

Land use management for sustainable European cities

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Need for integrated management



LUMASEC Event Bristol 2009, Photo: Engelke

For hundreds of years throughout Europe, steering urban land use has been a simple matter of permissions and land exchange in the insular setting of an individual municipality. But changing framework conditions such as globalisation or climate change and other 21st century factors mean that problems and their solutions are much more interlinked or crossing traditional territorial approaches than before. Authorities have to scan a much wider horizon in order to deliver responsible, sustainable development for today and future generations.

A changing understanding of public authorities and a shifting in their power as well as an increased stakeholder engagement open up opportunities to engage large partnerships with the public



and private sectors. Meanwhile it is a common understanding in the challenging brownfield land within cities and reducing urban sprawl. The economic and social benefits, as well as environmental, seem to be a common knowledge. City centre regeneration is almost entirely based on this policy, which has turned the tide on out-of-town development and brought creativity and commerce back to the cities of Europe. Now, many cities are aiming at spreading the prosperity to some of their disadvantaged communities by regenerating neighbourhoods within the city boundaries around new business and employment opportunities.

Some cities are not there yet and a few face huge challenges. In many cities, particularly in Eastern Europe, heavy industry has only recently declined, and they must plan carefully for the future to attract new employment opportunities.

Learning from practice

The URBACT working group "Land Use Management for Sustainable European Cities - LUMASEC" researched and supported cities' urban development at case study cities and city regions in order to learn more about practical ways to do sustainable land use management.

Managing urban sprawl, unlocking the potential of brownfield sites and creating competitive, attractive environments where communities can flourish is the shared aim behind this European project. As a network of private and public sector decision makers, LUMASEC develops strategies for sustainable land use management on Land Use Management for Sustainable European Cities". At the centre of this URBACT working group of five European cities: Baia Mare (Romania), Bristol (United Kingdom), Bytom (Poland), Kavala (Greece) and the Saint-Etienne region/ Epures (France) supported by three research institutes: CERTU (France), the University of Ljubljana (Slovenia) and the lead partner Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (Germany), as well as the URBACT Lead Expert Didier Vancutsem (Belgium/Germany).

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LUMASEC

Approach and Book

The LUMASEC network is committed to brown-field solutions and protecting and enhancing the urban environment. It also aims to foster greater understanding of the challenges, including the legal, governance and operational boundaries within which each city must work, and a greater appreciation of good working practices, including showcasing policy and practice that develops and adapts to meet modern needs across administrative boundaries.

LUMASEC recognises the challenge of developing adaptable best practice policies across a range of national and local political environments, with varying structures for policy and decision making, and where land is in public or private ownership.

LUMASEC Handbook

Learn more about the sustainable land use management in Europe: the knowledge and experience of the LUMASEC working group as well as contributions from URBACT published in a handbook, giving practical information on different land use management systems in Europe and providing tools to establish sustainable land use management. It provides an integrated methodology and the LUMASEC layers of intervention, and describes the local action plans of the five LUMASEC cities as well as interviews with political representatives on the process of establishing these plans - CD-Rom included.

The book will be officially presented during the Open Days 2010 in Brussels.



URBACT LUMASEC book; published in co-operation with CERTU, 2010

The LUMASEC Approach

LUMASEC address the fast pace of demographic, economic and social change in European cities and develops a cohesive and integrated approach to sustainable land use management; assuming these challenges, involved LUMASEC cities have developed local action plans, establishing examples of land use management system on their territory. To build such a system, means to get an overview on existing development opportunities containing greenfields as well as brownfields: the first step consists in understanding their own spatial pattern and monitor their development, followed by strategic urban development. Key tools to establish these strategies are land policies and land banking, as the research on the involved cities as well as within URBACT demonstrated, together with GIS: they are appropriate ways to steer land development and skim the added value of the developed land for the public. A key layer of intervention of sustainable land use management is to influence the spatial pattern of the territory.

Experiences in LUMASEC demonstrated that a successful sustainable land use management has to consider the metropolitan area as a whole, to avoid disparity between the core city/cities and the surrounding communities and loss of competitiveness of the metro area. To overcome the different governance approaches, involvement of public administration of different communities as well as different stakeholders like e.g. the private sector is crucial and an important layer of intervention of sustainable land use management.

Both the spatial pattern layer as well as the governance layer of land use management are depending on ability and skills to set the frame for the stakeholders to act in. This is depending on the knowledge and experience of policy, administration, professional organisations and civil society. An integrated approach is raising the capacity to act in these complex inter- and transdisciplinary processes to reach the aims within and across the different layers of intervention in sustainable land use management.

>> Read more about LUMASEC and the results on the web: www.urbact.eu/lumasec

Interview

Dirk Ahner, Director General DG Regional Policy - 03.05.2010



Dirk Ahner, Director General -
Source: DG Regio

Seventy percent of all Europeans live in cities and their agglomerations, and cities play a vital role in the development of European regions. They are hubs of education, culture and creativity. However, European cities are confronted with huge challenges and risks of social tension, insecurity, congestion and pollution, which need to be addressed. In such a situation, achieving a sustainable urban development is a challenge in itself. And this development should occur in an integrated manner: as an example, integrated urban projects funded under the URBAN Community initiatives have secured a good balance between the allocation of funds and for the built environment and for what may be called the "soft" investments, involving social services and cultural actions.

Urban development through Cohesion Policy is a place-based strategy. It is becoming increasingly obvious that challenges in urban areas go beyond the administrative boundaries of the city; our mindset is still influenced by a traditional configuration of the city as a well-defined spatial environment. However, urban reality is now made up of complex urban systems and sub-systems, the fabric of which is partly the result of people's mobility, their means of transport, as well as the location of their jobs and where they live.

Most of today's cities and towns are sprawling into neighbourhoods, which are neither urban nor rural. Consequently, tackling the challenges facing urban areas today requires a sustained coordination between the different administrative levels concerned. The need for metropolitan governance as well as urban and local governance is evident: we need both, a top-down approach defining the overall objectives and priorities, a framework to ensure coherence, and a bottom-up approach, that allows sufficient flexibility for local actors to develop and implement strategies according to their needs.

The DG Regional Policy is happy to see that the thematic scope of the URBACT program has increased with projects which tackle cities sustainable development. The LUMASEC project on land use management goes into this direction since environment is becoming an essential part of our cooperation in the field of sustainable urban development.

Land use planning is part of a long-term process for reconciling what are often competing social and economic demands, in a way that balances the needs and well-being of the community as a whole, while taking full account of physical and technological opportunities and constraints. The successful outcome of managing these tasks or processes should contribute to the creation of an urban environment which is dynamic, attractive and inclusive, where people are happy to live and work and where they have good access to the services and amenities which the modern city has to offer.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dirk Ahner".

Dirk Ahner,
Director General DG Regio, European Commission

>> Read the full interview on the LUMASEC
web: www.urbact.eu/lumasec

URBACT at a glance

URBACT is a European exchange and learning programme promoting sustainable urban development. This European programme is part of Europe's cohesion policy: its goal is to help implement the Lisbon-Gothenburg Strategy, which prioritizes competitiveness, growth and employment.

URBACT enables cities to work together to develop solutions to major urban challenges, reaffirming the key role they play in facing increasingly complex societal changes.

URBACT helps cities to develop pragmatic solutions that are new and sustainable, and that integrate economic, social and environmental dimensions.

URBACT enables cities to share good practices and lessons learned with all professionals involved in urban policy throughout Europe.

The URBACT Programme

URBACT is a European exchange and learning programme promoting sustainable urban development

29 countries

255 cities

5000 active participants



The four URBACT missions

Coordinating Exchanges to make Things happen

URBACT projects encompass primarily cities, but also other local authorities, as well as universities and research institutions. We use proven methodologies to coordinate exchanges among these numerous, diverse and geographically distant partners. We ensure quality and realistic outputs by involving key players from each partner city via Local Support Groups. We help them to define a relevant Local Support Group and effective Local Action Plan.

Analysing and Capitalising on Learning

We collect what is learned by the projects and develop integrated responses (link to Our expertise / Integrated solutions) that encompass the economic, social, cultural, and environmental dimensions of urban development. We mobilise the expertise of practitioners from the partner cities, experts working on each project, and Thematic Pole Manager.

Disseminating Information and Outputs

We disseminate information about the programme, particularly related to calls for proposals. We make the outputs of our work available to all city policy players throughout Europe. URBACT does not propose universal, ready-to-use recipes to the major urban challenges cities are facing, but rather makes available solutions that have proven effective in certain situations. To do this, we use our web site and National Dissemination Points, which are relay points that spread the

URBACT collage on www.urbact.eu

information in each country's national language. We also regularly organize conferences open to a broad audience and we distribute publications.

Funding Project Operations

We fund project operations, with maximum budgets ranging from €300,000 to €710,000. We do not finance the implementation of Local Action Plans, which can be funded by the partners or by other programmes (ERDF, European Social Fund, etc.).

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