsandri neighbourhood. In particular, the plan is focused on interventions on various infrastructures: road networks, public transportation and green, open spaces.
The Plan is a tool both for regulation aimed at the management of urban growth (regulation, regeneration in urban areas) and the protection of open spaces with zoning.
- **Local Urban Planning Regulations**
These are the urban plans for each of the 18 municipalities forming the metropolitan area.
The plans control all the aspects of the building process by regulating building features and managing the design and maintenance. Moreover, the regulations define:
 - abandoned/ unused & damaged buildings and impose their rehabilitation in order to ensure citizens' safety and improve urban design;
 - the facilitation process of the transfer in public domain of the buildings that are part of the urban sustainable redevelopment plan;
 - urban spaces functions – residential, green areas, law protected/

Tools for land use management

Existing strategies and plans guiding the urban and metropolitan growth and the management of interventions:

- the metropolitan strategy, for territorial management and development
- Baia Mare City Sustainable Development Strategy
- GUP of Baia Mare City, identifying areas to regenerate
- Integrated plan for the intervention on an inner city area
- Local Urban Planning Regulations

- restricted areas (historical centre), river side areas;
- the directions and functions of the metropolitan development areas (real estate, industrial, commercial, touristic);

5.4 Overview: experiences on urban transformation

Baia Mare City has already developed some projects concerning the reuse of inner-city areas:

- During the European LUMASEC project (Land Use Management for Sustainable European Cities- URBACT II), Baia Mare developed the Zone Urban Plan for the **Ferneziu neighbourhood**, where working factories could be redeveloped as city-hubs (Rompumb factory and Herja mine), in particular by tackling the reclamation of the polluted area.
For this area, the idea of creating attractive tourist areas and supporting the tourist sector at urban level was at the heart of the project.
- **MBC- Millennium Business Centre project**, considered an urban regeneration model for Baia Mare City.
This intervention of regeneration has been developed over the past decade, to rehabilitate and manage functional change in some areas of the historical core, under preservation.
The project could benefit from funding from the local Council, national and European funding (PHARE 2000 funds), accounting for 8.5 million euros.
Interventions on the physical environment were arranged to support local communities and local entrepreneurship, encouraging small and medium businesses to settle in the area.
The renewal acted especially on:
 - rehabilitation of the “traditional” business spaces in the historical centre, concentrating on the refitting of buildings and open spaces, encouraging a change in functions;
 - renewal of infrastructures for transportation and network facilities;
 - development of sustainable networks concerning mobility (cycle and pedestrian paths) and technological networks (ITC);
 - creation of a community for support and consultation of actors involved in the business and economic sector;
 - management of the new infrastructures by creating a private administrator to manage the public infrastructures located/renewed during the project, for long-term maintenance.

Experiences:

- Plan for the Ferneziu neighbourhood (planned), to create an attractive area for tourism
- MBC – Millennium Business Centre project (completed), encouraging entrepreneurship and business activities

5.5. Potential expectations and contribution.

The Baia Mare Metropolitan Area aims to strongly cooperate with network partners to:

- gain know-how on **land use efficiency** and on models of property-asset management, in order to better deal with **property fragmentation** between different municipalities and local authorities;
- learn good practices concerning **models of sustainable development** in abandoned/deprived urban areas;
- acquire models of **land use management within the economic crisis** framework, promoting plans towards “zero-growth” models and at the same time ensuring economic growth.

Relevant **contributions** of Baia Mare to the USEACT network could be

- its expertise in **intercommunity development** and **metropolitan governance**;
- the **inter-municipality approach to spatial planning** and for the development of shared policies for the **attraction of investments** could be one important discussion topic within the project;
- know-how in urban **sustainable redevelopment**, as Baia Mare City is an example of good practice at European level regarding the regeneration of the historical center with EU Funds. (Business Center Millennium III Baia Mare project)

Expectations

- models of land use management
- models of regeneration
- planning for land containment combining economic growth

Contributions

- expertise on metropolitan governance to create attractive inter-municipality communities
- experience in interventions for the inner city redevelopment

5.6. LAP and LSG in their early stages

Local Action Plan

The Local Action Plan of the Baia Mare Metropolitan Area Association shall propose a shared policy, offering an **integrated approach of land use management** in the entire metropolitan area.

In short, The Local Action Plan shall focus on two major themes:

- **“sustainable redevelopment” of brown field areas**, following the decline of the mining industry. These areas do not currently contribute to the attractiveness and competitiveness of the city, but they could be transformed into attractive focus points.
- a **land management policy** to better enhance the potential of **metropolitan development areas**, in which to preserve their existing function, increasing their potential through urban renewal and building refitting or the development of gentrification policies.

Local Action Plan

- integrated approach to land use management at metropolitan level

Local Support Group

The **Local Support Group** will be organized on two levels:

- a **technical support group** – comprising mainly specialists on urban planning/ economic development field/ project implementation field, representing the 18 municipalities involved;
- a **political support group** – the Board of Directors of Baia Mare

Local Support Group

- Composition:
- technical support group
 - political support group

Metropolitan Area Association, consisting of the 18 mayors, representing the municipalities.

Moreover, LSG may be strengthened with representatives from the Managing Authority and other stakeholders of the USE Act project.

The technical support group will be responsible in developing and promoting the action plan and the political support group will be in charge with assumption of the LAP, both at metropolitan level and at local level (18 municipalities).

Experience in terms of working through transnational exchange in relation to USEACT topic

LUMASEC project / URBACT II

Baia Mare City was partner and developed a local action plan regarding the sustainable redevelopment of a brown-field area (Fernezii – Romplumb)

SEPA project -Sustainable and Equipped Productive Areas

The project was implemented on the SEE Programme, with the aim of developing a Productive Area on a brown-field (Cuprom area).

STATUS project

Baia Mare Metropolitan Area is partner in this project, submitted on the SEE Programme in 2011, being part of a transnational network of 10 European cities & urban systems.

Links to the EU Operational Programme

The Operational Programme that supports urban growth and interventions in the urban and metropolitan areas in Romania is REGIO (ERDF). In particular, the first axis finances the Integrated Urban Development Plans of the major cities (2007 – 2013 period).

In the 2014 – 2020 period, the approach will focus on two aspects: the inner city and also the metropolitan areas (intercommunity approach).

Other Operational Programmes that can finance interventions could be: ESF / HR development and Transport OP.

Synthesis: Baia Mare Metropolitan Area

The Romanian area of Baia Mare, as other USEACT partners, is experiencing the consequences of the transition from a local economy based on the mining industry to a service-based economy. The consequences in terms of unbalanced wealth distribution and territorial composition, provoked by a chaotic expansion of the city over the past decade, are today clearly visible. Furthermore, after the “enlargement” the city is currently facing the challenges imposed by the UE legislative framework.

The Baia Mare Metropolitan Area, set in 2006 as territorial cooperative partnership between Baia Mare and its neighbour localities, is aimed at managing cooperation to work together for a more balanced territorial development.

After designing the “Baia Mare Metropolitan Area Strategy” for 2010-2020, the association is currently endeavouring to address the development of the region by working on the following topics:

- developing regional and metropolitan planning schemes and tools, to address policies at local level. These schemes should encourage interventions on brownfield areas and on low-quality residential settlements, to reduce the greenland take, and coordinate the re-use of the brownfields at whole metropolitan area level;
- strengthening the metropolitan vision as a mean to overcome the property fragmentation in areas located within the city and in other municipalities;
- introducing new tools to manage PPPs and incentives for the UGM and the protection of open spaces (see TDRs) to be managed at regional level, with the aim of developing more effective re-use process and schemes on brownfield areas and involving private subjects (funding).

City of Barakaldo

Spain

Size (city area)	25 km ²
Inh. (Bilbao metropolitan area)	900,000 inh
Inh. (city area)	100,000 inh
Density (metropolitan area)	162 inh/km ²
Density (city area)	2,500 inh/km ²

5.1 An overview

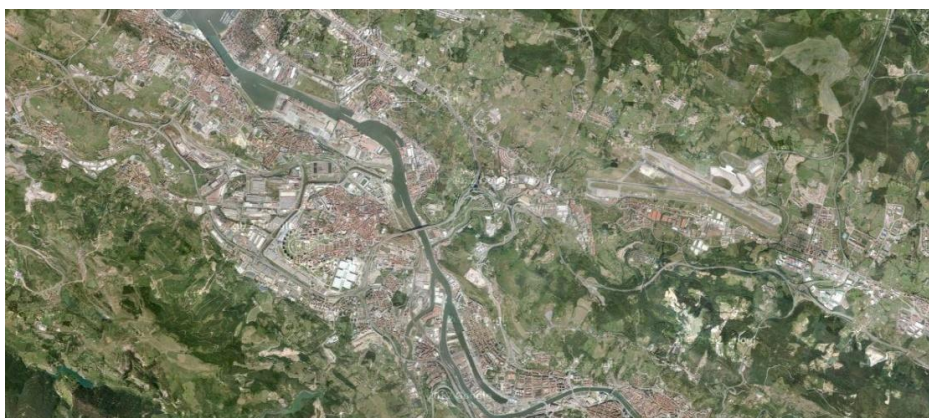


Fig.: Source: Google maps

Barakaldo is a municipality in the Basque Country, located in the historical territory of Bizkaia, on the left bank region of the river Nervion. With a population of 100,000 inhabitants, Barakaldo is the second largest municipality in the metropolitan area of Bilbao, Greater Bilbao, which has almost 900,000 residents in total. The city is close to Bilbao at only 8 km in distance, and has good transport connections, especially metro and railway, while the airport is only a 20 minute drive.

Over the past decade, Barakaldo has experienced a period of structural change in the productive sector, turning from an industry and mining-based economy to tertiary-oriented businesses.

Recently, the Spanish economic downturn has been having an impact on the construction sector, which previously was one of the driving sectors at national level. Moreover, the financial bubble prevents effective evaluation of the investments, reducing bank credits and consequently decreasing the possibilities for interventions.

General information

- Location
- Accessibility

Changes in the economic structure and current situation

5.2 Key problems, challenges and potential.

The status quo of the project theme

Generally speaking, the productive sector turnover has been managed by the General Urban Plan (GUP), enacted in 1999.

Currently, the City of Barakaldo still has to develop expansions on greenfield,

which accounts for 10% of the whole growth foreseen in the current Urban Plan. The plans are already at their executive stage and the interventions are ready for execution.

Some critical aspects have already been identified by the Municipality, which is currently working on other planning tools to deal with the following **problems**:

- Need to tackle, with adequate tools, the management of urban transformation processes **in the consolidated areas** due to the lack of economic resources and private investors because of the change in the economic structure;
- **Urban Planning Legal Framework**: Difficulties in reusing internal urban areas, due to current national legislation concerning urban planning and the prevailing private ownership vs. general-public interest, along with preventing high density interventions and settlements.
- **Fragmentation of property ownership**, that is a common problem at national level, too;
- Low quality of the existing built heritage (built before 1970), due to – among other reasons - **lack of maintenance**;
- Limited tools and management processes to encourage **public-private partnerships**.

In short, the **challenges** that the new planning tools are likely to face will concern the following topics:

- **Land use**: strategies for the reduction of land consumption, redeveloping already built land;
- **Construction sector**: detect strategies and incentives to encourage recovery and refitting interventions in existing neighbourhoods, that could at the same time increase the energy efficiency of the buildings and boost the productivity of the building sector;
- **Planning towards a “zero-growth” model**, by carrying out interventions through integrated programmes;
- **Partnerships and integration between different sectors**: the plan could encourage the setting of appropriate frameworks for public-private partnerships.

The **potential** of the City of Barakaldo primarily relies on:

- Experience in integrated operations of urban renewal, carried out in former industrial areas and brownfields;
- Recent legal framework modification that enables the definition of new ways of intervention in the consolidated city;
- The capacity of the local government of Barakaldo in defining integrated tools of planning, governance, financing and participation on an urban-local scale.
- Demonstrable interest from the private investors (including energy companies) on new type of businesses related to energy efficiency and some other local resources (self management communities).

Key problems

- Large amount of brownfields
- Fragmented properties
- Declining quality of the built heritage
- National planning framework preventing densification
- Management of PPPs

Key challenges

- Reduce land consumption
- Increase the interventions in the urbanized areas
- planning towards “zero growth” models
- Increased models for PPPs

Potential

- experience in operations of urban renewal
- private investors interested in refitting operations

5.3 Planning tools and strategies managing urban growth and supporting interventions in the city

Planning is managed at local level by the Municipality of Barakaldo, which has executive power to develop and implement local urban development policies at various scales, mainly through the **Urban General Plan** (PGOU) and the **Local Development Aid Plans**: from urban planning, as far as general regulation is concerned, to interventions on existing neighbourhoods and housing rehabilitation. Moreover, the municipality is responsible for the coordination of interventions and funding allocation and the empowerment of local stakeholders on urban regeneration.

Also the Municipality of Barakaldo plays a key role in the involvement processes of local stakeholders on sustainable development policies and therefore in cohesion policies.

It is of significance that the Municipality has been using the **General Urban Plan**, adopted in **1999**, to evolve from a stage of industrial decline and low quality urban environment to a different situation, by working on the infrastructural system, the urban spaces and the service networks.

The strategies adopted have been mainly focused on substituting high-impact industrial use, mainly in the industrial sector, through new housing and medium-sized non-polluting, tertiary uses, by working at a physical level and with the functional offer of the city.

Currently, the Municipality is working on further strategies, to produce a **new urban plan** in the next period. The main issue for planning policies in the period **2014-2022** is the regeneration of the urban fabric, focused on the balance between preservation of the environment and the improvement of land use efficiency by:

- Improving quality of life and housing (accessibility, energy efficiency and functionality of the buildings);
- Urban rehabilitation and regeneration interventions, especially in residential blocks in the existing city;
- Reactivate the business life (retail and shopping) by starting up the economic activity in the building industry

It is important to underline that the new “Urban Plan” aims to entirely develop at least four regeneration areas, with more than 1000 dwellings in each.

Regeneration (vs. renewal), especially in city blocks, **is hence one of the targets for Barakaldo**; however, the urban planning legal framework - with competence at regional level - is too rigid and does not permit increased density in the consolidated city.

Tools for land use management

- GUP (1999), managing the transition period
- new urban plan in progress (2014-22), for increased land use efficiency and densification in central areas

5.4 Overview: experiences on urban transformation

Over the past years, the Municipality has developed projects in collaboration with other municipalities and private stakeholders and investors, applying models of inter-institutional shared management, in order to encourage the

economic revitalization of the local entrepreneurs and of the physical context of the city:

- **Commercial Revitalization Special Plans (CRSP)**
The plans are aimed at the redevelopment of economic activities, with models of public policy involving citizens affected.
- **ERETZA “Rehabilitation Study” and Housing Forum**
ERETZA, the Municipal Housing and Land Management Company, developed a study (“Rehabilitation Study”) detecting and mapping the rehabilitation and regeneration necessities (e.g. accessibility and energy efficiency), setting priorities for further interventions and especially highlighting the need for new approaches and models of intervention. Moreover, every two years the Agency organizes the Housing Forum, to share needs and actions involved in regeneration processes.

As far as area-based transformations are concerned, the City of Barakaldo has lead several urban transformation initiatives from industrial areas to new residential and tertiary sector activities. All the interventions are based on urban renewal strategies and management tools, which means expropriation or public investment, and occasional private initiative. Fairly satisfactory results were achieved considering the possibility of defining a new city area, but these strategies cannot be applied to the consolidated areas (such as the proposed pilot cases).

In short, two examples are:

- **Intervention on Beurko neighbourhood** (residential)
The process carried out a renovation intervention on 755 dwellings suffering from aluminosis. The intervention could be carried out through beneficial expropriation;
- **Urban-Galindo** (industrial), where the intervention proposed the demolition of the existing built heritage and the reconstruction of the area, inserting new functions.

Policies for urban regeneration

- Commercial Revitalization Special Plans (CRSP)
- ERETZA “Rehabilitation Study” and Housing Forum

Interventions on existing areas

- Renovation intervention in the Beurko neighbourhood
- Urban Galindo industrial area.

5.5 Potential expectations and contributions

Barakaldo is interested in participating in the USEACT network to gain know-how and new models to further improve the ongoing General Urban Plan, which could become an innovative planning tool for land use management. In particular, the city would like to acquire know-how to:

- Have the possibility of **checking different systems, legal frameworks and management techniques** on urban regeneration operations held in other EU countries;
- **Share urban regeneration information and experiences**, either on urban or building scales, based on building preservation and the implementation of energy efficiency and accessibility measures.
- **Detect income-generating mechanisms** that enable the regeneration process (including financial strategies).
- Study **regeneration operations on mainly residential areas** (2000-

Expectations

- new models to improve the urban plan in progress
- new management models for regeneration in dense residential areas
- general info on regeneration experiences
- funding
- study the feasibility of the interventions

1000 flats), with medium high densities (300-200 flats/ha.), 30%-50% land cover ratio and lower income rate communities.

On the other hand, the City of Barakaldo has already experienced processes of re-use of inner city areas (industrial and residential areas), which could become case studies for the USEACT project. Moreover, the city could share the R+D of the industrial sector on building refitting and increasing energy efficiency, for new potential developments.

Contributions

- experience on the reuse of the inner city
- technology for refitting

5.6 LAP and LSG in their early stage

Local Action Plan

The Municipality of Barakaldo would like to focus on the USEACT themes with two different approaches: on **planning and regulatory frameworks** and additionally on the **implementation of already planned interventions** on inner city areas.

In short, the focuses are:

- Development of the **new Urban Plan for Barakaldo**, pursuing a zero-growth urban development.
- Implementation of already planned **interventions of renewal in 4 different neighbourhoods** (more than 1000 dwellings): Beurko, Llano, Rontegi, Arteagabeitia-Zuazo. In particular, the plans should focus on the models for better housing solutions and the increased energy efficiency of buildings; the accessibility and mobility system; the public space and environmental comfort; the urban functions and proximity.

Local Action Plan

- improvement of the new Urban Plan
- planning of interventions of regeneration on different neighbourhoods

Local Support Group

The **LSG** will be formed by a public-private consortium between the Municipality and its departments involved in planning, and the Euskadi Building Cluster (ERAIKUNE), comprising Basque companies, institutions and research centres focused on constructions.

The composition of the LSG could be organized as follows:

- **Core group** composed by **City Council**: The Municipal Urban Planning Office and the Employment and Economic Advancement Agency both agents of Barakaldo's Council as public agents (INGURALDE); **Construction Cluster**: The Euskadi Construction Cluster (ERAIKUNE) as private agent of the consortium;
- **Technical Comities**: University, Administrative Capacity Centre, Professional Chambers (Architects and Urban planners, economist, Sociologist, Engineers, etc.);
- **Citizens Open Forums**: Through any proposal, the Technical Comities will be open to any other participants from Citizen Open Forums

The intended end result of the cooperation is to debate on European experiences of regeneration to define new urban regeneration tools, to be applied to the Barakaldo legal framework.

Local Support Group

- Composition of the LSG: core group, technical comities, citizens open forums, managed in the form of a public-private association between the Municipality and the ERAIKUNE Building Cluster

Experience in terms of working through transnational exchange in relation to USEACT topic

NeT-TOPIC network / URBACT II

The project, aimed at the investigation of design of new tools and approaches to the management of transformation processes in medium-sized cities. It provided the network with an online Best Practice database, which has included information from all partner municipalities on their transformation processes.

RUnUp / URBACT II Networks

The Agency for Municipal Development, Employment and Economic Advancement (INGURALDE) was associated with the network which was working on the role of universities in the economic development of urban centres.

4th Intereg Program POCTEFA

Currently, in the Cultural Area, Barakaldo is associated with the French town of Ville de Tournefeuille to develop this project.

Links to the EU Operational Programme

The operational programme covers the main goal on Barakaldo research and innovation activities related to the regeneration processes through:

- Cross regional sharing of information with other EU partners, on the USEACT main topics;
- Joining with the different local agents in order to reinforce the new urban strategies development;
- Adapting new communication skills for the development and conclusion phases.

Synthesis: Barakaldo

During the nineties, Barakaldo, an industrial district located just outside the Bilbao city core, had to tackle, as did Bilbao itself, the consequences of the decline of the industrial sector. The development of deep urban transformation processes, through successful urban policies, such as the General Urban Plan (1999), made the city become a “core service centre” for the whole Bilbao Metropolitan area.

With a background of successful re-uses of former industrial “brownfield areas”, Barakaldo municipality is interested in addressing interventions on existing (mainly residential) neighbourhoods, for which the Municipal Government wants to develop a new “towards zero growth” General Urban Plan, aimed at re-using and “compacting” (as possible) the existing city fabric.

Before the economic downturn, the Spanish planning model for addressing interventions in the inner city area was mainly based on expropriation-acquisition of building and on the development of new schemes (often through an abatement and rebuild approach). Now, financial shortages and lack of greenfields in the Barakaldo area require strategies based on refitting the building in the consolidated city.

However, the fragmentation of ownerships and the difficulty in persuading flat-owners to collaborate could hamper this strategy. Moreover the National Urban Planning Legal Framework lets interventions on inner city areas very difficult, since this framework is designed to avoid high density interventions and settlements or density upgrading in already existing areas as well. This is a typical case of difficulty of adapting national requirements to local level demands.

Municipality of Barakaldo has highlighted some focuses to be tackled through the USEACT framework:

- Innovative and integrated tools to manage the processes of intervention on the consolidated city;
- Involving owners and the community in the processes and encouraging public-private partnerships should be coped with the definition of appropriate financial schemes and bank support, in order to manage integrated planning tools fruitfully;
- Interventions in existing city parts are also an opportunity to think to address with an integrated vision operations of refitting in building and improvement of the systems of accessibility, while encouraging sustainable mobility.

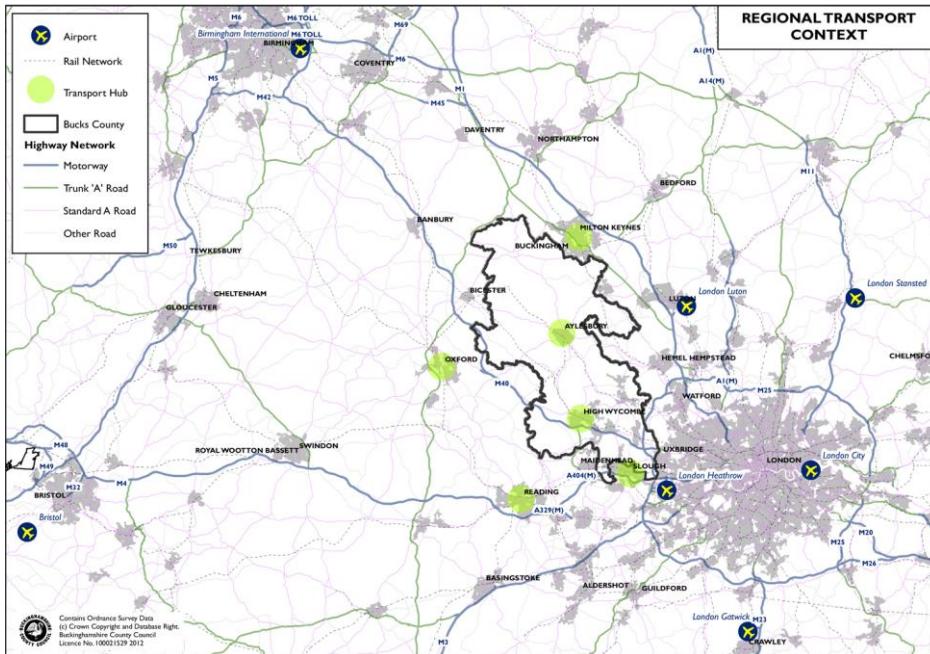
Buckinghamshire Business First

United Kingdom

Inh. (Buckinghamshire Region area)

500,000 inh

5.1 An overview



Source: Buckinghamshire County Council

The Buckinghamshire Region

The Region of Buckinghamshire is part of the Thames Valley Region of England, located north-west of London, with a population of 500,000 inhabitants. Buckinghamshire possesses two major urban centres, Aylesbury (Pop. 56,392) and High Wycombe (Pop. 92,300).

Good accessibility to the capital (London) is provided by highway and rail connections and by its proximity to the largest London airports (Heathrow, Luton and Gatwick), offering good opportunities for national and international trade, business and for the location of foreign business.

The good accessibility and its central position in Britain, only a 30 minute drive from London, make the Region a good location for entrepreneurial activities and businesses. Indeed, the area shows good performances in terms of competitiveness and local economy, with generally good levels of employment rate and education and the fastest job growth of all local authority areas in the UK. Moreover, the region is part of the Greater South East, which has the strongest economic growth in Britain (4.6%).

The economic sectors of excellence are: ICT including film and digital media

The Buckinghamshire Region

General information on Buckinghamshire Region

- Location
- Accessibility system

Driving economic sectors

(ESRI, Mc Afee, Pinewood Studios, National Film and Television School); Advanced Engineering (Martin-Baker Aircraft, COMDEV Europe, Instron); Food and Drink (Premier Foods, McCormick; United Biscuits) and Healthcare/Assisted living (GE Healthcare, Buddi, Johnson & Johnson).

ICT, advanced manufacturing, food& drink; healthcare/ assisted living

However, the current global economy downturn is a serious challenge for the area, requiring investment on infrastructures and local business, to maintain the region's competitiveness. Buckinghamshire has the largest small firm economy in the country and one of the smallest public sector economies. We are falling rapidly down the league table in GVA per hour worked. Fewer people in their twenties start their careers in Buckinghamshire than anywhere else and our supply line of technical skills does not support the industrial mix.

Effects of the economic crisis on the job market

- trends in entrepreneurship;
- negative effects on the job market

Buckinghamshire's incidence of deprivation and worklessness is increasing. The claimant count across the ten wards with the highest levels of worklessness in Buckinghamshire has risen by 3.4 % to a new high of 1,683, or 27.1% of all claimants. The Wycombe District has lost 18,000 jobs or 17.1 per cent of employment since 2004. This is the weakest performance of any local authority district in Great Britain.

Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership

BTVLEP – Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership, is one of 39 Regional Development Agencies established by the UK government to stimulate economic growth. BTVLEP is a business-led 'partnership of equals' that is responsible for building the conditions for sustainable economic growth and overseeing the development of "growth sectors" in the County, such as construction and space, creative industries and manufacturing. BTVLEP is formed from 5 private stakeholders (50%) and 5 local authority participants (50%) that take part in the decision-making process.

**BTVLEP
A business agency**

Buckinghamshire Business First (BBF) is a not-for-profit public equivalent body that provides a range of business support services and provides the BTVLEP secretariat support.

The agency (BBF) has developed a specific expertise in the design, management, implementation and evaluation of a wide range of transnational EU funded projects, delivering business improvement, cluster development, economic development and sustainability, and community development outcomes.

Buckinghamshire Business First competences

BBF possesses a strong track record of working with European, national, regional and local government departments and agencies across all the major sectors, including industry, environment, health, education, agriculture and society. We also work in partnership with a range of partners from the public, private, voluntary/community and academic sectors to deliver service excellence.

The organization has successfully delivered a number of specialist projects

which have focused on the development and growth of SME's, entrepreneurship and innovation, renewable energies, enterprise and business development, education and training, targeted support of disadvantaged groups in business such as women and ethnic communities, rural development and industry sector specific support.

For more information:

<http://www.bbf.uk.com/>

<http://buckstylep.co.uk/>

www.bis.gov.uk

5.2 Key problems, challenges and potential.

The status quo of the project theme

The region of Buckinghamshire has potential in terms of attractiveness for business and entrepreneurial activities. However, the Wycombe District of Buckinghamshire is currently coping with several **problems**:

- Commercial stagnation of the property sector
- Current rates of unemployment and consequent social problems;
- Road congestion reducing accessibility and attraction of businesses to the city area;
- Presence of strong anti-development communities and organizations;
- Decreased opportunities for investments on re-use interventions by the public sector, which is experiencing the effects of European financial crisis.

Development is an opportunity for the region to invest its potential, in particular demonstrated in the cultural and creative-innovation sector.

The following aspects can be considered as **key challenges** for BBF:

- Develop interventions with positive effects and the useful influence of the interventions on the local community and economy. The investment has to be combined with policies to share the targets of the interventions with the residential population and stakeholders involved;
- promote economic growth and at the same time cope with the presence of the green belts or protected land, representing a challenge between production - and environmental targets;
- pursue plans encouraging business activities, to assure economic growth for the region and at the same time encourage builders to invest in this sector;
- provide a territorial vision coordinating the intervention, pursuing long-term effects;

Key problems

Problems for Wycombe district

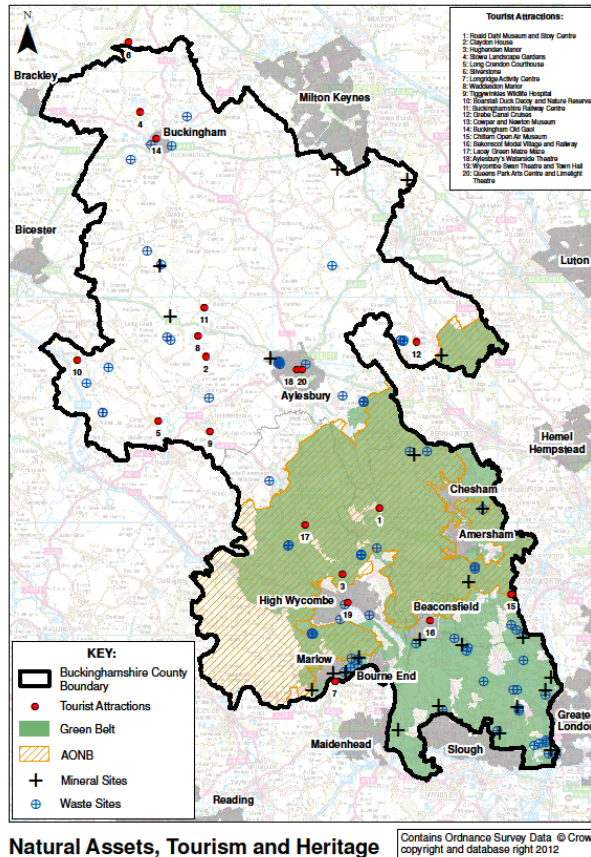
Key challenges for BBF

- communication of the targets of interventions
- combine economic growth with a limited territory
- business related development
- shared vision

5.3 Planning tools and strategies managing urban growth and supporting interventions in the city

The urban growth of the city of High Wycombe, is strongly determined by the presence of the following UGM tools:

- Green belt:**
 Greenbelt is a national land use designation/policy used to retain areas of largely undeveloped, wild, or agricultural land surrounding or neighbouring urban areas. This tool controls the urban development within the city boundaries and safeguards the peri-urban fringe;
- Protected Landscape Designation (Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty).**



Tools for UGM

- Green belts
- Protected land
- Local Development Plans
- Community infrastructure Levy as taxation supporting development
- Business Rate Pooling, as decentralized taxation system
- Tax Increment Financing, financing operations of redevelopment, for community growth
- Neighbourhood Planning, empowering local communities and their role in local planning

Much of the surrounding area is part of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – a landscape designation which means the area is largely “untouchable”, in development terms.

- Local Development Plan.** As the primary planning authority, Wycombe District Council is responsible for developing and consulting on a local development plan, which will provide the spatial development framework for any future urban growth in the Wycombe area.
- Community Infrastructure Levy** - The Community Infrastructure Levy is a new levy that local authorities in England and Wales can choose to charge on new developments in their area. The money can be used to support development by funding infrastructure that the council, local community and neighbourhoods want - for example new or safer road schemes, park improvements or a new health centre.
- Business Rates Pooling** – The UK government is moving away from a centralized local government funding system (where business rates are collected by local authorities, pooled centrally by the Government and redistributed to local authorities through a complex needs based formula grant) to implement a new rates retention scheme which will create a

stronger incentive for local authorities to promote growth, by allowing local authorities to retain a proportion of business rates income.

- **Tax Increment Financing** – is a ‘value capture’ public financing method that is used to subsidize redevelopment, infrastructure, and other community-improvement projects strategies used around the world. TIF is a method which uses future gains in taxes to subsidize current improvements, which are projected to create the conditions for said gains. The completion of a public project often results in an increase in the value of the surrounding real estate, which generates additional tax revenue. Sales-tax revenue may also increase, and jobs may be added, although these factors and their multipliers usually do not influence the structure of TIF.
- **Neighbourhood planning** - is a new right for communities introduced through the Localism Act 2011. For the first time, local people will have a major statutory say in helping to shape development in the areas in which they live. Neighbourhood planning empowers communities to shape the development and growth of a local area through the production of a neighbourhood development plan, a neighbourhood development order or a Community Right to Build Order. Neighbourhood development plans will become part of the local statutory development plan and will form the basis for determining planning applications in that area. A neighbourhood development order enables the community to grant planning permission for the development it wishes to see.

Whilst District Councils are the local planning authorities in the UK, the government foresees that **Local Enterprise Partnerships** (for which BBF acts as the Secretariat in Buckinghamshire) should provide a strategic planning role in the planning system, by:

- Providing a “powerful voice” for business in the planning system;
- Leading the production of strategic frameworks that identify and align strategic economic priorities and guide infrastructure delivery;
- Championing projects and the local area to potential developers and investors in order to secure infrastructure investment to achieve planning priorities for growth;
- Producing evidence and technical assessments to inform decision-making;
- Facilitating decision making on complex applications.

In delivering this role, BBF aims to apply entrepreneurial strategies and management to the planning system. The models proposed in the development plans are specifically aimed at business settling, trying to integrate both economic growth and territorial management, and bring local needs and challenges in a broader framework. In other terms, re-use is interpreted as integrating visions for territorial development with economic growth, and searching for long-term positive effects on the whole region.

Especially, BBF is responsible for:

- Preparing “**special plans**”, to be negotiated with the local authorities, to coordinate interventions;

The role of BTVLEP and BFF in planning and spatial development

BFF planning tools to address interventions

- special plans
- coordination of the

- Managing the processes of interventions from the development of the idea to the quality control, while at the same time, attracting investments and allocating funding.

Moreover, the agency is currently working on developing a **growth manifesto**, with long and short-term targets to stimulate sustainable business works.

processes
- growth manifesto
- maps, detecting potential areas
- regional infrastructural plan

5.5 Potential expectations and contributions

BFF would like to work with other USEACT partners to:

- Develop **innovative models of funding and financing growth**, to “unlock” development;
- Develop **innovative approaches for securing the buy in of communities to key developments**;
- Develop new strategies to **communicate to communities** and involve them in the planning decision-making process;
- **Acquire best practice models of interventions and growth in cities with limited land-availability** (see green belt regulation);

Expectations

- funding models
- models for densification
- communication of the targets of UGM

On the other hand, the partner could offer:

- Expertise in developing suitable **governance structures** to oversee and coordinate sustainable development strategies;
- **Planning skills** of the partners involved in the Local Support Group

Contributions

- regional governance expertise
- planning skills

5.6 LAP and LSG in their early stage

The Local Action Plan

The **Local Action Plan** proposed by BFF is aimed at:

- Developing a framework of **innovative models for financing the urban renewal** that is needed in Wycombe. This will include a consideration of a range of measures for financing growth, including; Revolving Loan Funds; Tax Increment Financing; Community Infrastructure Levy; Real Estate Investment Trusts; Municipal Bonds; Prudential Borrowing; Community Share Issues etc;
- **Develop a 3-D property/infrastructure visualisation tool, to encourage local residents to better understand why developments are important**, what the likely impact will be; and why renewal and jobs growth is an important element of sustainable urban development

LAP

- innovative models of funding for interventions
- community involvement and communication strategies

The Local Support Group

The **Local Support Group** could be composed of the following participants:

- Michael Garvey - Stupples Chandler Garvey (Chair)
- Marcus Rogers – Buckinghamshire County Council
- Shereen Ansari - Buckinghamshire County Council
- Chris Rawson – Buckinghamshire Business First
- Jim Sims – Buckinghamshire Business First (Minutes)

LSG

- composition and actors involved

- Richard Harrington – Aylesbury Vale Advantage
- John Callaghan – Wycombe District Council
- John Byrne – Aylesbury Vale District Council
- Derek Rowell – Chiltern District Council
- Ian Gillespie – South Bucks District Council
- Guy Lachlan - Jones and Cocks (2009) Ltd
- Jerry Unsworth - Wycombe District Council

Experience in terms of working through transnational exchange in relation to USEACT topic

BBF has extensive experience in managing transnational projects, having actively participated and led a range of INTERREG IVc, INTERREG IVb NWE, Lifelong Learning Programme and FP7 projects. These projects have covered skills, infrastructure and innovation issues.

The agency is one of two UK organisations registered as members of the **European Cluster Alliance** and are registered on the **JRC S3 Smart Specialisation Platform**, as the body responsible for developing the **RIS3 Innovation Strategy**.

Synthesis: Buckinghamshire Business First

As a local development agency of the Wycombe District (located in close proximity to the London metropolitan area), the main role of the public-private partnership “Buckinghamshire Business First” is sustaining local economic development.

Despite the fact that the district is still one of the most economically prosperous in the UK, some problems connected to the increasing unemployment induced by the global downturn are emerging. To face this challenge, an integrated strategy to attract businesses interested in establishing in the area is required. However, national and regional land use regulations, such as green belts and protected areas, and a strong opposition by community groups against new developments, reduce, in general, the availability of areas for expansion.

With a strong expertise in the management of PPPs and attraction of funding for local projects aimed at the support of a lively and “young” entrepreneurship, BBF would like to support new developments and find new funding models to unlock growth and develop collaborative planning tools.

Especially, the agency is interested in:

- developing further models to finance interventions to reuse underutilized or vacant areas, to strengthen the opportunities of implementation and long-term governance
- experimenting new models of growth, combining economical development with limited land-availability
- improving social awareness and the engagement of the community in processes, as community groups and some stakeholders support the protection of the natural space and contrast proposal for new spatial development.
- developing new communication tools and arrangement of discussions, capable to show the possible impact of physical and economic interventions and share a common vision and working on a comprehensive territorial vision pursuing long-term effects of the interventions.

City of Dublin

Ireland

Size (metropolitan area)	355 km ²
Size (city area)	115 km ²
Inh. (Greater Dublin metropolitan area)	1,800,000 inh
Inh. (city area)	506,000 inh
Density (city area)	4,588 inh/km ²

5.1 An overview



Source: Municipality of Dublin

Dublin, the capital of Ireland, is sited on the estuary of the River Liffey. This river empties into Dublin Bay, which opens onto the Irish Sea. To the south, Dublin is bordered by a low mountain range, while the surrounding counties to the north and west of Dublin are surrounded by flat farmland.

The greater Dublin area is home to **39% of the Irish population**, which has been increasing at a modest 10% over the last 20 years, currently accounting for 4.6 million. On the other hand, the Dublin region and the mid-east region have grown significantly over the same period (respectively up to 24% and 63%), with related increase of land use in the external areas of the city.

While established manufactures, such as the traditional food, drink and tobacco industry, or the production sector are experiencing a decline, other enterprises linked to services, hi-tech and biotechnologies are showing potential.

Despite an expansion of the urban area to the external parts of the capital, with a consequent vacating of the centre, the image of the city has been

General information

- Location
- Trends in population growth and localization

Transition period in driving economic sectors

- Effects on the physical layout of the city

considerably renewed and raised at international level. This is partly thanks to coordinate interventions in the city centre, such as on the Docklands, now occupied by service buildings, cultural facilities and residential areas, with a 30% approx. increase in private apartment living in the inner city since the 1980s.

Today, the focus on the city centre and its renewed parts is showing positive results in terms of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), as the core for international businesses and trade.

For more information:

<http://www.dublin.ie/>

5.2 Key problems, challenges and potential.

The status quo of the project theme

In relation to its starting situation, the development of Dublin city in the next period is likely to face a number of **critical aspects**, which can be summarized as follows:

- **urban sprawl** and land consumption in external areas, with consequently rising commuting distances and car dependency, with a higher environmental impact;
- **regional competition between different administrative regions** regarding urban growth management. For instance, over the past decades, some regions willing to attract investments, have offered special incentives to “external” investors and developers of commercial areas and shopping malls (“free riding”). Now, there is need for more cooperative governance to prevent further consumption of greenfield sites;
- **high vacancy levels in the historic city**, due to the change in the traditional production sector and outmoded office accommodation.
- **multiple ownership** in already developed land, further reducing the opportunity for re-use and re-involvement into the economy of the city;
- **reduced financial opportunities**, hurdling interventions on inner city areas. Interventions, especially for the recovery of central neighbourhoods, are also bridled by the perceived lack of collaboration between the public and private spheres, by funding agencies. The economic downturn has made the market vulnerable, so banks do not encourage funding the interventions, and public-private partnerships (with long-term implementation) are required by the “frameworks” of the projects.
- need to **raise public awareness** regarding underused land and its possible impact in terms of employment creation, strengthened urban neighbourhoods, reduction of environmental impact and greenfield preservation.

Key problems

- Regional competition
- Vacant areas in the inner city
- Reduced financial opportunities for interventions
- lack of awareness about the contribution of re-use on the vitality and energy efficiency of the city

Central **challenges** that the City of Dublin is currently facing are as follows:

- how to create a **quality, more compact city** and how to create attractive areas with increased jobs opportunities and higher living standards for housing interventions, while ensuring the public infrastructure (transport, water supply, energy and community facilities e.g. schools) becomes more viable;
- communication of the targets and importance of urban growth management to the resident population and to sectors of the administrations.

Key challenges

- Make Dublin a “compact city”

The **potential** of the City of Dublin in relation to the USEACT project can be explained in terms of:

- techniques of speeding up redevelopment of brownfield sites to deliver homes, jobs and viable services;
- transformation of places and heritage buildings by planning new uses, as carried out with previous interventions in the inner city;
- development of new sustainable residential typologies for city living (e.g. dense and mixed settlements).

Potential

5.3 Planning tools and strategies managing urban growth and supporting interventions in the city

In the Irish legal framework, planning is managed through National level strategies, Regional Planning Guidelines coordinating city level Development Plans, which are implemented through Local Plans (e.g. Local Area Plans, Schematic Masterplans).

In the city of Dublin, the city manager is in charge of executive functions also corresponding to planning, housing, service networks (roads and traffic, water etc.) and green areas and environment.

Dublin has experienced the management and implementation of urban transformations, since the early 1980s, when the City approved the **Urban Renewal Tax Incentive Schemes**, to alleviate the increasing dereliction in inner urban areas. These incentives, between 1986 and 1998, were coupled with the **Urban Renewal Schemes** - plans managing interventions in the older urban areas. The first schemes focused mainly on economic policies, while residential issues were added later. An issue to be highlighted is the governance of the interventions managed with the schemes: the designation of “Special Incentives” with an “area based approach” specially directed at an area, were used to encourage interventions in the city fabric.

Policies addressing interventions in the inner-city

- Urban Renewal Incentive Schemes
- Urban Renewal Schemes
- Urban Renewal Guidelines
- Urban Renewal 2000

Later, in 1998, the city developed the **Urban Renewal Guidelines**, to create a more integrated approach in the interventions at urban level, by using integrated programmes in the implementation of the projects. The document led to the programme **Urban Renewal 2000 - New Approaches** in 2000, encouraging

phases of consultation in the creation of regeneration plans and leading to a limitation of fiscal incentives³.

Currently, the City of Dublin is working on a **new Development Plan 2011-2017**, that, among other targets, includes a suite of objectives to ensure the city's infrastructure is developed and improved in combination with growth.

The city has produced a **Green Infrastructure Plan** and a **Public Realm Strategy**, both of which are aimed at making the city a more attractive, healthy place, maximizing inward investment, and allowing for quality densification. The new plan also contains specific objectives to promote temporary uses in some vacant lands and buildings.

Planning tools

- new Development Plan (2011-17), combining territorial growth and transportation networks
- Green Infrastructure Plan

5.4 Overview: experiences on urban transformation

During the phase of application of the Urban Renewal Schemes, remarkable projects were carried out, such as:

- the “**Custom House Dock**” (1992-96), with its International Financial Service Centre, as the most well-known intervention, to create a multifunctional area (residential and tertiary use).

Later, the city further developed:

- the **Docklands Renewal Programme**, within a masterplan including former port areas at the mouth of River Liffey.

Other operations can be mentioned:

- **Fatima Mansion Masterplan** - the regeneration of the dilapidated and socially problematic Fatima Neighbourhood was developed in 2003. The intervention, managed through a public-private partnership (*Fatima Groups United*), applied an integrated policy of regeneration. After the unsuccessful fiscal state intervention at the end of the 1980s, the group was established, to connect urban policies to social policies, making the intervention effective and long-lasting. Meanwhile, the land is owned by the City Council, the association gathers participants from Fatima Mansions Residents Panel, the Community Employment Scheme, the Rialto Youth Project, and Day Care Centre amongst others⁴;
- **Smithfield**: an area that experienced urban decay in the 80s has been renewed with quality buildings and civic spaces.

Currently, the City Council, in collaboration with other agencies, is actively involved in the regeneration of socially deprived areas of the city and in particular:

- a new Institute of Technology campus on a 70Ha site, within the **Grangegorman Strategic Development Zone**. At specific project level, a new underground tunnel has been built, linking the Dublin Port to the

Experiences of transformation

- Custom House Dock, for a mixed functional area;
- Docklands Renewal Programme;
- Fatima Mansion Masterplan and partnership;
- Smithfield area intervention
- Grangegorman Strategic Development Zone

³

⁴ http://www.irlfunds.org/your_money_at_work/projects_fatima.html
<http://www.fatimagroupsunited.com/>

motorway network, thereby improving the public realm in the City Centre.

5.5 Potential expectations and contributions

Within the USEACT framework, Dublin would like to **gain experience** regarding:

- **efficient and integrated land use management**, gaining models for strong regional governance and cooperation
- strategies aimed at the **redevelopment of inner city areas**, currently vacant or underused;
- models for new **sustainable refitting and redevelopment** of built areas in the city territories, to deliver homes, jobs and viable services;
- special focus on the **intervention on historical areas** of the city centre, to be redeveloped with innovative uses and functions;
- new ideas for regional governance, to create a sustainable and competitive region.

Expectations

- models for regional cooperation
- redevelopment models for central vacant areas
- redevelopment of central areas for productive and business functions
- intervention models for regeneration of historical areas

On the other hand, the city, in light of its **experience** in terms of successful interventions of re-use in inner city areas, could share with other cities the models of planning and intervention on brownfield areas or in problematic neighbourhoods.

Contributions

- experience on large interventions in inner city areas

5.6 LAP and LSG in their early stage

Local Action Plan

The **LAP** of the City of Dublin could concentrate on the reduction of urban sprawl trend and the maximization of the sustainable use at city level, by working on two different levels:

- On a strategy at city level to **expedite the redevelopment of vacant and underused lands and sites** within the city area for employment, residential and mixed use purposes;
- Area-based LAP, targeted at finding solutions specifically focused on vacant or rundown heritage areas (e.g. Georgian Square)

LAP

- city-level strategy for mixed-functional re-use
- area-based plan for redevelopment of inner city areas

Local Support Group

The **LSG** should comprise the following:

- City Council, with representatives engaged in the Planning and Economic Development Department;
- Strategic Policy Committee (Elected Members);
- Research from Universities and Technology Institutes
- Stakeholders from the real estate and private property sectors

LSG

Experience in terms of working through transnational exchange in relation to USEACT topic

Dublin City has had considerable experience of working in transnational exchanges eg:

- **The Cruise Ships Project;**
- **B-Team Brownfield Interreg Project;**
- **Cities Divided by Rivers Project;**
- **4 cities Project:** this project provided tangible and long lasting outcomes.

Synthesis: Dublin

The capital of Ireland, home to the 39% of the Irish population, has been experiencing a period of sprawled suburbanization, with low density consumption of agricultural land associated to an increased car dependency, caused by, among other factors, a certain regional competition between different administrative authorities. At the same time in the city area many factors, such as the decline of traditional industry and the ageing population, are determining significant levels of vacant or underutilized lands.

Among other development targets, the city of Dublin is currently working on the implementation of planning strategies (see the new City Development Plan 2011-2017, adopted and in effect) to create a more “compact” and sustainable city and for this target, for which cooperative governance is part of an integrated strategy to promote a metropolitan approach for sustainable territorial growth.

Despite large and successful operations of redevelopment starting with the Urban Renewal schemes in the 1980s, today the capital of Ireland has to manage several areas in the city centre, vacant or under-used due to industrial change and obsolescence of functions. Generally speaking, Dublin’s approach has always been “area-based”, achieving remarkable effects in different parts of the city. However, now a more integrated approach, could be fostered by planning tools, so to enact different policies for the re-use of areas in the inner city.

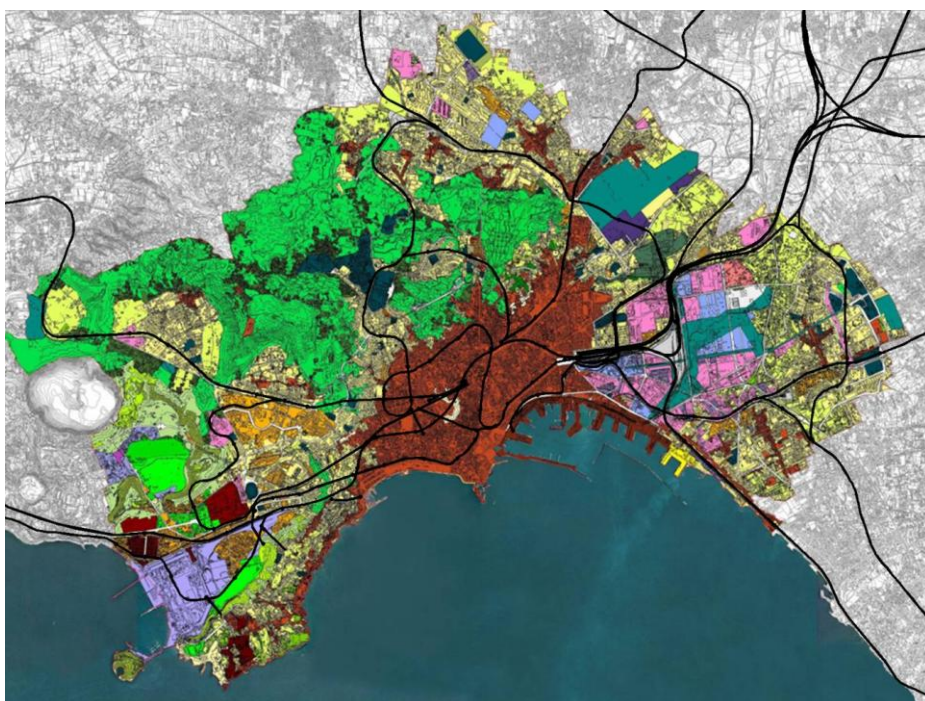
Indeed, investments could be encourage by suitable planning, funding and partnership schemes to overcome several aspects, such as property fragmentation, a general contrast from the resident population, difficulties in obtaining financial support from the bank sector, and to raise the awareness of resident communities and the politics about the importance of interventions and sustainable urban growth.

Target areas could be also the historical parts of the city, to densify the existing urban fabric, to refit buildings also for business activities and experiment new typologies for residential buildings, with high quality comfortable standards and good accessibility.

City of Naples

<i>Italy</i>	
Size (metropolitan area)	1171 km ²
Size (city area)	117.30 km ²
Inh. (metropolitan area)	3,078,408 inh (2011)
Inh. (city area)	956,740 inh (2011)
Density (metropolitan area)	8,160 inh/km ²
Density (city area)	8,160 inh/km ²

5.1 An overview



Source: Municipality of Naples

Naples is the capital city of the Campania Region and Province of Naples, as such it is one of the largest cities in Italy, located right on the Mediterranean coast and with an optimal position in the Mediterranean basin. The dense metropolitan area accounts for more than 3 million inhabitants on a surface of 1 171 km².

Naples is the third most populated city in Italy after Milan and Rome. The city is a major cargo terminal, and the port of Naples is one of the most important in the Mediterranean basin, due to its importance as a tourist destination. Its attractiveness lies in the cultural opportunities and historical heritage - large and rich - which has placed it on the UNESCO World Heritage List since 1995.

Culture and tourist-related services and facilities account for significant results in terms of productivity and vitality, reaching respectively a +3% and + 10.4% growth in the period 2010-2011. Other strong economic sectors are the service sector (83.4% of the regional value added) and foreign trade (+6.7% in 2011).

General information

Location
Territorial demography
Attractiveness of the city

Driving economic sectors

Port activities, cultural and tourist services, services, trade

Despite the importance of the Naples economy at national level, the city is currently suffering from the economic crisis, affecting the manufacturing sector and artisanal activities in particular.

Moreover, the crisis has sharpened the problem of unemployment and entrepreneurship crisis. Indeed, unemployment has been one of the problems, at 17.8% percent of the population over 15 years of age. However, the population is characterized by the percentage of young people (under 15 years old): this represents an important resource for the city's economy, to be incentivized in new entrepreneurial activities in driving development sectors such as tourism, environment-related economy and the tertiary sector in general.

As far as the physical structure of city is concerned, Naples is characterized by a large urban fabric, constituted by the historic town and its peripheral areas, which are currently experiencing physical decay.

The deteriorated areas are mostly located within the urban historic core, often densely populated by a high percentage of renters with low incomes. Other deteriorated parts can be found in the ex-industrial parts of the city (east and west Naples), or in parts of the city built in the 1960s, and located in the northern areas, with "ghetto" quarters of "case popolari" (council housing) with low level facilities and experiencing economic and social decline.

For more information:

<http://www.comune.napoli.it/>

5.2 Key problems, challenges and potential.

The status quo about the project theme

Naples is currently facing a number of **problems** connected to different physical situations, and especially in relation to:

- **the trend of urban sprawl**, with legal and illegal settlements;
- **the deterioration of the existing urban heritage**, with specific issues in large parts of the historical city; in recent neighbourhoods, built between the post-war reconstruction and the 1980s; in brownfield (or underused productive areas).

In relation to the previously described problems, the **challenges** that Naples is currently facing are:

- **reduce the trend of urban sprawl** (legal and illegal), increasing the quality of residential areas and, where necessary, promote densification in existing urban areas, without further land use;
- **promote recovery and rehabilitation of existing neighbourhoods**, in particular encourage interventions to improve energy efficiency in

Effects of the crisis on the economic sectors

Physical situation
Central and peripheral areas in decay

Key problems
- urban sprawl;
- urban heritage in decay

Key challenges
- reduction of urban sprawl
- rehabilitation of the built heritage

buildings' renovations.

Different starting situations need different approaches to interventions and especially the:

- **Historic centre:** Re-use in the historical parts of the city and rehabilitation of private building heritage and of public spaces should be managed avoiding phenomena of social exclusion (e.g. gentrification effects), by coordinating refitting incentives and social policies, protecting local commercial activities and residents, to preserve the identity of the areas;
- **Recent neighbourhoods,** currently deteriorated or undervalued, to be improved with interventions, in which local owners could be involved ;
- **Productive areas,** such as the “Bagnoli area” or “San Giovanni area”, respectively located in the western and eastern parts of the city, that could be, through their rehabilitation and re-use, a booster for the city's development (ongoing projects) .

**Different approaches
on re-use in urban
areas**

The approach of the interventions to manage urban growth and reduce urban sprawl, require a distinction between **inhabited areas** - where policies and strategies for re-use should carefully manage the movement of residential people -, and **productive areas**, where interventions of soil reclamation, refitting and construction are developed in uninhabited areas.

5.3 Planning tools and strategies managing urban growth and supporting interventions in the city

Several measures for the protection of open spaces and inner city re-use are undertaken and managed by different tools aimed especially at the reduction of land use and the transformation of the former industrial areas.

Recently, the city has been declaring its commitment to the reduction of land use by supporting the national campaign “**Movimento stop al consumo di suolo**” (“Stop land consumption”).

In further detail, the **management of the urban growth** is enacted through the following plan, that promotes a “zero growth” policy for the city growth:

- **General Masterplan (PRG-variante generale),** set in 2004 and entailing, among other targets, the reduction of land use and investment on the re-use of the existing heritage. Within the plan, recent urban planning schemes address the change of functions for some vacant industrial areas, to convert them into new residential settlements. The aim is the adjustment of residential building supply, allowing increments of housing in areas of transformation under the new general plan (Prg), according to strict quality and environmental parameters.

**The General
Masterplan**

Other regulation tools at regional or county level for the management of urban growth are:

- **Regional Masterplan (PTR):** The tool gives guidelines for intervention and protection of the landscape (natural and built), safeguarding the territory from land consumption and sprawling development and enhancing the multifunctional character of rural areas in peri-urban fringes.
- **Management Plan for the Protection of land and water resources** (promoted by the Northwestern Campania Basin Authority).
In this tool, preservation of open space and reduction of land consumption play a key role for the protection of the environment: urban land use has to be carefully managed, as it can provoke soil and coastal erosion and consequent floods if not adequately controlled.
- **Legge Regionale 1/2011⁵ (Piano Casa).**
The law promotes the interventions on the existing built heritage, towards the “sustainable development of urban areas, reducing social and living distress”.
- **Provincial Masterplan (PTCP)** (currently in passage)
The general aim to enhance landscape features in the whole provincial territory consists in specific targets on the built heritage, for its re-development towards sustainable and balanced urban settlements, avoiding social exclusion and urban degradation. In particular, the plan provides measures towards the re-use of the already urbanized areas, to contain the consumption of agricultural land and concentrate the industrial, productive and logistic areas. The re-use of existing building and abandoned areas has to be promoted also for residential use, to contain land consumption not only in external areas but also in urban areas.

Other tools for UGM

- Regional Masterplan
- Management Plan for the Protection of land and water resources
- Regional Law 1/2011
- Provincial Masterplan

Operational planning **tools to implement interventions** at local level can be described as follows:

- **Urban Implementation Plans (PUA)**
The Plans are applied to special “situations” requiring an integrated approach to planning and building, such as the transformation of abandoned areas. Two plans in particular are being developed for the transformation and re-use of some industrial areas: the western area “Bagnoli” and the eastern area “S.Giovanni”.
- **Urban Executive Plans (PUE)**
- **Programmes for Urban Regeneration (PRU)**
The programmes are specifically aimed at intervention in deprived urban areas, to locate facilities and infrastructures and through re-fitting, improve the urban and architectural quality.

Tools addressing interventions in the inner city

- Urban Implementation Plans
- Urban Executive Plans
- Programmes for Urban Regeneration
- S.I.RE.NA project
- Laboratorio Napoli /Naples Workshop
- transport policies improving urban quality

Moreover, Naples is focusing on initiatives, such as the **S.I.RE.NA**

Association, “Società per le Iniziative di Recupero di Napoli”, managing partnerships with the city population during interventions on the historic centre and driving incentives for refitting interventions, or the “ **Laboratorio Napoli (Naples Workshop)**”, established by the Council Department of Common Resources to start new participatory processes .

Another interesting aspect of the Naples policy is the link between urban interventions, land use management and plans for the management of the **transportation network**. The re-organization of the infrastructural system is improving train and metro connection and has been managed since 1997 (**Local Transport Plan**), to better connect the suburbs to the city centre and to positively influence the urban environment, in particular areas close to the newly restored metro-stations (**Piano 100 stazioni**, 2003)

The reduction of car traffic, with the definition of a large restricted traffic area corresponding to parts of the historical city centre and part of the waterfront, works to increase the transport network and is one of the key actions in view of the redevelopment of a wide area of the city centre.

5.4 Overview: experiences of urban transformation

The city is currently working on some projects for the re-use of the historical heritage and the abandoned industrial areas.

In the **historical centre** one important project is:

- **Real Albergo dei Poveri**, consisting in the re-use of the existing historical building, considered to be one of the largest palaces of Europe, to create the “City of Young people”. The intervention is managed and financed by the public sector and is ongoing.

Re-use projects in the historical centre

- Real Albergo dei Poveri

Former industrial areas to be re-used are:

- **West Area : Bagnoli- Area Ex Italsider**. The intervention aims to locate new cultural and tourist maritime facilities in the area (ex-Italsider), integrating them with the surrounding landscape areas. The new services will be attractive places on an urban level. The area is owned by the Administration, and for the intervention a new entity was established Bagnolifutura S.p.A, a joint venture between the Municipality of Naples (90% of shares), the Campania Region (8,5%) and the Province of Naples (2,5%).
- **East area: Ex-Manifattura Tabacchi**, its identity features will be preserved, such as the former industrial buildings and valuable green areas, while new facilities and residential buildings will be located. The intervention is being developed through an executive plan of private initiative (PUA). The area is owned by FINTECNA Immobiliare spa, a company with full public involvement, which is also enforcing the intervention process (in progress)

Re-use projects in former industrial areas

- Bagnoli-Area Ex Italsider
- Ex Manifattura Tabacchi

5.5. Potential expectations and contributions

The city would like to exchange experiences to improve the management of land use, reduce urban sprawl and achieve a sustainable city development.

In particular, Naples, would like to acquire know-how on strategies to deal with the refitting and rehabilitation of private buildings in **inhabited areas**, managing correctly the “social aspects”, in other words avoiding, as far as possible, the eviction of inhabitants.

The **key issues** (expectations) which the city would like to discuss within the USEACT framework are:

- Contrast urban sprawl and unauthorized building not only in external areas but also in urban areas;
- Promote the rehabilitation and recovery of existing private built heritage (80% of Naples’ historic centre, inscribed in the UNESCO Site List) , further increasing the real estate value of the areas avoiding gentrification;
- New strategies for the use of sustainable and energy efficient technologies in existing buildings.

Expectations

On the other hand, the potential **contributions** are:

- Experience of the production of tools for the reduction of land use and the transformation of ex-industrial areas;
- Sharing the initiatives set up by the Municipality to attract private investment for the upgrade of the private housing heritage and support trade and artisanal activities in the historic centre (see S.I.RE.NA)
- Experience in planning for the improvement and management of the **transportation network** (from 1997 “**Local Transport Plan**” to 2003 “**100 Stations Plan**”);
- Experience in the realization of new stations i.e. dealing with new architecture within the historic centre, modern art (art stations) and archaeological sites (archaeological stations)

Contributions

5.6 LAP and LSG in their early stage

A proposal for the Local Action Plan

The City of Naples would like to work on different levels for the implementation of the LAP:

- **Territorial Interventions:** Finding **new models for the integrated development** of some areas, especially targeted at strategies to refit inhabited private residential blocks, avoiding gentrification, increasing energy efficiency and improving economic potential (to counteract the current crisis). Decisions could be discussed and detected with stakeholders. The Lap could **detect areas**, which potentially represent

LAP

- physical interventions
- development of mapping tools for monitoring underused areas

an important draw for investment and urban development, especially those affected by the work in progress of the transportation network.

- Planning tools and planning governance: **mapping of underused built heritage** (unauthorized building included) and abandoned areas to better address the processes of economic and physical transformation in urban areas, attracting investors through appropriate strategies and tools; implementation of the energy plan, aimed at increasing the efficient use of resources.

The Local Support Group

Naples will initially draw into the Local Support Group the **key stakeholders**, who could play a useful role at the conference table for the discussion and further investigation into the network topics for the implementation of a Local Action Plan, which meet with the Administration's priority.

The **involved stakeholders** are:

- Local Government Representatives (City Council - Province - Region);
- Campania Region (Managing Authority)
- City Council of Naples Departments/Offices (Urban Planning, Infrastructures, Culture, Tourism, Historic Centre, Environment, Urban renewal; Craft / Trade Development; Social Policy);
- University of Naples "Federico II", Faculty of Architecture
- University of Rome "La Sapienza" – La Sapienza Innovazione Research Centre
- S.I.RE.NA. ScpA;
- CNR National Council for Research
- ACEN Builder Associations
- ANEA Naples Agency Energy and Environment
- WWF;
- LEGAMBIENTE association (league for the environment)
- "Stop al consumo del suolo /Stop land use" civil movement
- Private investors/Associations of retailers and craftsmen

As the target areas will be selected, property managers and tenants will have a primary role within the LSGs, as promoters of bottom-up initiatives.

The **core group** could be comprise the following bodies:

- City Council of Naples Elected Representatives
- City Council of Naples Departments/Offices
- Campania Regional Administration (Managing Authority)
- University of Naples "Federico II"
- University of Rome "La Sapienza" – La Sapienza Innovazione Research Centre
- S.I.Re.Na. ScpA;
- CNR National Council for Research
- ANCE Builder Associations
- ANEA Naples Agency Energy and Environment

The first LSG Meeting was held on the 23rd of July.

The LSG

- composition
- core group

Experience in terms of working through transnational exchange in relation to USEACT topic

> Projects concerning Energy efficiency and “20 20 20” strategy:

BELIEF

The project was aimed at setting up of Action Plan together with local stakeholders to realize initiatives in the field of energy efficiency, renewable sources and sustainable mobility. Local authorities and stakeholders were involved in the Local Intelligent Energy Forums for the implementation of sustainable energy policies in historical centre.

CITY INSTRUMENTS

The project was aimed at monitoring and Transferring Instruments to address Climate Change in Metropolitan Regions, producing a catalogue of best practices and verify which are the specific activities to reproduce in the historical centre.

OPERAZIONE CALDAIA SICURA

Aimed at the maintenance and inspection campaign for heating systems, the project was the opportunity to make a new information campaign about new efficient technologies for heating system.

CLEAN ENERGY IN NAPLES

During the project, the municipality introduced a new financial instrument to incentive use efficient energy measures in historical buildings.

GO PEDELEC

The projects is aimed at electrical vehicles promotion, and especially to make a specific information campaign to promote the use of electric vehicles in historical centre with the objective to realize a bike sharing system.

Links to the EU Operational Programme

The link to the OP relies in the connection to the executive phase of the **Campania OP ERDF 2007-2013**, giving criteria for the selection of interventions, for environmental, social and economic sustainability.

The guidelines express requirements for new interventions and especially infrastructures, concerning environmental impact reductions.

ERDF also promotes risk-prevention oriented works, such as works for soil protection in deteriorated areas. At the same time, the EAFRD – European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development is promoting interventions to reduce the impact of pollutants connected to rural and agricultural activities; to prevent hydro-geological risk for agricultural areas; for the management of the territory, to prevent fire damages.

Especially, the **axis 1 – Environmental sustainability** and cultural/tourist attractiveness is aimed at promoting the ecological and sustainable development of territories and regional communities.

Synthesis: Naples

Naples, the third largest city of Italy, and one of the most important ports in the Mediterranean basin, is well known for its cultural attractiveness and rich heritage. However, the city is currently facing a period of declining economy, due to the effects of the downturn, especially on the manufacturing sector and small businesses, with growing unemployment rates and reduced vitality of the entrepreneurship.

In relation to the USEACT themes, the Municipality of Naples is currently focusing attention on two priorities: the urban sprawl (due both to planned and unauthorized developments), and the deterioration of the existing heritage in historical areas of the city centre and in recent neighbourhoods outside the city core.

As far as the sprawl issue is concerned, the Municipality stresses the importance of increasing the operational effectiveness of metropolitan and regional Urban Growth Management tools to tackle the current sprawl trends (inside and outside the area administrated by the Municipality), within an integrated cooperative framework.

On the historic centre side, integrated interventions on the residential heritage should be carried on. They should follow a “regeneration-oriented” approach and should be specifically addressed both to the rehabilitation of the residential private built heritage (through operations of refitting aimed at reducing energy consumption) and to the revitalization of economic activities, supporting local entrepreneurs (retailers or craftsmen, e.g.).

Indeed, while a part of the Local Action Plan could be “area based” and provide sustainable solutions for the historic centre, another section could be dedicated to develop a mapping system (through GIS technologies) to identify the underutilized and “problematic” urban areas to be potentially reused.

Municipality of Nitra

Slovak Republic

Size (metropolitan area)	870,73 km ²
Size (city area)	104,5 km ²
Inh. (metropolitan area)	159,422 inh
Inh. (city area)	78,875 inh
Density (metropolitan area)	183,09 inh/km ²
Density (city area)	784,98 inh/km ²

5.1 An overview



Source: Google maps

Nitra is the fifth largest city in Slovakia, located in the valley of the river Nitra, in the central part of western Slovakia, on the border between the flatlands and the mountainous landscape.

At an 80 km distance from the capital, Bratislava, the city is home to three universities, several scientific organizations (Departments of Slovak Academy of Science; institutions of Agricultural Research; Animal husbandry), institutions managing environmental protection and natural preservation, cultural centres (galleries, theatres and libraries. The city is also renowned as the centre of the bishopric of the Roman Catholic Church since 880 AD.

The surroundings offer valuable environmental areas such as a NATURA 2000 site and other areas, managed through special protection regulations.

The university helps attract young people to the city area (accounting for aprox. 24, 000 students), while a new industrial park offers job opportunities to ca. 6000 employees (mostly migrating).

The city is currently experiencing a period of urban, industrial and social development, and before the 2009 financial crisis its economy was positively growing. The productive sector is mainly based on key **industrial businesses** such as chemical production, plastics processing, electro - technical, machinery, constructions, agriculture, **services**, and especially tourism, gastronomy, shopping centres.

General information

- Location
- Attractiveness and cultural importance of the city

Driving economy sectors

For more information:

<http://www.slovak-republic.org/nitra/>

<http://www.nitra.sk/news.php?all>

5.2 Key problems, challenges and potential

The status quo of the project theme

At the moment, the city of Nitra is trying to:

- **manage the urban growth** and the building activities in its territory, especially as investors are likely to avoid the regulations of the general urban plan;
- find strategies for **densification**;
- **address refitting operations** in central areas, due to declining conditions of the built heritage;
- **recent real estate settlements** not fully developed, for the downturn has slowed the demand, which would require interventions.

Some of the main **challenges** for Nitra in relation to USEACT themes can be summarized as follows:

- the increasing role of **communication** between various stakeholders and responsible bodies involved in the processes of land use and urban growth management: administrators, local stakeholders and the community have to discuss the opportunities for future urban developments, towards balance models of growth;
- combining **planning regulations** (such as green area ratio, volume ratio, height of buildings, functions...) with the **economic targets of private** investors and developers.

Key problems

Key challenges

- communication between administration, stakeholders and communities on land use opportunities
- combination of public planning and private interests

5.3 Planning tools and strategies managing urban growth and supporting interventions in the city

As far as the **protection of open spaces** is concerned, Nitra is currently protecting with adequate regulations natural areas, such as some forests close to the urban centre.

Planning is managed at national level in agreement with the Development Strategy of the Slovak Republic; at regional level through the regional general plan and at local level through the zonal and city general plan.

The **General plan** offers tools to manage functions, spaces, building design standards, traffic, etc.

The legal framework (Act 50/1976) for urban planning and building regulation enforces local plans are renovated every four years: this offers certain **flexibility to planning tools** and offers the opportunity to adapt the regulatory instruments to the present issues and problems.

Tools for the protection of open spaces

Overview of the planning framework

Planning tools

- General plan, frequently updated
- new urban plan in progress
- activities to engage the community

In general terms, the planning framework is rather complex and requires a long-term implementation, hence a further rate of flexibility in the planning tools would be required to efficiently address interventions of reuse, according to the updated needs of the owners, stakeholders and the community involved.

Currently, the general urban plan identifies some areas for new developments. However, opportunities to obtain amendments on plan forecasting are given.

According to the previous urban plan framework (2003), the Municipality aims to develop a **new general plan** for the next 5-8 years. This tool could define new strategies for the future growth of Nitra and especially focus on:

- new models of urban growth;
- new layout and building models for residential areas (housing);
- models for densification and/or reuse of former productive areas;
- interventions and strategies to increase energy efficiency of urban areas by working on: refitting of buildings and service infrastructure networks.

Moreover, the Municipality is currently working to increase the awareness of the community regarding the targets and strategies for future urban developments, by using available media and publications, as well as consultation meetings.

5.4 Overview: experiences on urban transformation

The city of Nitra has recently started the **reutilization of a former military area**. The area, originally built in 1882, is located in the northern part of the wider centre of the city, in the Zobor area. With a surface of ca. 21 ha, this is the largest derelict urban structure within the Nitra urban area with discussion of its possible re-use and opportunities for new functions have been ongoing since 2008. In 2012 the Municipality of Nitra (City Architecture Department) proposed the urban and architectural plan for the re-use of the barracks, to be transformed into cultural, recreational, administrative and residential buildings.

The reuse of a former military area in Zobor

- Location
- Opportunities for reuse
- Funding issues
- Property framework of the target area

The area has a remarkable archaeological and historical value, so careful reconstruction of the technical infrastructures is to be provided for its re-use. At this stage, the main challenge for the next period is funding the operations, for which the Municipality is currently setting the framework (EU funds, public-private partnerships etc.). So far, some buildings within the target area can benefit from the status of National Monuments, so an agreement between the owners and the National Monument Fund office is being established.

Currently, while the plots (area) are property of the Roman Catholic Church, the Municipality of Nitra owns 31 buildings and the Slovak Academy of Science (Nitra Bishopric) owns another 11 buildings. The property framework is another issue that the Municipality is trying to solve over the near future, finding an agreement between the different owners regarding the possible new functions to set in the area.

The operation is being managed through a purely administrative and contractual

public-private partnership.

5.5. Potential expectations and contributions

The city of Nitra seeks to:

- **exchange experiences and good practices** in the field of innovative tools and technologies concerning the urban planning, energy efficiency of structures and communicating the tools and methods to the public and local stakeholders.
- **gain economic and management models** to fund the interventions and models for the implantation of tools.

Expectations

- models to improve planning tools, technology and community involvement
- funding and management for interventions

On the other hand, the **contributions** of the Municipality of Nitra could be:

- sharing the experiences of the **implementation of planning regulations from national to local level** (vertical structure)
- sharing the know-how regarding the harmonization **of different strategic documents** (general plans, systems of ecological stability, landscape-ecological planning, traffic engineering, etc.)

Contributions

- vertical integration of planning levels
- integration of different aspects and policies in planning tools

5.6 LAP and LSG in their early stage

Local Action Plan

The **Local Action Plan** could be based on three different topics:

- **densification** of the built heritage especially in recently built areas to be revitalized by locating new functions, in vacant areas in the city centre, such as in former military or productive areas, or in housing areas and settlements to be renovated;
- improve the **energy efficiency** and reduce costs of energy consumption by setting new technologies, attracting funding and activating the population on the target theme through communication activities;
- management of urban spaces occupied by **private transportation** (parking) with adequate policies in the planning tools.

LAP

- densification
- improvement of energy efficiency in built areas
- sustainable solutions to private transportation

The Local Support Group

The **Local Support Group** could comprise the: Municipality of Nitra, Faculty of Management of Slovak Agricultural University of Nitra, Nitra Investment Association, Faculty of Architecture of Slovak Technical University in Bratislava, Local construction office, and some of the local construction companies (e.g. Stavby Nitra, Dynamik ...).

LSG

- composition
- intended achievements

In short, the LSG is aimed at **communicating** to its participants the new tools and strategies of urban planning and development, which could be involved in the process of creating the new general plan (foreseen in the next 5 – 8 years). Moreover, the “roundtable” set for the LSG offers the opportunity to get some feedback on the framework of the current general plan and, improve the new one in the process of preparation, according to the remarks collected.

Experience in terms of working through transnational exchange in relation to USEACT topic

Common lands for sustainable management (ERDF -Field social work in the area of Lukov Dvor)

Moreover, structural funds were allocated, supporting different targets and activities:

- Energy agency of Nitra,
- Education of the employees in the field of public administration,
- Improvement of the air quality in the city by improving the technical accessories,
- Waste management as the source of the energy sustainability,
- IT services in the public administration,
- Development of the tourists traffic in region of Nitra,
- Reconstruction of the public buildings in Nitra (grammar schools, pensioner homes, homeless people shelters etc.)

Links to the EU Operational Programme

The link relies on the OP ERDF Basic infrastructure, Priority n. 3: Local infrastructure, which consists in the support of the economical development of regions through the improvement of the public infrastructure – renewal of the basic structures in settlement (buildings, plots, areas) in the field of education, social and medical care, culture, regional politics and management.

Synthesis: Nitra

Nitra, the fifth large city of Slovakia, located close to its capital Bratislava, is currently experiencing a period of urban, industrial and social development, and before the 2009 downturn its economy was positively growing.

The Municipality of Nitra, which recently managed the re-use of abandoned areas in the city centre (Zobor military area), is now carrying on the development of a new general urban plan and is therefore interested to develop new models to manage urban growth and to implement effective planning schemes

Especially, important targets for the planning framework in process could be:

- the redevelopment of former productive areas, and new schemes for sustainable housing settlements;
- the introduction of innovative technologies to increase the energy efficiency in areas to be redeveloped;
- the reorganization of transportation networks, to reduce the physical impact of private transportation (e.g. parking) in the urban areas.

Other two priorities in the Nitra's agenda are respectively innovating the funding models, to attract private capital, and the development of communication strategies to raise the stakeholder awareness on the importance of improving the planning schemes, and to adequately involve the community into the planning process.

Østfold County Council

Norway

Size (county area)	4,182 km ²
Size (twin city area)	986 km ²
Inh. (county area)	278,352
Inh. (twin city area)	12,216
Density (county area)	72 inh/Km ²
Density (twin city area)	192 inh/Km ²

5.1 An overview



Fig.: Source: Østfold County

The county of Østfold is located in the south-east part of the Oslo metropolitan area, right on the Oslo Bay. Østfold comprises 18 municipalities (6 cities) within its administration. It is one of the areas where the first urban settlements took place, so it still preserves its precious historical heritage, which is also an interesting attraction for the tourist sector.

The good location and proximity to the capital has made Østfold a region where 80% of freight transportation for foreign trade passes. Østfold's industrial output accounts for around 6.6% of the total industrial

General information

- Location
- Attractiveness

Driving economic sectors

sector of the Norwegian country, with vital industries and research centres for ITC and energy technology.

Traditional sectors such as timber conversion and food production are currently the driving sectors of the Østfold economy, with groups like Borregaard in Sarpsborg and Saugbruksforeningen in Halden, or large food companies like Stabburet, Denofa, Borgar and Brynhildsens Fabrikker respectively.

Currently, the region is experiencing a change in the spatial structure, due to the current trends of the productive sectors and of the demographic evolution. A change in the traditional industrial sectors affects the physical spaces related to the industrial activities, in addition requiring a reorganization of the spatial setting of production.

On the other hand, the forecast population increase in the Oslo metropolitan area is likely to influence the development of the Østfold County over the next few years, due to the short commuting distance between the capital area and the County territory. Statistics foresee a growth consisting of at least 100,000 new inhabitants moving into the Østfold territory in the next 40 years, many of whom are likely to be immigrants from southern and eastern Europe.

Structural changes in the spatial structure

Effects of industrial changes and demographic trends

For more information:

<http://www.ostfoldfk.no/>

5.2 Key problems, challenges and potential.

The status quo of the project theme

The change in the productive and demographic structure is responsible for different trends, that can be summarized as follows:

1. a **change in economic sector** due to obsolescence of traditional industrial activities is provoking an increase of abandoned areas, which are former factory buildings. Moreover, the situation is negatively affecting employment opportunities and reducing cultural vitality;
2. **farming** continues to be a large sector, which requires the protection of open spaces for farmland. Urban expansion has to be limited also to protect and encourage agricultural activities;
3. the county of Østfold is affected by the population **growth in the capital area**, due to increasing urban pressure in Oslo. The increased housing demand in the Østfold territory has to be counterbalanced with the policies for efficient land use and the re-use of inner city areas.

Trends in the spatial structure

Effects of changes in the economic and demographic structure

In short the **key problems** are:

- Increase of **abandoned areas** due to change in the industrial sector;
- Increase in population (and related **housing demand**) connected to management of urban growth;

Key problems

- number of brownfields to be adequately managed
- increased

- Management of land use, dealing with **different sectors** (e.g. agriculture and cultural heritage);
- **Changes in the job market**, affecting also the level of education of the population;
- Weakness in the **coordination between different levels of planning** regulation, which relies on the difficulty of coordinating development targets at county level and planning regulation in city-level planning tools;
- **Limited tools** that the authorities can use to control the quality of the interventions, as most of the detail planning is managed by private investors
- Need for **increased awareness** regarding the targets of densification and interventions in former industrial areas or inhabited areas at political and community level.

population and related urban growth
- employment crisis
- difficult implementation of national planning tools at local level
- need for tools to manage interventions

According to the previously described issues, the **main challenges** could be identified in the following targets:

- **Densification** in already urbanized areas, to combine the growing population with an increased efficiency of land use and the protection of open spaces (for farming and preservation of archaeological findings);
- Gain experience in the **management of quality interventions**, to be developed with investors according to shared quality standards;
- **Communicate** to the community, the investors and the administration regarding the UGM targets and the need for densification in existing centres

Key challenges

- Densification
- Tools for the management of interventions
- Communication

Whereas the proximity to the capital area is one of the factors for the pressure on Østfold growth, it can also be considered as the region's **potential**, in terms of good accessibility to skilled labour.

Potential

5.3 Planning tools and strategies supporting interventions in the city and managing urban growth

As far as urban planning is concerned, at **national level** the Ministry of Environment is responsible for providing guidelines at regional and local levels (white papers, national policy guidelines and resolution of conflicts). The Ministry of Local Government and regional Development is responsible for Norwegian housing policy, district and regional development, local government and the administration of elections.

General planning framework

At **regional level**, the counties in Norway are entitled to provide planning guidelines, that can address local tools and policies on different themes (environment, transportation, social policies, land use..), but do not have operational power to the same degree.

The **municipalities** are responsible for preparing general master plans enacting zoning tools.

For instance, **Østfold County** has been working on tools for the reduction of land use, which can be described as follows:

- **A master plan** (enacted since 2009) concerning sustainable urban growth; environmental preservation and quality; business development; public health.
In particular, the plan provides a “Land use plan” which limits the possibility for municipalities to grow outside the city centres (next to zero growth), while it encourages interventions in the inner city areas to densify existing urban fabrics and avoid land consumption in external areas. Target-areas for densification interventions are identified according to supposed demographic growth. Currently, discussion on the relationship between regional competences and local autonomy has been raised; however, all the conflicts are solved at regional level and not raised at national level;
- **Overview and status of used land** (still in progress) to prevent further land consumption encouraging “densification” in already urbanized areas.

Tools for UGM by Ostfold county

- master plan for UGM
- overview and status for used land

5.4 Overview: experiences on urban transformation

One recent intervention carried out in one urbanized area of the Østfold County is the **Møllebyen in Moss**, the Mill City.

Møllebyen consists of a unique collection of brick buildings from the period 1850 – 1930: the vision of the intervention was to create an open district, a social meeting place for the general public with the theme “culture and expertise”.

The implementation of the proposal was carried out with private initiative followed by a land use plan for the city centre. In particular, the process was managed through public-private partnerships: a private owner with the vision and the means to create a difference. A public sector that cooperated and contributed with plans, competence and leases.

Today, Møllebyen appears to be a vibrant environment: the public library, Moss City and Industrial museum, the city’s cinema, design and technology companies, schools, restaurants and a microbrewery.

The Mill City in Moss

Renovation of a historical area for a new creative and cultural hub in the city centre

5.4 Potential expectations and contributions to USEACT

Private investors often are the main actors proposing planning initiatives. However, further **models for the management of the partnerships** is one of the County’s aims in taking part in USEACT. The County would like to acquire better know-how and discuss the following aspects:

- Acquirement of more specific and effective competences in the

Expectations

- PPPs interventions

- management of relations between public and private sectors
- Multi-sector approach to managing integrated projects and interventions in the inner city.
- How to ensure the quality of the city when the planning processes are comprehensive?

for interventions' management - integrated approaches to interventions

On the other hand, the potential **contributions** to USEACT that Østfold could possibly provide are:

- Experience of a strategic master plan at regional level to manage urban growth and encourage densification in already urbanized areas, with the aim of (close to) zero growth;
- A planning regime where most planning initiatives are given private investors;
- Experience on interventions in deprived neighbourhoods, which are being implemented in Norway;
- Experiences from development and land use planning in the city centre;
- Experiences from processes that are not authorized by the Planning and Building Act

Contributions

- regional master-planning on UGM
- interventions in neighbourhoods and in the city centre

5.5 LAP and LSG in their early stage

Local Action Plan

As Local Action Plan, the County of Østfold would like to create an arena to share knowledge and experiences about urban development and hurdles in urban planning, showing and explaining new creative planning tools and ideas of new planning models.

Moreover, this work could help strengthen the knowledge and understanding amongst politicians and the public on the need for planning, planning tools and planning capacity.

In particular, a **publication** (online edition and printed version) could be useful to organize and systematize knowledge and acquisition of new experiences on inner city interventions, growth management and densification acquired within the USEACT project, in the form of guidelines.

Main focus of the guidelines should be:

- tools for the management of complex property assets;
- know-how to manage different stakeholders with interest in the development of inner city areas;
- tools to govern public-private partnerships which is one of the most interesting challenges of the processes of transformation;
- strategies to manage the financial aspects of the interventions and risks involved.

The booklet should contain interesting descriptions of case studies showing:

- how interventions can be driven and implemented;
- examples of what positive incentives are available and

Local Action Plan

Guidelines concerning tools and strategies for interventions and UGM to be delivered to the community and involved stakeholders

- models providing effective regulatory legislation.

Local Support Group

The **LSG**, coordinated by the Østfold County Administration, should be composed of:

- city planners from the six Østfold cities
- the Norwegian State Housing Bank (Husbanken);
- the County Governor, since its engagement in the UGM topics and attention to sustainable development in planning;
- a research institute interested in joining the project

Local Support Group

The intended achievements of the cooperation with the LSG is detecting strategies to increase urban qualities and attractiveness in the Østfold cities.

Experience in terms of working through transnational exchange in relation to USEACT topic

Østfold County Council currently participates in the following relevant projects:

Interreg IVB - project Trans in Form

“Trans in Form” introduced competitive development concepts for rural regions, smaller towns and cities. It raised awareness among both policy makers and citizens about regional attractiveness and potential. Participation in the project generated cross-border alliances, the development of skills and experiences, as well as financing of local projects.

Interreg IVA project COINCO North 2 (partner)

The overarching objective is to promote sustainable economic growth by reducing travel time, create new arenas for business cooperation, stimulate closer academic cooperation and strengthen the marketing of the region as an attractive location.

Interreg IVA project In Site

The objective is to increase citizens common knowledge about how the Öresund-Kattegat-Skagerrak-region is linked together and how cultural heritage in combination with art can be a resource for the future.

Interreg IVA project Implement (partner)

“Implement” seeks to challenge a concrete environmental problem and turn it in to a resource and through that create growth based on biogas.

Progress project HEPROGRESS (lead partner)

The aim of the project is reducing health related social and gender inequalities and barriers to social and economic participation.

In addition Østfold County has developed knowledge on the Interreg Program through our function as Secretariat for the Interreg IVA Norway-Sweden program and the Interreg IVA Öresund-Kattegat-Skagerrak program.

Links to the EU Operational Programme

The link is the **Interreg IVB project Trans in Form**.

The aims of the project rely on increasing the awareness among both policy makers and citizens regarding regional attractiveness and potential.

The creation of a new cross-border alliances, the development of skills and experiences, as well as the financing of local projects are possible interventions planned or executed within the EU project framework.

One of the lessons learned is the need to make good city centers even in smaller places.

Synthesis: Østfold

The Norwegian Østfold County is facing a growing population trend (and a increased housing demand) due to the attractive effect played by the capital city Oslo area, while the current economic transition phase (with reduction of manufacturing activities) implies new brownfields are available for urban change but, at the same time, to weaken the economic role of the area, which risks to get a “dormitory” for commuters working in Oslo.

Østfold County is also applying land-use schemes at county level to avoid excessive farmland take. Especially, the county plan is aimed at:

- reaching higher densities in already urbanized areas, to defend the environment and to preserve sufficient land for agriculture and to preserve heritage;
- assuring support to the local economic transition, through a set of policies aimed at a successful implementation of re-use and densification schemes by the municipalities, to attract businesses and develop local entrepreneurship;
- However, some difficulties in the implementation of the regional guidelines (which have a weak operational power) can be observed at local level: the schemes, promoted by communities and private investors, often propose different development visions, based on low density settlements.

In this framework the priorities of the Østfold County are:

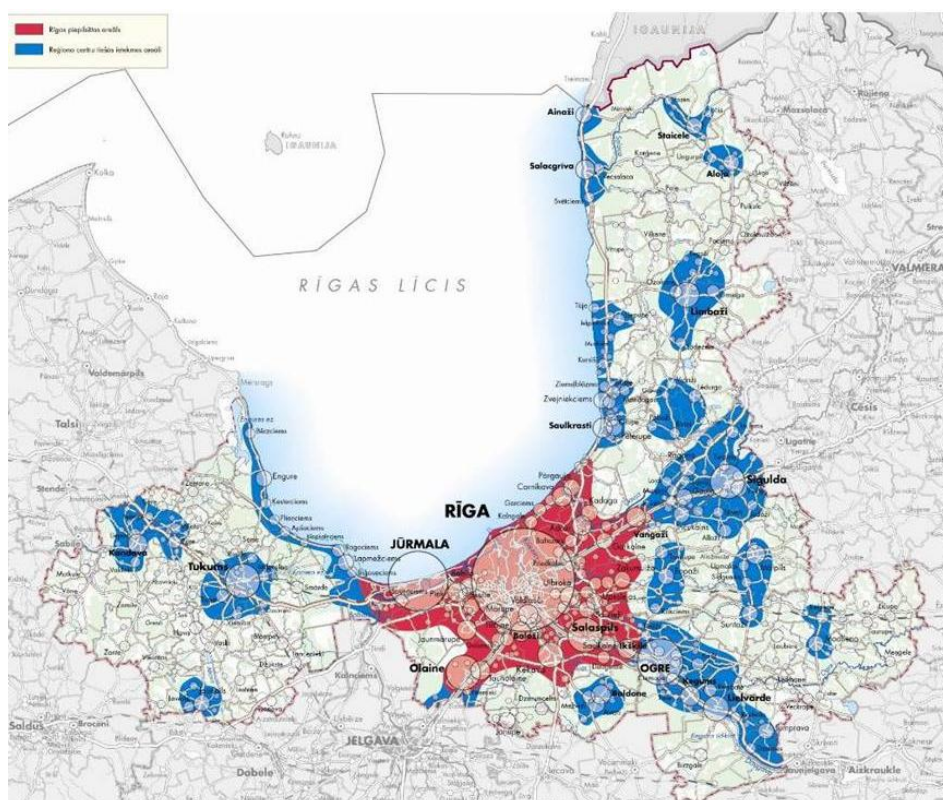
- finding more coherent and shared targets between different levels of governance, to enable Østfold County to implement their plans also at municipality level, developing new tools (e.g. incentives);
- communicating to the community and to developers the environmental and social benefits of newly developed (but high-quality) density settlements;
- overcoming issues hampering densification, such as higher costs of construction in existing areas or brownfields and fragmented real estate ownership, through innovative fiscal and financial tools, to induce owners jointly to cooperate with municipalities and developers.

Riga Planning Region

Latvia

Size (metropolitan area)	10,435 km ²
Size (city area)	304 km ²
Inh. (city area)	650,468 inh
Inh. (city area)	956,740 inh (2011)
Density (metropolitan area)	104 inh/km ²
Density (Riga city area)	2300 inh/km ²

An overview



Source: Riga Planning Region

Riga Planning Region is the most important planning region of five in Latvia, and comprises the capital and its influence area Pierīga. The region was founded in 2006, according to the “regulations on Territories of Planning Regions” (n.133, 2003).

Located in the middle of the Baltic states, the region includes not only Latvia’s capital, Riga, but also twenty cities, the largest of which are Jūrmala, Limbazi, Tukums, Ogrē and Sigulda, surrounded by a number of environmentally interesting areas and coastal stretches.

The administrative structure of the Riga Planning Region is organized through the association of 14 representatives from local municipalities (3 from Riga, 2

Riga Planning Region General information on Riga Planning Region

- Location
- Administrative framework

from Jurmala, 9 from other municipalities), working for the development of the Region.

The capital region of Latvia is becoming a point of interest for other European states, for some opportunities in the economic, technology-related (ICT) and scientific sector. However, the leading economic sectors are mostly related to the landscape features of the area: agriculture, forestry and woodworking, with related food & beverage production.

The leading service sectors are trade, cultural services and tourism, and professional services. Significantly, the real estate market is the second VA sector of the country, despite being negatively affected by the global crisis.

At national level, the capital area attracts population and markets, significantly contributing to national growth. In particular, the region is experiencing demographic growth due to many new inhabitants moving to the capital area, which offers attractive possibilities.

The area of Riga and the metropolitan areas in Pieriga contain 90% of the housing stock in the whole country. With relatively high prices in the “core” area of Riga, the residential and housing pressure is concentrated in the external urban circle, where local municipalities have been encouraging new interventions and urban expansion over the past decades. The crisis has certainly hampered investment, with some suburban and metropolitan areas experiencing management problems, which would therefore require revitalization investments.

Moreover, outside the city area a number of former industrial sites and brownfields could be reused as areas for housing, productive activities or good quality open spaces.

For more information:

<https://www.riga.lv/>

<http://www.rpr.gov.lv/pub/?lang=eng>

5.2 Key problems, challenges and potential.

The status quo of the project theme

After a period of crisis, the building sector and the real estate market are currently reactivating, due to an increased demand for new housing expansion.

This trend, if not adequately managed could further exacerbate some **key problems**:

- chaotic and **sprawled urban** areas in Pieriga, with a low rate of facilities and utility networks, increasing the pressure on the capital area and consequently reducing the quality standards in the Riga area;
- a number of **formerly industrial sites**, abandoned after the Soviet period, which would need to be re-used;
- **illegal allotments**, with chaotic layouts and no planning framework;
- lack of **intervention coordination** in different areas.

Riga
Driving economic sectors

Demographic growth in the capital areas

Effects on the physical growth

Key problems

- urban sprawl outside the city area
- abandoned productive sites
- illegal settlements
- lack of coordination in interventions
- difficult implementation of regional tools at local level

- difficulties in implementing regional guidelines at local level, especially over the past years, as some municipalities encouraged expansions (later blocked by the crisis in the building sector).

The **challenges** for the following years in Riga Planning Region are:

- Increased **operational power** for Riga Planning Region, offering operational tools to implement regional planning regulation at local level;
- address **interventions in brownfield areas or in problematic inhabited areas**, so as to efficiently re-use abandoned areas and on the other hand ensure real estate development without further or unmanaged land consumption;
- address interventions in brownfields and illegal allotments to possibly create **new spaces for urban functions**, such as public institutions, business institutions, education and science centre, public open spaces;

Key challenges

- regional governance
- address urban growth in brownfield or abandoned areas;
- encourage development of inner-city areas for public facilities
-

5.3 Planning tools and strategies managing urban growth and supporting interventions in the city

The **Planning Region of Riga** is currently working on a new planning framework, mainly based on two different documents:

- a general document for regional spatial planning - **Spatial Planning of Region Territory 2005-2025**.

The regional level document provides guidelines for the territorial planning of local municipalities, with proposals for regional cooperation between the involved local authorities, setting the framework to implement national and regional development planning.

The document provides regulatory tools, such as zoning maps, to address the development of the Riga region over the next 20 years. Moreover, the plan identifies the degraded territories at regional scale, in order to offer general guidelines for interventions to be implemented locally;

- **local plans** for the development of specific target areas within the region.

Planning tools for UGM

> Documents developed by Riga Planning Region:

- Spatial Planning of the Region Territory 2005-2025, with zoning regulations addressing future developments
- Local plans

> Documents developed by local municipalities:

- Riga Development Strategy
- Jurmala Development strategy
- Olaine city planning

Some of the main cities of the Riga Planning Region have created **strategies at city level** acting as strategic planning visions for the development of their municipalities, and respectively:

- **Riga development Strategy (up to 2025)**. Set by Riga city with its neighbour localities, the document aims at creating a common planning framework to cooperate on shared issues and interests concerning territorial planning. The plan identifies the brownfields in urban areas, classifying them in categories. At this stage, the city does not have an action plan for concrete interventions in such areas.
- **Development strategy of Jurmala city 2010-2030** (to be approved). Set by the city of Jurmala, the document addresses the territorial planning for the next decades.
- **Olaine city territorial planning** set at city level. The plan for Olaine

addresses land uses and restrictions.

As far as specific tools for urban growth management are concerned, local territorial planning sets binding rules for the use of territory and construction, through zoning maps.

Policies for the protection of open spaces are implemented with different operational tools according to local municipalities.

While in Riga most of the natural areas are property of the Municipality (**public acquisition of land** as policy to protect open spaces), in Jurmala, one of the cities in the metropolitan area of Riga, the protection of open spaces is achieved through:

- **Protection status** to be applied to forestry and natural areas, in order to forbid productive activities in such areas.

Moreover, another tool can be highlighted:

- Land transformation in agricultural and forest land can be only allowed by local municipalities, providing plans with **zoning regulations** which define buildable and non-buildable areas.

Tools for the protection of open spaces

- public acquisition of land
- protection status
- zoning regulation

5.4 Overview: experiences of urban transformation

In **Riga** planning region most of the activities of urban transformation have been carried out in Riga city. Other cities have experienced lack of resources, political motivation or have faced other difficulties in managing the process.

The ongoing projects are:

- **Andrejsala**, an area formerly home to a tobacco factory, to be transformed into a space for creative activities;
- **Spīķeri** neighbourhood (2010-2013)
- the revitalization of **Grīziņkalns park** and **Miera dārzs park** (2011-2013) for the creation of new parks and open public space;
- **Wooden Riga** (2010-2012) – reconstruction of old wooden architectural buildings which are historical and cultural heritage in the Grīziņkalns district.

The project in **Spīķeri**, a former area for freight warehouses and the city market, started in 2010 and is scheduled for completion in 2012. The intervention is aimed at transforming the place into a public area hosting public functions, such as a concert hall, museum, social centre, restaurants, cafes and galleries.

A number of land assets are owned by the municipality, while the rest of the buildings are private property.

The project is being developed through European Regional Development Funds, and it is being implemented through a **public-private partnership**, composed of:

- the Joint Company “Spīķeri” as private partner;
- Riga Municipality as public partner;
- the Ministry of Culture;
- the Ministry of Education and Science;
- various NGOs

The PPP offers increased opportunities in terms of attracting financial

Interventions in Riga

Interventions on former industrial areas, to create new urban facilities

Spīķeri intervention

Warehouse area transformed into multifunctional public space with PPP

resources. On the other hand, the contemporary presence of various actors increases the complexity of implementing the project.

5.5 Potential expectations and contribution of partner cities.

Riga Planning Region is interested in the USEACT project as it **expects to**:

- Gain experience and models to identify abandoned and deprived areas at regional level, to develop appropriate solutions for the territorial growth (to be deepened in the LAP);
- New tools for the interventions, to be implemented at regional and local level.

Expectations

- regional schemes for identification of target areas to be re-developed
- new tools for interventions

On the other hand, as Riga is working on several areas, the **potential contribution** is:

- Sharing the ongoing experience in spatial planning and the revitalization of degraded territories

Contributions

- sharing the experiences of the re-development

5.6 LAP and LSG in their early stage

The Local Action Plan

The Local Action Plan of the Planning Region of Riga could be aimed at developing different revitalization opportunities for deprived and abandoned areas. Strategies should vary according to the type of the selected target area, which can be generally classified as follows:

- degraded industrial sites;
- degraded residential areas;
- illegal settlements with chaotic layouts and built environment.

The proposal should be coordinated at regional levels by a shared strategy.

The possible areas to be identified for future transformations are located in Riga, Jurmala and Olaine:

- **Riga:** transformations have to be mainly directed at the damaged heritage of the Soviet period, consisting in residential and industrial buildings from 19th and 20th century, which are no longer suitable for contemporary uses and needs;
- **Olaine:** interventions should prioritize former Soviet industrial buildings and allotments, often used illegally as family gardens within the city areas. These areas could be planned to organize new activities and functions, and especially locate high quality residential spaces, mixed with recreational and business activities.

LAP

- development of area-based plans in Riga (refitting and reuse of Soviet heritage)
- development of area-based plans in Olaine (re-use of already urbanized land for residential activities and services)

The LAP could be organized in the following steps:

- Analysis of the current situation (exploration of degraded territories at regional level, analysis of the situation, mapping);
- Development of alternative scenarios for the development;

- Creation of guidelines addressing interventions in the target areas.

The Local Support Group

At this early stage of the project, Riga Planning Region has identified possible stakeholders which could participate in the Local Support Group:

- Riga planning region,
- municipalities of the cities where target areas are located,
- territorial planners,
- association of constructors,
- the university of Latvia
- asset owners,
- operators,
- NGOs.

LSG

- identified partners

Experience in terms of working through transnational exchange in relation to USEACT topic

Riga planning region have no experience in transnational exchange in relation urban planning issues.

However, Riga planning region has been a Lead partner in **Norway Grants project** “establishment and use of composite indicators”, which was connected with development planning and evaluation. The project was focused on adoption of German experience in establishment of composite indicators and use of them within evaluation of development planning.

Synthesis: Riga Planning Region

As official authority in charge of the regional development, Riga Planning Region involves the capital of Latvia and other cities.

Riga city and its metropolitan area contain 90% of the housing stock of the whole country. With relatively high prices in the “core” area, the demographic and housing pressure tend to move towards the most external urban zones, where local municipalities have been encouraging new interventions and urban expansion over the past decades. At the same time, a number of brownfields in the core areas remain potentially available for housing, business activities or high quality open spaces.

Riga Planning Region is currently dealing with a certain lack of coordination between the municipalities located within the administrative boundaries.

With some experience in the redevelopment of inner urban areas (see Spīķeri project), the current priorities for Riga Planning Region are:

- managing interventions in brownfield areas, fostering a better regional coordination: vertical and horizontal integration between different administrative levels, is a fundamental target to implement the regional strategic plan at local level;
- improving the administrative capability to design and manage stronger partnerships between different administrations and stakeholders, useful to implement area-based interventions and improve the opportunities to attract funds;
- developing new partnership and funding schemes to effectively implement interventions locally.

City of Trieste

Italy

Size (city area)	84.50 km ²
Inh. (city area)	202 563 inh (2011)
Density (city area)	2400 inh/km ²

5.1 An overview



Fig.: Source: Municipality of Trieste

Trieste (202,000 inhabitants) is an Italian maritime city, located at the north-east Slovenia-Italy border in the Friuli Venezia Giulia region. The city, chief town and largest urban nucleus in the Friuli Venezia Giulia region, Trieste is one of the main commercial ports in the North Adriatic Sea.

The port of Trieste, serving important Italian and Central European markets is located within a dense port-region, encompassing within a 40Km radius, the ports of Monfalcone (I) and Koper (SLO) amongst others. The economy of the city is “service-based” (involving 55% of those in the province, and an added 13% for trade). In this city with art, nature and the sea, tourism always plays a very important role.

The pertinent presence of services makes the city the gravitational centre for a larger area, including five other municipalities, which constitute the Province of Trieste (236,000 inhabitants in its entirety; 242,000 in 2001).

Some important industrial plants remain, bearing in mind the rather limited role played by the industrial sector today (23% of those involved in the province, more than in the construction sector with around 8%). Another important sector refers to cultural and research activities, due to the presence of important

Key data

- location
- the port
- the territory

Evolving trends of the economy

research institutions such as the business incubator AREA Science Park and SiSSA (International School for Advanced Studies). The research sector accounts for 8000 employees in the city, while the large university attracts a population of 25,000 students.

The national and local crisis is bringing to a standstill the main economic activity. The process started some decades ago, in concomitance with the reduction of public transfers to the subsidized industrial sectors, but now it is reaching its peak with the closure of large factories and the abandonment of huge areas and buildings. Moreover, in recent decades Trieste has witnessed a change in several background factors that have transformed the geopolitical and economic scene. In fact, the full integration of the fast growing and competitive Eastern European countries within the EU has strongly reduced the (economic and political) role of Trieste as a “border city”, reducing the opportunities for “trans-border” trade.

In spite of this, the unemployment rate in Trieste has seen a greater fall (4,5%) than in neighboring areas, due in part to the greater presence of activity in connection with service (including in the public arena) which have been a mitigating factor.

Employment trends

As for demographic patterns, Trieste is facing a trend of population decline (205,000 inhabitants today vs. 211,000 in 2001) whereas the death rate is matched only by immigration. Moreover, the amount of elderly people account for nearly 30% of the overall population, displaying a trend that anticipates European forecasts for the next decades. The average age is 48, in comparison with 45 in the region and 43 in Italy generally.

Demographic trends

For more information:

<http://www.retecivica.trieste.it/>

5.2 Key problems, challenges and potential.

The status quo of the project theme

Trieste is undergoing a phase of economic and demographic transition, which presents several economic and social challenges, and which requires the introduction of a general strategy based on the renewal of the attractions' potential (directed at people and businesses) in the city within the context of an elevated social and environmental quality standards.

The general challenges
for the city

The **challenge** will be to define a new role for Trieste at European level and new approaches to development and competitiveness in an increasingly wide and complex territorial framework.

The strategic location and the landscape and services quality standards are clearly the main **potential** areas to focus on, in order to revive the tourist, agriculture, artisan and cultural-scientific sectors. These sectors could attract a new population to the city, investments in the renewal of city spaces and further

The potential

economic activities (mainly in the fields of light production and green economy). This places a **growing focus** on the subjects of sustainable development, urban and territorial standards and the necessary urban tools for these end goals.

Since the 2011 elections, the new Administration has initiated a new framework of town policies, mainly focused on the draft of a new **General Town Plan**, currently in progress. The plan aims to represent an overall vision of the city for the future, projected over a time frame of 15/20 years.

The main **challenges**, connected to the themes of the USEACT project, which the new land use plan will seek to tackle are the following:

- Promotion of economic development
The Plan should pursue a balance between the development of activity, existing economic frameworks and new structures alongside the need to safeguard and improve the territorial resource, with the maritime economy, advanced services, quality tourism, and system of knowledge. Challenges for this development include supporting non-intensive traditional agriculture and regenerating the extensive heritage of lands and buildings within the industrial quarter. In addition, identifying disused areas and buildings for advanced manufacturing and services installations, integrated within the urban fabric;
- Control of land use and the regeneration of the existent
The new plan seeks to alter the past trend of housing demand for development (also in a declining demographic phase) using settlement methods, which require a high use of resources (land, free areas; valued landscape resources and areas, hydrogeological risk zones). It also seeks to define realistic housing needs and therefore a realistic settlement capacity, pointing to the recovery and regeneration– through the advancement of public and private initiatives – of existing urban and deteriorated areas. The aim is to not only to promote the recovery of individual buildings but also their extensive surrounding contexts.
The aims of recovering and reusing the existing building heritage also rest on a new functionality of the urban territory in line with the concept of a polycentric and harmonious city. The interventions should be structured and integrated , spanning different areas of activity (manufacturing, services industry, housing). They will also aim to stimulate the reuse of the building heritage via useful tools to make such an operation attractive from an economic perspective, and guarantee the compliance of the transformation interventions with the criteria of environmental, social, spatial and building quality control;
- Promotion of environment and landscape quality standards
The lack of a landscape plan requires the new Plan to acknowledge the diverse features of the landscape - urban, historical centre or peripheries, suburban areas with a greater green component. This will establish the right criteria for an urban planning study aimed at regulating existing and potential green areas, inside and outside urban centers. In the farming sector, the target is to foster ways of actively

The main challenges of the draft regulating plan:

- economic development;
- land use containment and interventions in the inner city;
- interventions to protect the landscape;
- sustainable mobility

safeguarding the recovery and maintenance of some of the landscape features.;

- Stimulate a sustainable mobility
The aim is to promote new forms of sustainable mobility, in particular targeted at pedestrians, cyclists, vulnerable users and public transport.

It is clear that in order to fulfill these targets the plan must employ targeted tools and suitable implementations to manage the specific features and trajectory of the development of the individual urban zones. To this end for specific strategic areas, the Plan should also outline integrated planning actions (spatial structures and the use of built-up and open spaces, infrastructures, equipment and services), orientated by these specific aims.

The Plan should therefore identify new regulatory tools to address the quality of the interventions and to orientate and evaluate their environmental friendliness. Such challenges require innovations in the tools (incentives, standard, etc.), integration with the other urban planning authorities and the possibility of working at diverse levels, such as the implementation of the plan in specific regeneration areas.

5.3 Planning tools and strategies managing urban growth and supporting interventions in the city

As mentioned above, the regulating plan currently in progress (to be adopted in 2013) is a tool which seeks to be strongly orientated at managing urban growth and at the same time reusing what's already in play in addition to economic development. The general plan guidelines, which are already public, and the issued provisional safeguarding policies are very clear to this end.

The drafting of the Plan should interact and integrate itself with the other tools for managing the territory under revision (detailed plan of the historic center, urban traffic plan, urban parking plan, building regulation, energy plan, etc.). Moreover, **tools** are defined at municipal level, but have to be coherent with regional tools (on territorial, public transport and landscape issues). The presence of different institutional players in charge of planning strategies and plans for strategic areas (port and industrial zones) requires a special effort.

Defining transformation processes and urban restructuring, foresees the use of appropriate methods to facilitate this such as the use of transferable development rights, and incentives (also in connection with the goal of energy containment and the creation of social, co-financed or subsidized housing).

At the same time, the Administration is elaborating further tools and integrated plans aimed at reducing soil consumption, enhancing the local building stock, promoting economic and cultural activities held both in the centre and in the suburbs of the city, supporting sustainable mobility (i.e. Pisu Project, funded by EDRF (European Development Fund 2007-2013; General Traffic Town Plan).

Tools to be integrated in the General Urban Plan in progress

Coherence between planning tools at different administrative levels

5.4 Overview: experiences of urban transformation

Over the last decade, the Municipality of Trieste has realized several urban transformation initiatives with the involvement/support of the public. Among them, we can summarize the most relevant as follows:

- **“L'altra città”**, (2004-2008), funded by URBAN ITALIA Programme - 11.751 Meuro. The target area, in the south-west suburbs, suffered from spatial, environmental and social decay, with neglected public buildings, increasing vandalism, unauthorized building and lack of public services and facilities. The project focused on the economic and social regeneration of the abandoned urban areas through renovation, restoration and the re-use of existing buildings and facilities. Private partners were involved in the financial plan, who contributed their own finances to the project and participated in its overall management, sharing their objectives and targets;
- **“PISUS project - Integrated Urban Development Sustainability Plan”**, (in progress), to be funded by EDRF 2007-2013 FVG Region. The project is aimed at the economic revitalization of the historic centre and the comprehensive redevelopment plan of its spatial areas. The PISUS plan calls for a number of actions and policies, focusing especially on the economic, cultural and social revitalization, namely:
 - redevelopment and urban infrastructure;
 - urban regeneration;
 - starting and preserving traditional artisan business, commercial, tourism and general services, for the social-economic regeneration of critical areas;
 - increasing the energy efficiency and functionality of buildings, also including protected historical and monumental buildings (e.g., installation of waterproof solar panels);
- **“Piano Città”**, (2012-2013, ongoing), funded by the Ministry of Infrastructures and Transport - 4 Meuro.

The project focuses on the reuse of two former military areas in a peripheral neighbourhood, where public services are located, such as the municipal archives and a museum. It is owned both by the Municipality and the State. The project is partially co-funded by regional and municipal funds. These interventions are a first step towards the urban and social regeneration of a larger district where new council housing has been recently built.

This project must be read in the context of the general issues of reduced land use and reuse of disused areas set by the new General Town Plan, where these areas play a strategic role as “gates” to the city. The project relies on public funds in this first phase.

Interventions in the city carried out through EU programmes and funding

- “L'altra città”: economic and social regeneration of deprived areas;
- “PISUS project”: interventions towards sustainable mobility;
- “Piano Città”: for the requalification of two military areas

5.4 Potential expectations and contributions to USEACT

The simultaneous drafting of the new regulating plan and the USEACT project enables the USEACT project to serve as a framework in which to learn, in the “International Exchange”, the applications of specific tools connected to urban planning geared towards the reduction of land use. In particular, participating in

Expectations

the project would enable the city to:

- upgrade the knowledge of offices in charge of planning;
- share experiences in the field of tools, strategies and projects on the issues of reuse cities and reduce land consumption;
- share projects and solutions, in order to increase the energy efficiency and functionality of buildings, with particular reference to historical estate;
- share planning and building code models in order to minimize the use of resources and further urban growth, to promote the reuse of existing buildings and areas, greater energy efficiency of buildings, participation models;
- share experiences and tools on community participation processes.

Moreover, for some single components of the regulating plan, the LAP activity could represent a way of exploring, in an experimental manner and in partnership with the stakeholders, potential for greater innovation.

5.5 LAP and LSG at their early stage

The Local Action Plan

The LAP will be strictly connected to the design process of the “General Town Plan”, currently in progress. The plan complies with a firm UGM approach to minimize land take.

Together with the stakeholders, solutions and operational tools and schemes to locally implement the general strategies provided by the plan in process will be discussed and tested on specific areas.

LAP

Towards the new
General Urban Plan

Local Support Group

Using the USEACT project as a framework to reinforce the preparatory process of the new regulating plan, with the deepening of some specific aspects, the LSG, coordinate shall agree alongside the stakeholder that the municipality has initiated the general town plan through a participatory approach.

Therefore, the main actors involved in the preparation of the LAP, under the coordination of Carlotta Cesco and Beatrice Micovilovich will be:

LSG

- Coordination
- Composition

- other municipal offices involved in various ways in urban planning activities;
- other local public bodies located in the city
- members of the municipal electoral and administrative districts
- economic stakeholders (organisations representing SMEs, organisations representing professionals, trade associations...)
- public and private housing agencies
- environmental organisations
- university and research establishments
- cross cutting issues representatives

Links to the EU Operational Programme

The Friuli Venezia Giulia ERDF ROP 2007-2013 envisages some aspects linked to the subject. In particular the operative object 4.1 “Increase the attractiveness of urban territory enhancing its development through an efficient and cost-effective use of its resources”, axe 4 “Territorial development”, encompasses interventions such as the recovery of existing buildings, preservation of architectural heritage, the enhancement of interventions for energy efficiency.

The Municipality has applied to the above mentioned EU programme and other programmes related to funding by national funds and is working to detect the most suitable EU funding programmes such as 7FP or CIP-PSP.

Synthesis: Trieste

Trieste, a medium-sized port city located on the border between Italy and Slovenia, with an service based economy, is facing an increasing ageing of the population and a weakening of the traditional economic activities.

With the purpose of reinforcing the local development potentials and to fit the social and environmental requirements of its community, the Municipality recently has started the process for a new general urban plan, strongly oriented to minimize the use of new land resources, already scarce in the area.

The general targets of the forthcoming plan are:

- reaching economic development;
- regenerating the existing heritage;
- re-organizing the urban mobility;
- gaining a more general and visible urban quality.

This implies densification and reuse of existing parts of the city.

Drawing up the new plan will require a strong cooperation framework with several other local planning authorities (Port Authority, Province, Region etc.) and will be the occasion to develop innovative implementation tools to re-use urban underutilized or vacant areas.

Viladecans City Council

Spain

Size (city area)	20.10 km ²
Inh. (city area)	65,000 inh
Density (city area)	3,500 inh/km ²

5.1 An overview



Fig.: Source: Municipality of Viladecans

The City of Viladecans, in the southern part of the metropolitan area of Barcelona, is located on the coast. Its proximity to the Catalanian capital results in a good infrastructure network, being only 5 km from the harbour of Barcelona and 1 km from the airport. Highways and railways also connect the city to the metropolitan area.

General information

- Location
- Accessibility

Originally a centre based on agricultural economy, the city has been recently developed driving sectors mostly based on SMEs (95% of the enterprises), that are mainly involved in the service sector (67,2%), construction (17,2%) and industry (15,1%). As agriculture and industry are still important sectors, Viladecans aims to develop innovative technologies and networks, directed towards an attractive and efficient "smart city" vision.

Driving economic sectors

It is interesting to note the city has just developed the Viladecans Business Park for enterprises and production activity.

The population potential is high, with 52% of the population under the age of 40, locating in Viladecans for lower prices of the real estate, but preferring to work in the attractive area of Barcelona. At the same time, the GDP is one of the lowest

Demographic composition

of the Catalan region due to the lack of manufacturing and decreasing productive potential.

Traditionally an agriculture-based area, the city experienced rapid urban growth in the 1990s, also affected by the booming growth of Barcelona, its facilities and networks, stimulated by the 1992 Olympic Games, such as the Olympic stadium located between Barcelona and Viladecans. In those years, urbanization populated former empty areas close to three streams - always at flood risk - running through the urban area, which can still be considered a strong limit to urbanization.

**Territorial
growth and
evolution**

Today, the territory of Viladecans is clearly structured into different sectors with separated functions: from the forestry area in the northern part, close to the mountainous zone; to the urban and industrial settlements in the mid-part; to the more natural, agricultural and leisure-oriented areas close to the environmentally interesting coast - the "delta area" - where a rural park has been organized. Currently, this part of the Viladecans territory is protected by national and European laws.

**Current
territorial
structure and
functional
composition of
the city**

For more information:

<http://www.aj-viladecans.es/>

<http://www.viladecans.net/>

5.2 Key problems, challenges and potential.

The status quo of the project theme

The **change in the economic sector** experience by Viladecans is affecting its physical structure with functional areas for production becoming obsolete.

The city would like to focus on such areas, singled out for their potential in terms of accessibility and location at local level (proximity to the city centre). The issue is finding an effective **link with the regional planning tools**, so that the target areas identified can acquire a role at metropolitan level.

Some other **problems** to highlight are:

- **Unemployment:** the rate is quite high. Policies and measures to reactivate the job market, such as incentivize the productive activities in the territory, are one of the targets of the municipality;
- **Mobility networks in connection with the built fabric:** the relation between traffic networks and the built heritage is not suitable for contemporary needs, so public transportation could be developed to reduce congestion at local level and interventions on street spaces could be carried out;
- **Energy efficiency:** working on existing buildings and service networks could improve the efficiency of Viladecans in terms of

Key problems

- change in the economic sectors, to be adequately managed
- unemployment
- link between mobility spaces and builtscape
- need to reduce energy consumption

reduced carbon emissions and discourage energy consumption in the built heritage, currently relatively high (40%). Fiscal tools and legal frameworks are needed to encourage such an approach.

The **challenges** that Viladecans is currently facing are:

- Redefine the inner-city interventions and re-use of the inner city under a regional approach;
- Combine protection of **natural environments** and open spaces with the **production** and business needs, to relieve current problems such as unemployment
- Increase the investments in the **technological research and innovation**, in terms of high quality education and business opportunities, in order to maintain existing entrepreneurs in the territory and become a catalyst for new business activities.

Key challenges

- regional planning framework for re-use
- combine production with environmental protection
- encourage technological innovation and related high-level education

5.3 Planning tools and strategies supporting interventions in the city and managing urban growth

Following fast growth and dispersal after WWII, the City developed its first master plan in 1953, to manage a chaotic growth linked to a booming economy. Later, in 1976, the General Master Plan was enacted and has been developed until now, as the final phase of urban transformation is being completed.

Today, the **regional planning framework** in Catalonia comprises the following documents:

- **Territorial plan**, at regional level, managing the whole region of Barcelona (Pla Territorial General). The plan defines the permanent morphological elements of the Catalan region and the development “directions” for the urban settlements. At this general level, the Municipality of Viladecans is identified as a “super-municipal facility”);
- **Metropolitan Plan** (Pla General Metropolità – PGM), approved in 2010 and managing 164 municipalities;
- **Director plans** (Plans Directors Urbanístics), to ensure the implementation of the territorial planning guidelines, coordinating planning at local level;

Planning framework in Catalonia

At **local level**, the principal planning tool is:

- **Municipal plans of the municipalities**, Pla d’Actuació Municipal (PAM). The main objectives of the PAM of Viladecans are especially focused on strategies to reduce unemployment and encourage businesses and enterprises to settle in its territory, increasing economic growth.

The model for local development is called “**Viladecans 21**”, trying to combine sector plans for land management to strategic plans for specific networks and strategies. In further detail, the model combines, through participatory processes and activities, in bottom-up involvement:

“**Viladecans 21**” as model for local sustainable development

- Urban Land Master Plan;
- Building Land Master Plan;
- Non-Building Master Plan

with sector frameworks such as:

- Housing Local Plan;
- Local Agenda 21;
- Strategic Plan;
- Mobility Plan.

Among other targets for future development, **sustainability** is a main topic, defining guidelines for a more effective and broad use of renewable energy systems and the arrangement of a network for sustainable transportation and mobility. It is important to underline that the local plan for Viladecans provides guidelines for participatory processes, involving the community and local stakeholders in the decision-making works.

The Urban Land Masterplan provides a general scheme for future expansions within the city centre, working on a system of central areas to be developed as commercial areas (close to high-capacity infrastructures) or attractive areas for activities.

Moreover, the city aims to efficiently locate **productive activities** in the territory, in order to offer increased opportunities for occupation by the inhabitants and try to develop models of mixed function- settlements, combining residential functions with productive and business activities. In particular, the expansions for industrial activities, according to the plan, are located close to existing industrial areas.

5.4 Overview: experiences in urban transformation

During the 1990s, the public administration focused on the refurbishment of central urban areas, to create, among others, pedestrian areas and shopping axes, while encourage the private sector to invest in such operations.

As far as area- based interventions are concerned, the city has recently developed the **Viladecans Business Park**. This Park represents the evolution from the idea of the old Industrial Estates, to a more urban settlement with a combination of uses, such as production and facilities.

Other interventions on the inner city areas were mainly carried out through the “Ley de Barrios”, the “**neighbourhood law**”, enacted by the Catalan region, to grant incentives and funding for interventions on internal urban areas.

Two interventions are being carried out in particular thanks to this legal framework:

- **Ponent district**, a district built in the 60s and 70s, with social problems;

Targets of Viladecans 21

- Re- development of central areas in connection to mobility
- Innovation and economic activities
- productive activities
- ITC
- sustainability
- efficient location of productive activities

Experiences of urban transformation

- Viladecans Business Park
- Interventions financed through the “Neighbourhood Law”

- **Mont Serratina District**

These two areas are morphologically different, but they both are densely inhabited, accounting for respectively 9,891 and 3,725 inhabitants.

5.5 LAP and LSG in their early stage

Local Action Plan

The Local Action Plan could consist in an **analysis of the current situation** in a municipal context, to create guidelines and strategies of future transformations, in order to define future necessary urban plans.

In particular, this general approach could be coupled with a focus on the redevelopment of **one industrial area** currently hosting large-scale industry and smaller workshops and manufacturers. The area offers good accessibility, being close to the airport and to main transport networks. Despite the morphological proximity to the city centre - the “barrio antique”- the area is separated from the urban core by the regional motorway.

An area plan could focus on the development of productive functions having potential at both local and metropolitan scale. The Municipality could offer the entrepreneurs and firms a well-organized and equipped area of metropolitan interest, with high-standard infrastructures and service networks.

The plan could be focused on:

- finding strategies to encourage the **transition** from a model of obsolete industry to a new model for attractive enterprises, having an impact at territorial level;
- involving the targets detected for the area in strategic and large-scale planning tools, in order to link the intervention-level to a wide, **territorial governance**;
- defining **models for the set of productive activities**, ensuring economic growth without expansion, solving current problems such as unemployment.

One possible model for the management of the project is the **22@ District of Barcelona**.

The municipality is working in collaboration with the GRU- Urbanism Research Group in the Polytechnic of Barcelona to evaluate the possible re-organization of this large urban fragment.

Local Support Group

The **Local Support Group** could comprise:

- Entrepreneurs;
- Land and building owners;
- Promoters experiencing economic difficulties;

LAP

- analysis of the present situation to create strategies for future developments
- area-based plan for an innovative productive settlement

LSG

- composition
- intended achievements

- The Economic and Social Council

The possibility of collaboration on a shared project is an opportunity to generate confidence among the stakeholders involved and to achieve the following:

- Improvement in conventional planning participation system;
- Define a plan for future interventions, with a special focus on the needs of the stakeholders involved.

Experience in terms of working through transnational exchange in relation to USEACT topic

Since October 1992 International Department has been promoting and developing transnational project. Some examples related to the topic are:

- ECOSIND/RECIPOLIS, INTERREG IIIC South (2003-2006) Spain, Italy. (Viladecans Budget 200.000 €)
- DEDUCE, INTERREG IIIC South (2005-2007) Spain, Belgium, Latvia, Poland (Viladecans Budget 53.000 €)
- STRAIR, INTERREG IIIC North (2005-2007) Spain, Norway, UK, Sweden, Belgium (Viladecans Budget 250.000 €)
- cRRescendo, CONCERTO (2005-2012), Spain, France, UK, Netherland, Bulgaria, Italy (Viladecans Budget 3.012.813 €)

Links to the EU Operational Programme

The link is **Catalonia's ERDF Operational Programme**, with special reference to the Priority Axe 4.1 of the programme, "Regeneration of Degraded Urban and Rural Areas".

Synthesis: Viladecans

The city of Viladecans, located in the metropolitan area of Barcelona, has an excellent accessibility, due to the proximity to the main infrastructures of the region (airport and highways).

With an economy traditionally based on agriculture, Viladecans experienced a dramatic urban growth in the 1990s, connected with the booming development of Barcelona. Today, high rates of young population but low local economic performance and considerable unemployment characterize the city, which is mainly considered a low-cost facilities for people working elsewhere.

After developing several housing re-use schemes in inner neighbourhoods, thanks to support of the “Neighbourhood Law”, the Municipality is currently turning its attention on the opportunities to develop high quality (mixed use) urban spaces, through re-using industrial underutilized areas, to attract new advanced business activities and skill, exploiting the optimal position within the metropolitan area.

Part 3

Synthesis

3.1

From the key questions of the partners to the thematic structure of the USEACT project

3.1.1 / Not “cities” alone: the complementarity of the partners

The USEACT project partners, in addition to representing countries with different planning frameworks and urban interventions management, also represent categories of diverse players with different “functions” and, obviously, size.

This reality does not present – in actual fact – a problem of “incoherence”, but rather quite the opposite, (although the partners are from disparate countries): it is an opportunity to work on the knowledge and development of the roles’ “complementarity”.

USEACT partnership is formed by:

- a. partners who represent planning bodies that have power on territories which include several municipalities (Østfold County; Baia Mare Metropolitan Area and Buckinghamshire Business First, Riga Planning Region);
- b. partners who represent authorities governing the “inner-core” of important and more extensive metropolitan areas characterized by wider Urban Morphological Zones and Urban Functional Zones (Naples, Dublin);
- c. partners who represent bodies located within the metropolitan areas (UMZ) but outside the “urban core” (Villadecans, close to Barcelona, and Barakaldo, close to Bilbao; however, also indirectly, the municipalities of Østfold County and Buckinghamshire, which are affected by the Urban Functional Zones of Oslo and London respectively).
- d. partners who represent medium-sized cities, considerably self-contained in terms of the

connection between the administrative areas and the UMZ (Nitra, Trieste).

The “complementarity” of the roles makes the learning prospective of great benefit. This is true as far as the project facilitates the exchange of experiences, typical problems and the views of the players that represent the various “roles” and “planning powers” in the governance framework whereby the UGM policy and urban interventions is developed.

3.1.2 / A bottom-up process in the selection of themes

In the sphere of general USEACT themes, a framework constituting “key questions” of partners’ interests was identified.

Based on the information provided by each partner respectively (original situation, challenges, problems, knowledge) and through the creation of a summary listing the challenges and problems, the key questions have been finally collectively drawn together (following a “bottom-up” process) during the “final meeting” (Dublin, 11-12 October 2012).

In harmony with the “conceptual pillars” of the USEACT project (planning tools for Urban Growth Management integrated with the “management” of urban reuse processes, in a framework of “quality control”) the partners, also identified the ensuing “key questions”. These are ideally traceable to three “main themes”, but have strong reciprocal connections.

3.2 Proposed thematic structure

3.2.1 / Planning tools and planning governance for Urban Growth Management (UGM) and reusing urban areas

Integrating the planning between the different authorities

The question of integrating authorities from different levels, for implementing Urban Growth Management at metropolitan/regional level was considered to be a crucial topic by many partners. This is the case firstly for “non city” partners with “supra-municipal” roles (counties, associations of municipalities, agencies), interested in a more efficient implementation of the “guidelines” in the municipalities. However, equal interest was shown by authorities which have planning power on the “city core”, but not on the whole metropolitan areas, which often see the neighbouring municipalities included in the UMZ or whose UFZ tries to autonomously attract new building development.

The interest in the topic originates in particular from the idea that via suitable urban tools (capable of creating incentives and trade-offs), in addition to “institutional and technical support” (typically in small-scale municipalities), the execution of improved quality “densification” interventions could produce win-win results to everybody’s advantage.

The partners can exchange experiences of regional/metropolitan management practices and regional co-operation to create regional strategies compatible with UGM and reuse targets.

Develop “social awareness” towards aims to uphold quality

The above mentioned theme of integrating authorities of varying scale on the subject of UGM also surfaced in relation to the need to solve the problem of the often weak “social awareness” of the benefit of applying at municipality-level “higher level” guidelines to reduce land take and to recommend “reuse” intervention (with more densification) within the cities. As a consequence, a more decisive need to explain and share to a greater extent, at “local” collective level, the aims and potential benefits of the UGM policies (proposed for example by the authorities at regional level) emerged. Furthermore, improved capability to demonstrate the possibility to achieve good quality design for “interventions” is needed: several partners have revealed the interest for innovative “visualization tools” and the public communication of aims and projects, for example.

Additionally, the need to focus attention on the need to work for the optimization of the participatory processes and create “trust” and “transparency” conditions, whilst avoiding the rhetorical mono-directional frameworks and potentially block on the status-quo, was underlined.

Develop new planning tools and incentives for the new requirements

Almost all of the partners interested in urban recycling, are mutually interested in exploring the potential for innovating the technical tools of the UGM, and especially, those suited “to connecting” UGM and concrete interventions to reuse underutilized or vacant areas. Each partner, at

administration level, has in fact expressed the need to advance – adapting it to the changing requirements – the traditional frameworks of the “planning tools”.

The common discussions within the USEACT community highlighted an interest in studying the applicability of innovative instruments such as the transferable development rights. However, it revealed above all an interest in debating the incentivising fiscal tools (contribution schemes/levies, tax incentive systems) and the most suitable instruments to overcome ownership fragmentation in the vacant areas through planning schemes.

Moreover, partners underline the importance of considering which “tool-packages” – on a planning level - would enable a better fine-tuning control of the “qualitative” aspects of the “reuse” interventions. Such qualitative aspects, to be “addressed” through the planning tools, refer to different aspects.

Sustain the economic local development

On the subject of the urban functions to be addressed using planning tools, many partners facing the economic crisis have, as a result, explicitly stressed the need to develop specifically new advanced integrated planning frameworks (coupled with high-quality design control), whereby it is possible to promote, also in (or in close proximity of) inner urban areas, new economic activities capable to guarantee the best long-term local economic impact and employment level.

A complementary target is also steering planning frameworks capable of bringing about long term “efficiency” and “low costs” (i.e. in energy management) at the level of private, public and environment resources: reducing long term costs and allowing high environmental standards is considered a very important element of “company attraction policy”.

Often, existing frameworks and tools (zoning, taxes, standards, etc) seem to be incapable to

reach this target, since they have mainly induced large floor retail activities or commercial speculative developments.

Planning the UGM in relation to transport

Lastly, a limited number of partners, currently involved in the redefinition of transport infrastructure interventions on a territorial level, have expressed an interest in working on the issues of transport systems and of planning regulations (density, incentives) based on accessibility.

Despite interest from only a limited number of partners – for several partners the question of transport is in many cases already “a given” – the theme deserves attention, on account of its substantial centrality.

3.2.2 / Interventions to “recycle” urban areas: management, partnerships, funding, functions

The focus on the “partnership design” for interventions in UGM contexts

One of the main problems for the good functionality of the “link” between UGM planning and the concrete realization of urban recycling, on a local scale, relies on how effectively the “intervention” is set up and managed. The partners have, therefore, asked to specifically focus on the theme of the concrete management process of interventions.

One of the themes considered to be greatly strategic is the “partnership” models in the realization of the interventions. In some cases, in light of the link between UGM and the interventions, the “partnership” policies could already rely on the UGM planning framework (such as in the application of “tradable development rights”). However, the partners have asked, more generally, to delve deeper into the theme of partnership (and in particular Public Private Partnership) for reuse interventions.

They have underlined this as a strategic area for the aspects which concern, for example: firstly, the partnership design (form, contracts, etc.) and the “partner” selection; secondly, the maintenance of an elevated and efficient degree of control by the public administrations to guarantee quality and sustainability; thirdly, the management of tools to attract and address the financing and optimization of the income distribution.

Develop the capabilities of the PA

The partners have underlined the importance - among other things – of developing the “technical capability”, either on their own or via “collaborative platforms” developed at “supra-municipal” level, where suitable, to promote the implementation of UGM policies and the simultaneous implementation of interventions – especially (but not solely) at the level of smaller municipalities falling within “metropolitan” contexts or “regional” areas.

Improving this capability implies to develop internal administrative capacity (i.e. in terms of culture, skills, expertise and technical support structure, etc.) to better manage the planning development processes and guarantee quality projects, to avoid instances of “weak public initiative” or “excessive weakness” of a private developer.

3.2.3 / Refitting and regenerating buildings and areas

Some partners, especially those who manage contexts in which the reuse opportunities of “free” land are limited, or which in any case, have an important inhabited and deteriorated building heritage (whether it be in the historic centre or more recently built areas), have asked to focus on renewal interventions on this patrimony in concomitance with the application of UGM policies.

This focus is to some extent partially autonomous with respect to those that have emerged as “core-

themes” during phase I of the USEACT project and which are mainly tied to aspects of urban planning and the reuse of “underutilized or vacant areas”.

Nevertheless, the theme of sustainable refitting and regenerating of inhabited areas integrates perfectly with the general mission of the USEACT project in as far as, several cities, as a consequence of UGM policies, have demanded the maximum improvement of the existent and inhabited patrimony, via integrated action at neighbourhood level, to guarantee the request for “sustainability” and “new quality standards”.

Some of these cities are mostly concentrated in historic centres, others are in newer neighbourhoods.

The thematic focus, already tackled (even as an independent issue for UGM) in other URBACT projects enables us in any case to benefit from diverse spill-over derived from the core themes in the USEACT project.

Principal USEACT themes commonly include: the trial of new incentivising tools; managing the exchange between multiple proprietors; the ability to “persuade” and “draw in” the local community, and external sponsors also; the “internalization” in the short-term decisions of the long-term economic advantages of energy conservation; managing the “quality” control of the interventions (typically on heritage and public spaces); the need to work on the plan not only of the physical intervention but also of social regeneration, etc. However, they are applied to particular contexts such as residential blocks or inhabited historic neighbourhoods.

Focus on the “economic activities” again

With reference to the historic centres, several partners have specifically underlined how due to the historic character and nature of the city centre and the challenges this creates in regard to development management and forward planning, it is difficult to adapt historic buildings (especially) for use by enterprises. There is a lack of public

and political awareness about the vital contribution the re-use of buildings can make to employment creation and the strengthening of urban neighbourhoods. Many partners are interested in achieving enterprise in the city centre by reusing historic buildings and places in an appropriate manner and promoting both the

residential and enterprise (sustainable for both living and working) in older, historic buildings.

3.2.4 / The proposed thematic frame: themes and subthemes

The themes and sub-themes discussed and approved by the USEACT partner community are illustrated in the following table.

Theme 1	Subthemes
Planning tools and planning governance for Urban Growth Management and reusing urban areas	1.1 Implementing UGM at different administrative levels and scales
	1.2 Planning tools to manage land property fragmentation for integrated "reuse" interventions
	1.3 Taxes and financial tools for promoting and funding integrated "reuse" interventions
	1.4 Improving social awareness towards positive effects of UGM, renewal and densification and involvement of communities
	1.5 Transportation and planning for Urban Growth Management
Theme 2	Subthemes
Interventions to "reuse" urban areas: management, partnerships, funding, functions	2.1 Designing, managing and funding successful Public Private Partnership and proactive community participation
	2.2 Improving public administration ability on controlling and managing "high quality" and "sustainable" reuse interventions
	2.3 Inducing "local added value" in reuse interventions
Theme 3	Subthemes
Refitting and regenerating inhabited buildings and areas	3.1 Integrated, "regeneration-oriented" public strategies through refitting and maintenance of existing buildings in the urban fabric: residential blocks in central areas and historic centres
	3.2 Involve flat-owners to join refitting integrated strategies through energy efficiency improvements

Table: Themes and subthemes of the USEACT project

3.2.5 / Open the doors to the discussion on national constraints

The USEACT project thematic area and defined activities are certainly wide, but effectively represent a series of issues that must be effectively faced, in an integrated way, by the local administrations so as to have concrete results on the sprawl reduction and urban reuse programme.

It is clear that there are some insurmountable limits, which make some 'potential' aims of the project (including the establishment of a 'complete' integration between UGM policies and interventions) outside the influence of local administration, for example due to insufficient vertical and/or horizontal integration of more local authorities, not resolved (or resolvable) within the LSG.

Another and perhaps more challenging problem is, as already mentioned, that of the constraints

posed by the national legislation, but still capable, in various ways, of compulsorily constraining the local levels, blocking the possibility to achieve a full integration of the tools. This in particular, but not exclusively, is true for market based tools (taxes, incentives, etc.)

For this reason, the USEACT project has the aim of identifying as clearly as possible, within the network, the role played by the supranational legal frameworks and the constraining effects imposed by the national legislation which usually obstacles the UGM aims.

Certainly, it is not an aim of the USEACT project to eliminate these constraints, but, with the support of the partners, it could contribute to bring more political attention to the theme of 'complete' integration of the tools, and at the same time also helping the 'international' circulation of know-hows concerning the possibilities to improve national legislative framework.

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URBACT II

URBACT is a European exchange and learning programme promoting sustainable urban development. It enables cities to work together to develop solutions to major urban challenges, reaffirming the key role they play in facing increasingly complex societal challenges. It helps them to develop pragmatic solutions that are new and sustainable, and that integrate economic, social and environmental dimensions. It enables cities to share good practices and lessons learned with all professionals involved in urban policy throughout Europe. URBACT is 300 cities, 29 countries, and 5,000 active participants

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