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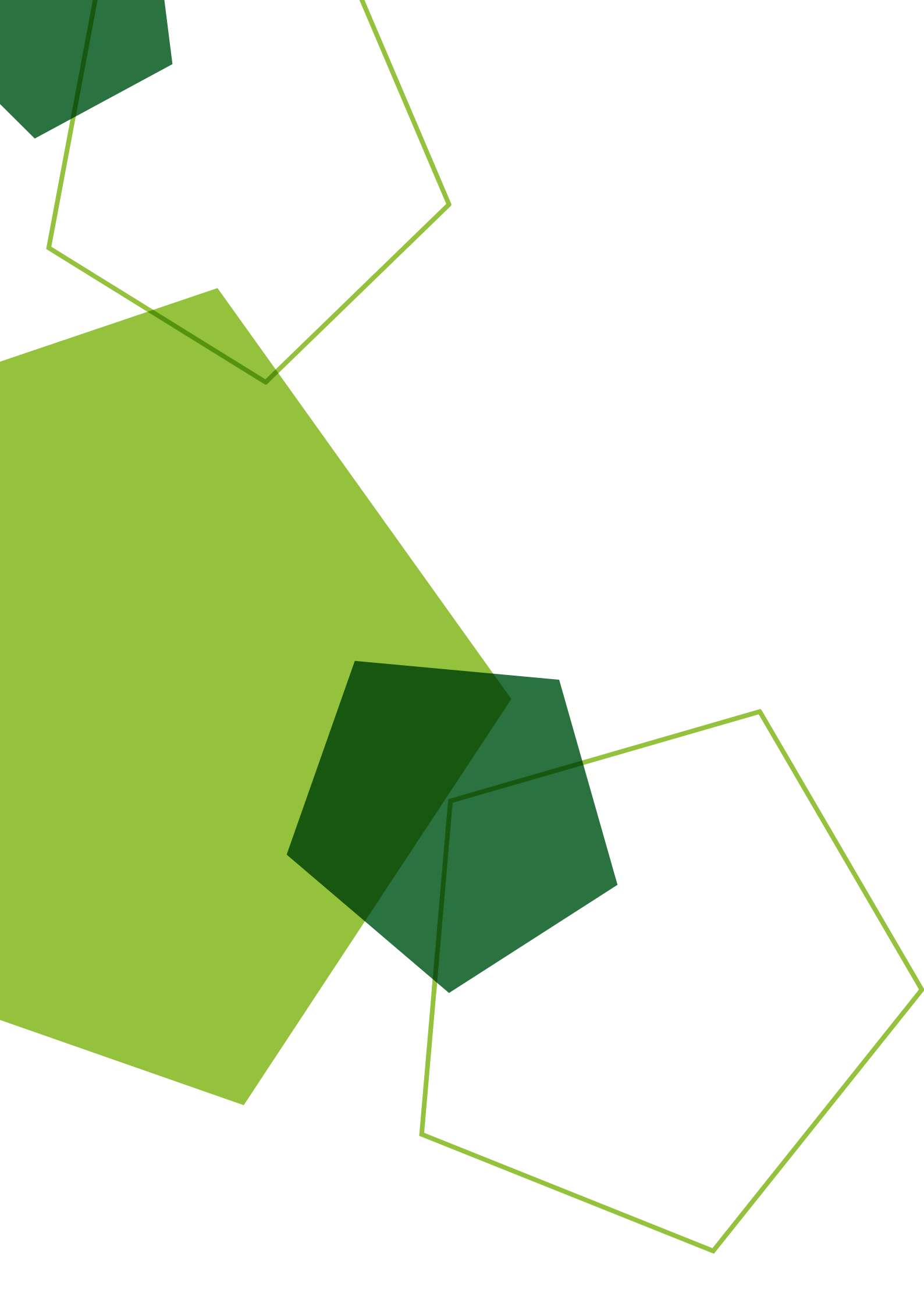
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HOW ARE CITIES PUTTING **SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT** INTO PRACTICE?

BRUSSELS CITY LAB PAPER
October 2019

URBACT Knowledge Hub presents:

HOW ARE CITIES PUTTING SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT INTO PRACTICE?

CITY LAB PAPER, October 2019

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URBACT CITY LABS

1.1 OBJECTIVES

To coincide with the forthcoming 2020 EU German Presidency, URBACT is organising a series of City Labs that will complement the work being undertaken by the German Presidency team to refresh the Leipzig Charter.

Each City Lab focuses on one of the original Leipzig Charter principles established in 2007 and asks:

- As we approach 2020, how are cities implementing the Leipzig Charter principles and where can we see effective examples of this?
- What is the right scale for developing effective city solutions?
- Where are cities struggling, in relation to the principles?
- How can cities be supported to build their capacities in relation to this?

1.2 RENEWING THE LEIPZIG CHARTER PRINCIPLES

It is over a decade since the Leipzig Charter underlined the principles of sustainability, integration and participation, during the 2007 German Presidency. This landmark urban policy document acknowledged the need for cities to play an active role in Europe's economic, environmental and social wellbeing. Furthermore, it underlined the need for multi-level governance and a structured approach to urban stakeholder participation. Finally, it argued for a framework to build the capacity of those stakeholders in order to support this way of working:

"Every level of government - local, regional, national and European - has a responsibility for the future of our cities. To make this multi-level government really effective, we must improve the coordination of the sectoral policy areas and develop a new sense of responsibility for integrated urban development policy. We must also ensure that those working to deliver these policies at all levels acquire the generic and cross-occupational skills and knowledge needed to develop cities as sustainable communities."[1]

For more than 15 years, the principle of integrated sustainable development and a commitment to participation have underpinned URBACT's work with cities. The principles of sustainability, integration, participation and multi-level governance were also reflected in the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted in 2015 and the Urban Agenda for the EU adopted under the Dutch Presidency in 2016.

Yet, although these terms are widely used and taken for granted, they are still far from being universally applied or understood across Europe.

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1 European Commission (2007), 'Leipzig Charter', page 2. Available at:
   https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/archive/themes/urban/leipzig_charter.pdf

1.3 LEARNING FROM URBACT CITY LABS

URBACT has launched a series of City Labs taking place between autumn 2018 and spring 2020 to contribute to the refresh of the Leipzig Charter by providing a city-level perspective across Europe.

The first City Lab took place in Lisbon in September 2018, alongside the URBACT City Festival. The event focused on the principle of participation looking at examples of cities using a Community Led Local Development (CLLD)

model, participatory budgets, crowdsourcing tools and citizens assemblies.

The second City Lab took place in Brussels in July 2019 and focused on the principle of sustainability. This City Lab paper summarises the findings from the event. A third City Lab will look at balanced territorial development in January 2020 in Porto and a final City Lab will take place in Berlin next year to combine our key messages in the spring of 2020.

A session during second City Lab, Brussels

2

THE CASE FOR
SUSTAINABLE CITIES

2.1 SUSTAINABILITY: DEFINITIONS

The concept of sustainability was popularised after the publication of 'Our Common Future', also known as the Brundtland Report, after the name of the Commission established by the UN, in October 1987. The report defined sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs".

The City Lab showed that there is a variety of understandings of the concept. Some participants linked it to 'resilience', which is the ability to recover from a disaster that could have been prevented or mitigated with sustainable practices. Whilst different definitions were proposed, there was a consensus that sustainability applies to all and should be tackled at all levels.

Discussions during the City Lab were influenced by the direct experiences of participants and focused on the environmental dimension of sustainability: air quality and mobility; climate adaptation and energy transition; sustainable food systems.

This City Lab paper also takes into consideration the scale of the climate and wildlife crises, and therefore substitutes the word 'climate change' for 'climate emergency'.

2.2 FROM ADAPTATION TO EMERGENCY

A growing body of research indicates the need for urgent action. The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) prepares the most comprehensive reports about knowledge on climate change, its causes, potential impacts and response options. Their landmark 2018 report on the impacts of a 1.5°C global warming, in line with the 2016 Paris Agreement, starkly set out a window of 12 years to avoid an ecological catastrophe.

Global urbanisation, underpinned by the relentless pursuit of economic growth and exploitation of the planet's resources, is a major cause of the problem. The recent European Commission Report, 'Future of Cities'[2], notes that "cities generate about 70% of global greenhouse gas emissions".

By 2050, more than 80% of the population will live in urban areas in Europe. Climate change also further exacerbates inequalities in cities with low income populations being more exposed to climate change impacts.

Cities are part of the problem but they are also leaders in environmental sustainability. Their ambition has risen in the last two decades, often beyond the national climate-change targets. However, cities have limited powers compared to national governments and multinational corporations. Without strong political commitment at all governmental levels, a coherent regulatory framework safeguarding common good, and enabling mechanisms at all levels, their efforts will fail.

2   IPCC (2016), 'Global Warming of 1.5°C'. Available at: https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/

2.3 THE POLICY CONTEXT

A significant policy shift since the adoption of the Leipzig Charter has been the alignment of European and global policy goals. This is best illustrated in the EU's adoption of the UN's Agenda 2030, framed by the SDGs. The 17 SDGs, and their 169 targets, provide a comprehensive framework for addressing the challenges we face.

In January 2019 the European Commission published its own reflection paper[3] on how it will contribute to Agenda 2030. This response acknowledges the need for urgent action, with reference to a 'global crisis plan'. It identifies areas – amongst them the Circular Economy, the Digital Agenda and the Green Economy – as priorities. However, the approach stopped short of stipulating what is required from Member States. On the contrary, it underlined the need for 'more freedom' and subsidiarity in decision-making. This may allow less enthusiastic Member States 'off the hook'.

The Commission's reflection paper contains a lengthy annex detailing the long list of EU policies designed to promote sustainability.

This includes specific measures relating to each of the 17 SDGs. It also refers to mechanisms such as the Urban Agenda for the EU, which has specific partnerships[4] tackling environmental issues, tasked with suggesting ways to improve regulation, finance and knowledge sharing.

Since last year, pressure is growing from activists and social movements such as Extinction Rebellion and the school strike calling governments at all levels to address the climate emergency through radical policies. There were also movements such as the 'gilet jaunes' (yellow vests) in France who have expressed anger at how reductions in carbon emissions often hit those on low-incomes hardest. There is a growing case to include social movements in policymaking through participatory approaches.

As social movements take to the streets and rally in public spaces to protest on climate change, it's becoming clearer that cities have a role to play in engaging citizens in finding solutions that can be shared and scaled up through collaboration with other stakeholders at different levels.

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3   European Commission (2019), 'A Sustainable Europe by 2030'. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/publications/reflection-paper-towards-sustainable-europe-2030_en

4   Most relevant here are the Partnerships on Air Quality, Energy Transition, Sustainable Land Use, Circular Economy, Urban Mobility and Climate Adaptation

3

SUSTAINABILITY: WHAT'S WORKING?

3.1 CITY COLLABORATION

Cooperation between cities has increased in the last ten years with a growing number of networks focusing on the environmental dimension of sustainability.

URBACT provides a platform for cities to collaborate. Increasingly, the programme attracts cities exploring ways to work together and learn from one another around sustainability. URBACT III has supported Action Planning Networks such as RESILIENT EUROPE, led by Rotterdam (NL), Freight TAILS led by Westminster (UK), CityMobilNet led by Bielefeld (DE) and AGRI-URBAN led by Baena (ES). There is also a new generation of Good Practice Transfer Networks, many of which have a focus on sustainability, including C-Change led by Manchester (UK), BeePathNet led by Ljubljana (SI), BioCanteens led by Mouans-Sartoux (FR), Tropa Verde led by Santiago de Compostela (ES) and Ru:rban led by Rome (IT).

EUROCITIES, partner of this City Lab, also provides a platform for collaboration on sustainability, through Working Groups focused on Air Quality, Climate Change and Energy Efficiency.

Networks such as ICLEI (Local Governments for Sustainability) and C40 cities have a global reach. ICLEI also has a direct focus on sustainability, through work which includes coordinating the contribution of local governments to the UN climate negotiations, as well as a number of thematic activities promoting sustainable procurement, nature-based solutions and social innovation for sustainability. Within Europe, other networks with a focus on sustainable development include the Covenant of Mayors, Energy Cities and Climate Alliance.

Below are some of the case studies presented during the City Lab.

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3.2 AIR POLLUTION AND MOBILITY

The effects of bad air quality on European citizens' health are catastrophic – more than 400,000 premature deaths per year from air quality related issues. This is ten times the number of people killed in road traffic accidents[6] for example, and yet the public health emergency has not made it to the top of the political agenda in the same way road safety has.

A major source of noxious particles in the air is vehicle emissions. Therefore public policies that aim to develop public transport, reduce car use, limit heavy vehicle transport and encourage walking and cycling for short distances are a vital piece of the puzzle.

CASE STUDY

Technology leading to behavioural change – the case of Helsinki discussed

The City of Helsinki (FI) is tackling air pollution through an innovative approach combining the latest technology with citizen sensors. The UIA-financed HOPE initiative brings together the city, the regional environmental agency and the university alongside the national meteorological institute and private enterprises to work with citizens in three main affected areas.

One of the innovative aspects Helsinki is testing involves citizens directly in air quality measurements. Vaisala, a global company from Finland has developed state-of-the-art air quality sensors which are installed at strategic points across the city, and crucially, on the buildings of local residents. To complement the readings of the fixed sensors, hand-held devices have also been constructed for residents to carry around to provide real-time data. Schools and housing cooperatives are also targeted to complete challenges, using gamification techniques to increase behavioural change.

With such technological innovations, inevitably comes the question of who owns the data. Helsinki is taking an open data approach, making all readings available on an open data platform. The national authority responsible for measuring air quality is included in the partnership to overcome issues around validation of the citizen-generated data. The project aims to develop a new standard air quality index which they hope would become the new norm.

Helsinki clearly recognises that technological innovations such as new sensors and hand-held devices are only one side of the coin, which ultimately aims to nudge towards behavioural change. To fully integrate the approach, Helsinki is looking at adding an 'air quality' layer to the existing mobile app for public transport, so that users can identify where their changes in modes of transport can make a direct impact on air quality.

In this regard, Angeliki Stogia, Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport at Manchester City Council was adamant: public health arguments around air quality are much more effective than technological arguments. Manchester launched a public campaign to "make the invisible visible" and engaged doctors to speak out about the health impacts of bad air quality. The city also engaged with specific target groups such as taxi drivers, bus and freight companies. The message of the campaign focused on the impact felt by the driver breathing in toxic fumes for more than eight hours a day rather than technical arguments detailing the level of small particles produced by the engine. Manchester City Council is also looking at creative ways to reach out to self-employed van drivers and other workers in the gig economy who are not in organised unions, but whose numbers have increased exponentially with the rise of online shopping and delivery services.

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6 European Commission, Cleaner Air for All portal. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/cleaner_air/

Urban Mobility Managemement – the case of Gdynia and discussion

The City of Gdynia is located in the north of Poland, on the Baltic Sea, and forms a metropolitan area with Gdansk and Sopot. Once a small fishing village, it is now home to the country's third largest port. Economic and demographic growth in the city is positive compared to other parts of Poland, but brings with it congestion, pollution and traffic.

One of the first Polish cities to develop a sustainable urban mobility plan (SUMP), Gdynia also took advantage of European funding to test and develop it. The SUMP covers four main strands: quality of life, economy, environment and energy. The question of air quality was only one of the factors in Gdynia's strategic approach to mobility management, and Alicja Pawlowska, head of EU projects and mobility management, was clear that they also had a question of capacity in the field of city logistics.

Throught participating in URBACT Freight TAILS network, Gdynia put in place an evidence-based and participatory process to develop an urban freight plan to enforce a comprehensive, structured and systematic approach to city logistics.

Improving delivery traffic measures in downtown Gdynia

With the continuing growth of online shopping, 'last-mile delivery' of parcels is making a significant contribution to urban freight traffic. Delivery services are also fragmenting as demand grows. In a city like Gdynia, which was starting their urban freight plan from scratch, it was essential to gather real-time data of what kind of vehicles were delivering what and where. And rather than outsourcing the task completely, they saw the value in training their own staff to carry out the face-to-face interviews with local retailers to engage them in the process.

Stakeholder engagement through the creation of the URBACT Local Group was identified as the key success factor in implementing new traffic arrangements for deliveries. It involved local businesses, the traffic department, the city designer for the creation of new public signage, and the municipal police. Alicja insisted that learning from previous URBACT projects helped her get it right from the beginning with Freight TAILS: she also had the support of an elected councillor from the beginning to ensure ownership of the ultimate recommendations.

Stepping up from the neighbourhood level, Gydnia's city-wide SUMP recognises that planning a system where the car is not dominant is challenging in countries where car ownership is still considered a status symbol or mark of success. Political will was identified as a key driver for change, especially when the decision goes against citizen demands, such as for city centre car parking spaces.

Political differences between national law and local plans were also flagged as a barrier, especially in those cities like Helsinki or Gdynia where the port (or other national infrastructure) is managed on a national level. The Port and the City have their specific needs and development plans, which can sometimes be in conflict. Reaching a consensus can be a lengthy process.

CASE STUDY

3.3 CLIMATE ADAPTATION AND ENERGY TRANSITION

Urban areas in Europe need to adapt to climate change, particularly to the consequences of rising temperatures such as flooding, water scarcity and proximal forest fires. Urgent steps are required if our cities are to remain safe, liveable and attractive.

According to the Urban Agenda for the EU Partnership on Climate Adaptation, only 26% of the 885 EU urban areas audited have a climate adaptation plan and this figure omits smaller urban municipalities, which are likely to have even fewer strategies or plans due to their limited resources. Research shows that city size, national legislation, and international networks matter as about 80% of the cities with about 500,000 inhabitants have a comprehensive and stand-alone mitigation and/or an adaptation plan[7]. The Urban Agenda for the EU Partnership on Climate Adaptation identified a number of barriers limiting cities' work in this area. They included lack of financial resources, absence of supportive frameworks as well as limited know-how around the development and implementation of adaptation measures. Limited capacity to collect, access and interpret data was also identified as a key challenge.

However, there are many examples of cities taking innovative steps around climate adaptation. These include the UIA initiatives in Paris (FR) and Barcelona (ES) to transform schoolyards into 'cool islands' and Seville (ES), a city that is redesigning neighbourhoods using co-creation approaches with citizens[8].

Group discussion during the second City Lab in Brussels

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7 Reckien, D.;Salvia, M.; Heidrich, O.; Church, J. M.; Pietrapertosa, F.; and al. (2018), 'How are cities planning to respond to climate change? Assessment of local climate plans from 885 cities in the EU-28' in Journal of Cleaner Production, Elsevier, 191, pages 207 to 219. Available at: https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-01756463v2/document

8 ICLEI; Red Cross Red Crescent (2019), 'Heatwave Guide for Cities'. Avilable at: https://www.climatecentre.org/downloads/files/IFRCGeneva/RCCC%20Heatwave%20Guide%202019%20A4%20RR%20ONLINE%20copy.pdf

Building a comprehensive strategy – Learning from Rotterdam

90% of the city of Rotterdam lies below sea level. As one of the Rockefeller 100 Resilient Cities network (100RC) Rotterdam developed a Social Impact by Design approach as a way to engage citizens in designing solutions to the challenge of climate change. This was based on the Rebuild by Design model developed by the Rockefeller Foundation and the US Housing and Urban Development Department in the wake of superstorm Sandy in New York City. The city further developed this approach as the Lead Partner in the URBACT RESILIENT EUROPE network, which extended the concept of resilience to include social themes and sustainable food systems.

Rotterdam has a sophisticated Climate Adaptation Strategy comprising four key components: strengthening its robust water defence system; adapting urban space; increasing city resilience through integrated planning; and exploiting all arising opportunities, including the scope for enhanced biodiversity and related economic prospects.

Innovative approaches, such as the construction of floating buildings, are being pioneered in neighbourhoods with high flood risks. Water surge spaces have been created throughout the city, such as the Museumpark car park, creating an underground water storage capacity of 10,000m^3. Blue-Green corridors facilitate natural hydrological processes, minimising flood risks and further enhancing water capture.

The city's approach also looks to combine these adaptation measures, and the energy transition process, with enhanced social resilience. Rotterdam has identified five neighbourhoods which will use an integrated district approach to phase out natural gas. In one of these, BoTu, a collective heating grid will serve much of the existing housing stock, a high proportion of which is social housing. A district installation company is also being established to provide jobs and training linked to arising opportunities.

Rotterdam is one of six European cities involved in the RUGGEDISED project funded under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme. There are plans on a large scale for Rotterdam South to prepare this highly diverse neighbourhood of 200,000 people for the transition to a low-energy future. This includes optimising the potential of buildings to store and exchange energy by installing a thermal grid up to 1,000 metres long, minimising the use of fossil energy and allowing excess heat or cold to be stored and exchanged.

There are also plans to enhance e-mobility and, as a consequence, improve air quality by installing an electric DC grid, powered by solar panels. It will allow the replacement of 270 conventional buses by electric versions and will also provide a network of charging stations for private e-vehicle users. Intelligent street-lighting infrastructure will use LED (light-emitting diode) lights and modern sensor technology to lower energy demand.

Overall, Rotterdam's climate and energy-related activities, alongside its social cohesion agenda, provide a strong example of a city embedding the principle of sustainability into planning and policy. In the words of Ahmed Aboutaleb, the city's Mayor:

"It's more than green economy, it's more than Mother Nature, it's more than clean air, it's also about stable societies."

CASE STUDY

Local Public-Private-Citizen partnership for energy governance – Learning from Viladecans

Viladecans is a city in Catalonia (ES) with 66,000 residents. Much of the city's housing stock – particularly in lower-income neighbourhoods – was in poor repair and dated back to the 1970s. Despite the evident effects of climate change, there was limited investment in adaptation measures within the housing sector.

In response, the city authority developed a bold initiative, centred round the idea of an energy company owned by a local consortium. The resulting Public-Private-Citizen Governance (PPCP) Partnership, launched in March 2019, aims to promote and ensure secure, clean and efficient use of energy.

© Vilawatt project

The Vilawatt initiative, supported through UIA became operational in July 2019. Its spatial focus is on the Montserratina District, which represents one third of the city's population. Two third of the housing stock was built before 1976. The annual district income is 15% lower than the city average.

Vilawatt's tools to support the city's energy transition extend beyond having a locally owned energy supply. It also provides energy saving services and deep energy renovation investments. One of the next steps is to generate their own energy through solar and wind power. An additional innovation is the development of a local energy currency. Residents can earn this through energy-saving activities and through the improvement of their energy consumption habits. The new local currency can only be used to buy products and services in Montserratina, therefore boosting the local economy[9].

The project will enable the deep energy renovation of 60 dwellings in this low-income neighbourhood. After its official launch, the new company expects to have over 2,000 customers before December 2019 and is set to grow further. Although still early days, the Vilawatt model offers inspiration for cities confounded by the challenge of climate adaptation and energy transitions. In the words of Laura Pardo, during the City Lab:

"People adopt it because it's local, it's fair and it creates neighbourhood jobs."

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9 The local currency concept was influenced by Bristol's development of the Bristol Pound

Breaking silos – Learning from Manchester

Manchester has developed a wide range of innovative tools and strategies to address climate change, social equity and wider policy goals altogether. For example, the Manchester Arts Sustainability Team (MAST) gathers over 30 arts and culture organisations working together on climate action and engagement. It has become one of the city's most successful examples of environmental collaboration and, in 2017, Manchester was awarded URBACT Good Practice City status in recognition of MAST's work. On the back of this, Manchester is working with five[10] other European cities to transfer the model through a Transfer Network called C-Change. The network found that in most cities there had been no previous dialogue between actors in the environmental and cultural sectors prior to this initiative. This suggests that the challenge to widen the debate across established policy silos is widespread in Europe.

Engaging with citizens, especially in most deprived areas, is another challenge. Manchester has developed a Carbon Literacy Project that aims to build capacity of individuals and organisations. Carbon Literacy is defined as relevant climate change learning that catalyses action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Evaluation evidence indicates that individuals taking part are likely to lower their own carbon footprint by up to 15%. Just as important, those individuals are expected to assume an ambassadorial role within their organisations, families and communities, cascading their knowledge and experience. The project has engaged with over 440 organisations and has certified over 10,000 individuals as Carbon Literate. At the COP21 in Paris it was recognised as one of the world's 100 Transformative Action Programme's by the UN.

Manchester's strategy to address the climate emergency is co-ordinated and driven forward by the Manchester Climate Change Agency (MCCA) and Partnership. The city has set a target of 2038, at the latest, as its zero carbon date. To help navigate the journey it has also established a 'science-based carbon budget', a limited amount of carbon the city is allowed to emit during 2018-2100. This budget of 15 million tonnes CO_2 is currently being 'spent' at a rate of 2 million tonnes, per year, meaning that it will run out in 2025 unless urgent action is taken. Manchester needs to halve its emissions every five years: 2018-22, 2023-27, down to zero by 2038.

Manchester's approach provides a good example of a city utilising objective scientific evidence to set its own targets, over a specific period, as part of a clear route plan. Doing the right thing on climate change is a key motivation for Manchster, coupled with the potential for new jobs, improved health, boosting the local economy and many other benefits.

Mobilising arts and culture sector to contribute to local climate change policies

CASE STUDY

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10 Wrocław (PL), Mantova (IT), Gelsenkirchen (DE), Sibenik (HR) and Águeda (PT)

3.4 SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS

Today, the food we produce, transform, distribute and consume is a threat for the environment, health, society and the economy. Soil loss and erosion account for 970 million tons of soil every year, with more than 11% of the EU's territory affected by soil erosion, whereas biodiversity is disappearing because of pesticides and nitrogen-based fertilizers. Food and farming systems account for 30% of the global greenhouse emissions. In addition, as 31% of the land required to meet EU food demand is located outside Europe, we outsource our environmental footprint, transferring the problem outside our border. All this, in addition to the fact that 1/3 of the food that is produced is thrown away[11].

Our health is also directly affected by the way food is produced because of ammonia emissions (90% from agriculture killing 400,000 Europeans each year) as well as antimicrobial resistance and exposure to endocrine disrupting chemicals via foods, food packaging, and agricultural contamination of water sources[12]. Food systems are also causing health damage through changing diets and the increasing risks of diseases and mortality. At the same time, access to healthy and sufficient diets remain out of reach for millions – nearly 800 million people still suffer from hunger, while two billion are afflicted by micronutrient deficiencies, globally[13].

Mega mergers (three companies responsible for 70% of the global agrochemical industry[14]) have concentrated power, allowing dominant food industry players to drive down prices and working conditions in supply chains. In parallel, from 2003 to 2013, more than one in four farms disappeared from the European landscape[15].

Although food had long been considered to fall beyond the sphere of competence of a city, mainly because food was produced outside its limits, cities have lately growing concerns about food security and sustainability. They have uncovered the systemic and evolutionary nature of the global food crisis, and the importance of bringing production closer to consumption. As such, more and more cities are becoming living laboratories, where innovation activities are carried out in real-life contexts, generating effective and practical solutions to the way we produce, transform, distribute and consume food[16].

BioCanteens Transfer Network aims to transfer Mouans-Sartoux's Good Practice in the field of collective school catering

11 IPES FOOD (2019), 'Towards a common food policy for the European Union'. Available at: http://www.ipes-food.org/_img/upload/files/CFP_FullReport.pdf

12 IPES FOOD (2019), *idem*.

13 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (2019), 'Food Security and Nutrition in the World'. Available at: http://www.fao.org/3/ca5162en/ca5162en.pdf

14 IPES FOOD (2017), 'Too big to feed'. Available at: http://www.ipes-food.org/_img/upload/files/Concentration_FullReport.pdf

15 IPES FOOD (2019), ibid.

16 European Commission (2017), 'Food in cities: study in innovation for a sustainable and healthy, production, delivery and consumption of food in cities'. Avilable at: https://ec.europa.eu/research/openvision/pdf/rise/food_in_cities.pdf

Learning from Mouans-Sartoux

The French city of Mouans-Sartoux (10 000 inhabitants) leads the URBACT network BioCanteens which has developed 100% organic canteens with no cost increase by reducing food waste by 80% and introducing plant proteins.

The project started in 1998 during the 'mad cow disease' scandal, when Mouans-Sartoux developed an ambitious vision of feeding its inhabitants while respecting their health and the environment. The municipality built a food policy to guarantee its food sovereignty[17] based on five types of actions:

- School canteens: since 2012 each school has its own kitchen which, each morning prepares 100% organic meals from fresh, raw and seasonal products - this with no additional cost thanks to an 80% reduction in food waste. 70% of purchases come from producers located 200 km or less from the city.

- Education to sustainable food: kitchen staff receive training to prepare meals from scratch and work closely with food educators who join children during their meals and organise activities for children and their families, such as visits to the local farm and cooking classes.

- Urban planning: the municipality is fighting against land speculation and saves spaces to ensure food sovereignty. An action plan was developed in 2018 to reverse the trend of land classified as agriculture that is not cultivated yet by raising awareness among land owners and building a sustainable solution for farmers' housing. The city also voted the principle of aid for organic farmers and created a municipal farm supplying the canteens.

- Economy: the municipality supports Community Supported Agriculture[18] (CSA) market gardens for social inclusion, farmers' market, zero-waste groceries, fair trade groceries, two shops that are 100% organic, and markets of Provencal products.

- Governance: in order to feed into local public policies, the Centre for Sustainable Food Education develops actions around five axes: agriculture, economy, education, research and dissemination. Mouans-Sartoux is also the founder of the European Club of Organic Territories that aims to provide a platform for local authorities across Europe to exchange on sustainable local food policies and practices, and influence on areas such as public procurement.

Visit to a school's class in Mouans-Sartoux
during BioCanteen's Transnational Meeting

CASE STUDY

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17 *"Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts the aspirations and needs of those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations."* – Declaration of Nyéléni, the first global forum on food sovereignty, Mali, 2007

18 Community-supported agriculture (CSA model) is a system that connects the producer and consumers within the food system more closely by allowing the consumer to subscribe to the harvest of a certain farm or group of farms.

Learning from Torres Vedras

In Portugal, the city of Torres Vedras (80 000 inhabitants) has a long history of caring about environmental sustainability, starting in 1999 with the Environmental Municipal Plan. It received the European Green Leaf Award in 2015. Three years later it signed the Covenant on Climate and Energy 2030, then the Milan Food Policy Pact and joined the RUAF Foundation-led City Food Network. It is also a partner of the URBACT BioCanteens network.

The municipality has developed a comprehensive vision on food, supported by a strong transversal programme within the administration. The 2014 Sustainable Food in Schools Programme focuses on children at school and school canteens engaging both citizens and their parents, as well as teachers and cooks. This integrated strategy embeds activities for teachers and children along four axes: production, acquisition, confection, consumption.

On the production side, the municipality set up pedagogical Vegetable Gardens (as part of the Eco-Schools National Programme). Between 2018 and 2019 it piloted a Bio School Vegetable Garden Programme. The local Environmental Education Centre also supports schools by providing raised beds and composting boxes for school as well as related activities for schools wanting to launch their own projects.

For the acquisition of products, the municipality promotes direct contact between suppliers and consumers, encourages environmentally sustainable cultural practices, and works on bringing more organic food into school meals. Meal preparation is the responsibility of the municipality and some social enterprises. All kitchens focus on producing the high quality and healthy products and meals

The municipality also promotes a series of activities to make children familiar with food production and consumption, through the Active School Programme, which fights childhood obesity while promoting correct eating habits and increasing physical activity, and the School Fruit Programme, which gives free fruits and vegetables to nursery and elementary grade pupils.

BioCanteens Transfer Network visiting Torres Vedras in March 2019

CASE STUDY

Learning from Milan

The Italian city of Milan (1.3 million inhabitants) is at the forefront of sustainable food with the co-design of a Milan Food Policy with stakeholders. The UIA OpenAgri project has five priorities: access to healthy food for all, sustainable food production, food education and awareness, food loss and waste management, scientific research promotion. It is also internationally responsible for the Milan Food Pact (196 signatures) and launched the C40 Food System Network in 2017. OpenAgri is also embedded within the wider Milan strategy on the Circular Economy.

In order to contribute to making urban food systems more inclusive, resilient, safe and diverse, OpenAgri is creating an Open Innovation Hub on Peri-Urban Agriculture seeking to:

• Improve entrepreneurship by fostering the creation of new innovative firms and social enterprises focusing on sustainability in peri-urban agriculture and the agri-food sector (with an extensive programme of acceleration and pre-incubation activities and the prototyping business ideas on 33 ha of public agricultural land).

• Contribute to the overall regeneration of a fringe area promoting a strong focus on social inclusion (with the piloting of an OpenAgri value chain from production to transformation to distribution of agricultural products).

• Exploit the potential of several food policy experiments within a single integrated strategy (with a Masterplan and metabolic analysis on alternative food-water-energy systems).

The site is located in Cascina Nosedo, an ancient farmhouse located in Porto di Mare, an area defined as 'urban fringe', representing the transition zone between the consolidated part of the city and the agricultural lands.

The project has attracted a large mix of participants interested in the agrifood domain, both professionals and amateurs. It has developed tailor-made solutions and training to cope with the heterogeneity of participants' profiles.

Cities' capacity to adapt and innovate provides a small, but growing island of optimism in the face of this mammoth challenge. Political leadership has been a clear prerequisite for the most striking examples, combined with the important function of local authorities being the most accessible and responsive to the needs of citizens.

4

BUILDING
ON THE CITY LAB

4.1 BEYOND 'SUSTAINABILITY'?

As we approach 2020, the environmental dimension of sustainability has become prevalent in policy debates at all government levels. There is a growing consensus supported by scientific evidence that urgent action is needed. Pressure is also applied by citizens and social movements. Whilst the principle of sustainability still dominates mainstream policy debates, climate emergency has also emerged as a new narrative that challenges the status quo and calls for more radical action.

Cities are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development. More people than ever are living in urban areas and are directly affected by the impact of climate change, especially in the most disadvantaged communities. The principle of sustainability directly links to quality of life and the liveability of Europe's cities, and is a matter of social justice. Therefore effective responses need to be built on integrated approaches across the policy spectrum – including health, housing and the economy. This can be done by adopting a thematic focus – for example, on sustainable food in Mouans-Sartoux, Milan and Torres Vedras. There are also examples of wider metro-regional approaches - for example, in Aix-Marseille, Rotterdam/The Hague, and Brussels region, as well as growing evidence of effective neighbourhood-level approaches.

Cities cannot respond to the challenge alone. Effective multi-level governance models and collaborative delivery models are needed to scale up action. Citizens and social movements also need to be involved in participatory decision-making[19]. And open data and digital tools[20] can be used to encourage transparency, and support new methods of action.

Participants of the City Lab looking ahead and reflecting upon the future, during a field visit

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19 Examples given during the City Lab included Nantes Grand Debat and Oxford's Citizens' Assembly on Climate.

20 Examples given during the City Lab included the Helsinki HERO project, Santiago's Tropa Verde initiative and Wrocłav's solar power portal

4.2 BARRIERS

The City Lab participants identified a number of barriers that hinder cities implementing sustainable actions:

- Adopting an integrated approach remains challenging for many cities – budget silos, disaggregated targets and inter-departmental fragmentation continue to be factors
- Cities often lack the tools for dialogue and collaboration with citizens, more particularly in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods
- Communication barriers – for example the need for non-technical plain language – continue to pose a challenge to building collaborative partnerships
- Access to flexible finance remains an issue, despite the growing repertoire of urban funds; mainstream investors remain skeptical about returns on long-term green infrastructure projects
- City authorities often lack the experience and know-how to design and implement climate-adaptation strategies
- Innovative projects are exposing the legal system's ability to keep abreast of new developments - for example, the tax-implications for citizens identified in Viladecans and the corporate tax issues arising from Rotterdam's Ruggedised experience around energy transfer between buildings

4.3 ENABLERS

The City Lab participants identified a number of enablers:

- Ongoing investment in capacity-building for cities – especially small and medium sized ones – remains a priority, both around integrated approaches but also on tackling the climate emergency
- Space to experiment, innovate and scale up solutions addressing the climate emergency will remain vitally important in the new programming period
- Generation and sharing of scientific evidence and related data to enable each city to set zero-carbon targets – with the support of the European Commission, the research community and Member States
- Key players (European Commission, Member States, European Investment Bank, city representatives) should investigate the limitations on long-term investment mechanisms relating to climate change adaptations
- Clear platforms are required to share city solution stories and to ensure that effective practices are communicated, understood and replicated as widely as possible
- Effective political leadership was routinely identified as a key factor at all levels of government

4.4 NEXT STEPS

This City Lab showed that there are already blueprints that can be redeployed in other cities. The URBACT Knowledge Hub will continue to support cities to adapt and spread these examples through URBACT's networks and further activities. This experience will be used to fine tune the key messages that came out in Brussels on the principle of sustainability and to feed into the renewal of the Leipzig Charter.

**Next URBACT City Labs
exploring the principles
of integrated urban
development**

24-25 OCTOBER 2019, WARSAW
Integrated approaches

29-30 JANUARY 2020, PORTO
Balanced territorial development

SPRING 2020, BERLIN
Sharing recommendations
and key outputs for Leipzig Charter

In the decade since the Leipzig Charter underlined the principles of integrated and sustainable urban development, cities have struggled to fully understand and apply these approaches.
This paper is the second in a series looking at how cities understand and apply the principle of sustainability.

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URBACT enables cities to work together to develop sustainable solutions to major urban challenges, through networking, sharing knowledge and building capacities of urban practitioners. It is funded by the European Regional Development Fund and EU Partner and Member States since 2002.

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