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The URBACT Tribune

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URBACT
Local Support Groups

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URB
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Connecting cities
Building successes

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL

Local partnerships and participative approaches were key success factors of the URBAN Initiative dedicated to deprived neighbourhoods, and stand today as a cornerstone of the "URBAN Acquis" method. According to it, urban policies should be designed, decided and implemented not only for but also with citizens.

Since 2002, European cities have benefitted from the possibility of networking within the URBACT Programme, created initially as part of the URBAN II Initiative, which has evolved to a general EU-level networking programme dedicated to exchange and learning among cities in the area of sustainable urban development. When the 27 Member States, the 2 Partner States (Norway and Switzerland), and the European Commission agreed to continue with an URBACT II programme, the question of the effective impact of transnational networking on local policies and practices was high on the agenda. In this perspective, it was decided to require all URBACT II partners, whatever their size, territorial level etc., to involve local stakeholders in policy-making through the creation of Local Support Groups (ULSG). This was a challenging measure, with a potentially high – even though unclear! - impact.

All partner cities are now requested to create a working group called Local Support Group (or build on an existing one whenever adequate), gathering the local stakeholders concerned with the policy area and problem they intend to work on, to involve them in transnational exchange activities and in the co-production of a Local Action Plan. Implementing such participative processes has a cost, that is why a minimum envelop of 70.000 euros is foreseen for the functioning of URBACT Local Support Groups in each thematic network.

Articles presented in this URBACT Tribune describe achievements of some URBACT projects in local partnerships and participative approaches. From these experiences, it is obvious that Local Support Groups have brought about astounding results. Much beyond what we had expected. The recent survey on Local Support Groups conducted by the URBACT Secretariat clearly shows, also from the perspective of partners themselves, the usefulness of this participative approach, as a tool to improve urban policies and as a driver for change in local governance.

One can then pose the question "what are the ingredients of this success?" Apparently a mix of different dynamics linked to the "European legitimacy" attached to such mandatory frameworks, to the involvement of elected representatives, to working across different departments and policy areas of the municipality, to having a wide range of stakeholders – private sector, NGOs, citizens, etc. – working together in an unusual setting, to incorporating peers' advice, good practices, etc. resulting from transnational networking.

Nevertheless, we are aware of the difficulties faced by some partners (especially those who do not have experience in this field) in setting up and running URBACT Local Support Groups. To approach these problems, the URBACT programme decided to organize for the very first time, during the Polish Presidency of the European Council, a special event – a Summer University dedicated to ULSG members. Urban practitioners, policy-makers, representatives of NGOs, civic society and the private sector will have the chance to come together and experience a combination of training, learning, practical exercises and networking.

Furthermore, in the perspective of the 3rd and last call for proposals to be launched at the end of 2011, URBACT intends to strengthen the means for Local Support Groups, and local capacities to manage such local partnerships, of course without taking the road to more bureaucracy or standardisation. One of the new measures in this context will be the organization of training seminars for ULSG members in all Member States. This solution builds on the success of such seminars in Poland which were organized in the first half of 2011 by the URBACT Secretariat, together with the Polish National Dissemination Point and the Ministry of Regional Development.

As a representative of Lublin nicely puts it, URBACT Local Support Groups must remain driven by "the power of imagination". It is an asset and an encouragement to go on.

Mrs Magdalena Skwarska
Counsellor to the Minister
Ministry of Regional Development
Chair of the URBACT Monitoring Committee

URBACT LOCAL SUPPORT GROUPS, A REAL CHALLENGE BUT... IT IS WORTH IT!

BY ANNIE AUGIER, IDES CONSULTANTS
ULSG COORDINATOR FOR THE URBACT PROGRAMME

The URBACT Local Support Groups (ULSGs) are a major pillar of the URBACT II programme. Each partner joining URBACT is required to set up and run a ULSG gathering the local stakeholders most concerned by the issue they address in their networks. Building on the URBAN Acquis, URBACT promotes integrated and participative approaches to urban development. While cities share their problems, experiences and solutions through transnational networking, it is crucial to ensure that such activities lead to an improvement of local policies and practices.

Beyond being a programme requirement, ULSGs shall be conceived as drivers for change in urban policies and… in local governance. Yet, for a majority of URBACT partners, participative processes applied to integrated urban policies are a real challenge including working across city departments, reaching out to various stakeholders, getting the elected representatives and decision-makers on board, etc. Not so easy to achieve, especially when there is no guarantee that the action plan they work on will be funded at the end of the process. What becomes of these ULSGs at partner level? Not so easy to grasp with over 270 partners spread all over Europe… A first survey completed earlier in 2011[1] among all URBACT partners now allows us to have first insights in this process: who is involved, how are they working, what difficulties they meet, etc. Let's take a look in the black box!

Local Support Group members, who are you?

With over 4.200 persons currently involved in Local Support Groups after 2 years of programme implementation, project partners appear to have bought into the URBACT framework. Interestingly enough, around 60% ULSGs were created as a result of their participation in an URBACT network and not building on an existing body. This was the case in Limoges (FR), Lead partner of the **UNIC** network. The city had mapped local porcelain makers; key stakeholders were identified. But the two parties had not worked together before joining URBACT. In most cases, the local authority has set up the group, identifying the stakeholders to be involved and inviting people to seat on the ULSG in relation with the issues they intended to address. In some cases, cities have used an open call to widen the participation, which is an interesting practice. The city of Riga, partner of the network **My Generation** used such a tool to reach out to NGOs. Having no

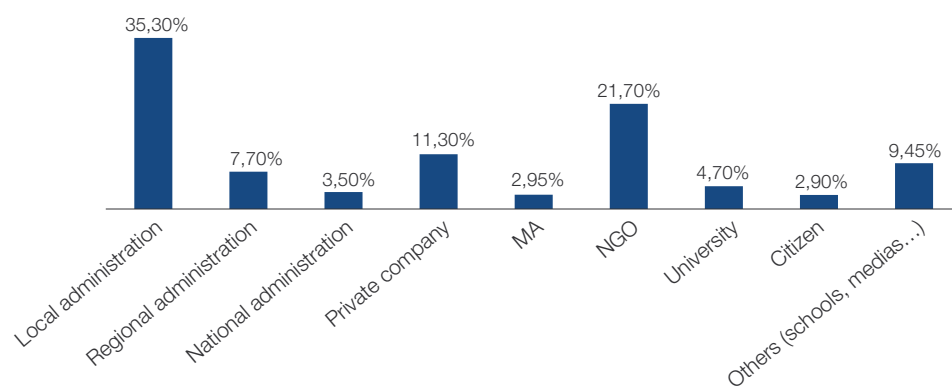URBACT LOCAL SUPPORT GROUPS, A REAL CHALLENGE BUT...
IT IS WORTH IT!

5

contacts with associations before joining an URBACT network, the city could identify about 60 NGOs operating with and for young people and engage some of them in their ULSG.

On average, a ULSG gathers between 10 and 15 persons, with some groups involving 6-8 people and wider groups involving 20-25 members. While the gender balance is not achieved (60% are men), ULSGs involve a great variety of stakeholders. As one could expect, there is a significant predominance of Local Authorities with over 1/3 of ULSG members being representatives of a local administration, often from different city departments. But civil society is rather well represented, with about 1/4 of ULSG members, even though citizens as such account for a very small part (less than 2%). One should also underline that the private sector comes next, accounting for more than 10% of ULSG members.

The weakest point regarding the composition of the ULSG seems to be the low participation of elected representatives. They account for 5% only of the ULSG members (included in the "Local administration" category in the graph below). The lack of political support turns out to be a real weakness when it comes to implementing the local action plan and securing funding. Last but not least when it comes to linking ULSGs with transnational exchange, almost 50% of ULSG members do speak English, which is relatively high considering the very nature of such groups.

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USLG members
Types of stakeholders represented

Category	Percentage
Local administration	35,30%
Regional administration	7,70%
National administration	3,50%
Private company	11,30%
MA	2,95%
NGO	21,70%
University	4,70%
Citizen	2,90%
Others (schools, medias...)	9,45%

Main activities of the ULSG

Bar chart "Main activities of the ULSG": Co-production of LAP 94%, Validation of the LAP 86%, Transnational exchanges 78%.
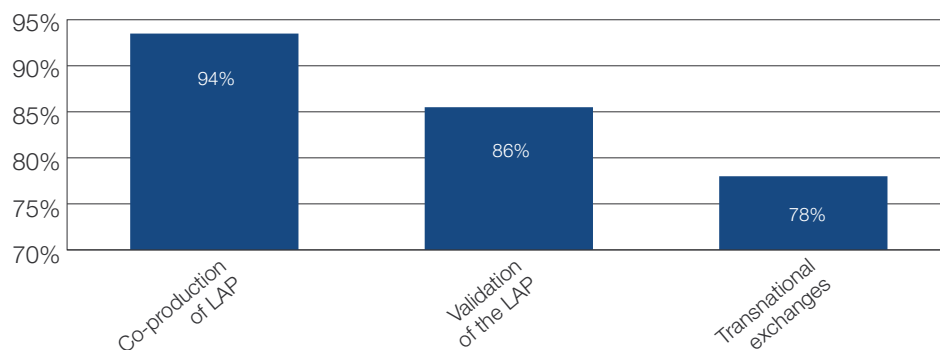
A new dynamic for the development of local action plans

Setting up and running a Local Support Group is not an easy task. Among the difficulties reported by partners, the lack of time to properly run the process appears as the most commonly shared concern. And one may expect that the ongoing cuts linked to financial austerity in the public sector will make this even more of an issue for partners. The second most frequently reported problem relates to insufficient capacities to run such a process within local administrations. Ensuring long term commitment from members is also a challenge. Nevertheless, URBACT partners are doing pretty well in activating their ULSGs.

With a meeting every 2 months for about 2/3 of ULSGs (and up to one meeting per month for 30% ULSGs), these groups have initiated a new dynamic at local level. This is also reflected in the fact that elected representatives and Managing Authorities of Operational programmes, while not often official ULSG members, still show interest in their meetings. 60% of partners declare elected officials do take part to the ULSG meetings, and this figure is close to 50% in the case of Managing Authorities. This is an important achievement considering the difficulties encountered by partners to engage with their Managing Authority.

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Within the framework of URBACT II, the ULSG is to be set up and run around a main task: the production of the Local Action Plan (LAP) that should result from the project at partner level. In this respect, the survey provides a clear picture of the focus of ULSGs' activities: over 90% of partners who took part in the survey declare that the co-production of the Local Action Plan is the main activity of the ULSG. This is the case in Duisburg (Germany) for instance. The Lead Partner of the **RegGov** network has a long lasting experience of participative approaches at neighbourhood level. Right from the beginning, the ULSG was organized with "round tables" open to citizens, NGO, politicians, city officials, etc. And each round table of 13 to 20 people has been involved in different dimensions of the production of the action plan. The survey also shows that ULSGs play an important role as an arena where Local Action Plans are validated before being submitted to the city decision-making body.
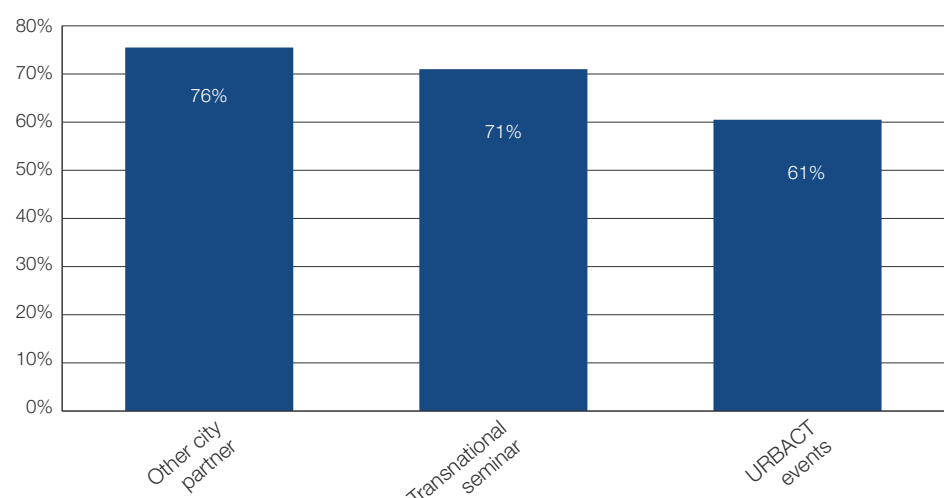
An active link to transnational exchanges

Whereas the programme requirements to run a ULSG and to produce a Local Action Plan could result in partners focusing mainly on local activities, it is interesting to see that ULSGs do actually link to transnational exchange and learning at project level. This occurs through the preparation of input for network seminars, mainly through drafting action plans and case studies (78% of respondents report that this is a major activity of the ULSG). This is also achieved through the participation of ULSG members to network seminars (70% of partners report that ULSG members do take part in transnational project meetings) or sometimes through visits to some partner cities on a bilateral basis. ULSG members also attend events organized by the URBACT programme such as the Annual conference, City Labs, etc.

The transnational seminars taking place at project level also impact the activities of the ULSG at local level, showing that ULSGs are keen on ensuring the link between the local and transnational levels. In a large majority of cases, the ULSG meets before the transnational seminars (82%) and after the seminars (90%). It is to be underlined that 92% of partners who responded to the survey declare that their ULSG receives feedback from transnational meetings and other project activities.

In this regard, the translation of documents may help even though about half of the ULSG members do speak English. As a matter of fact, about 60% of local coordinators who took part in the survey declare translating

ULSG members travel to

Bar chart "ULSG members travel to": Other city partner 76%, Transnational seminar 71%, URBACT events 61%.

URBACT LOCAL SUPPORT GROUPS, A REAL CHALLENGE BUT...
IT IS WORTH IT!

7

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Feedback from transnational meetings?

No 8%

Yes 92%
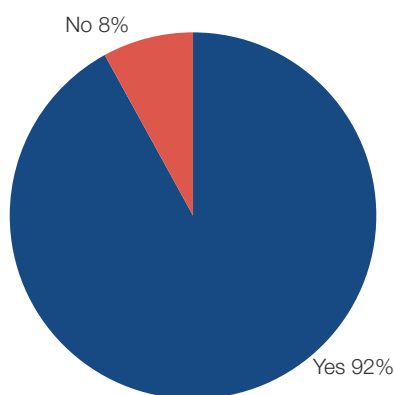
URBACT documents into their national languages, so as to ensure a better dissemination of the project level information/ outcomes at local level. Even though these are to be considered as positive results in term of programme implementation, it should be underlined that, in most cases, only a few ULSG members are actually involved in project level activities. Projects' budgets in general foresee that 2 ULSG members per partner city may attend to the project meetings, and sometimes, they are the same persons traveling and ensuring the link with the transnational exchange and learning part of the project. The question should be raised as to whether this is sufficient to allow the learning resulting from the transnational exchange to inform the work of the ULSG on the local action plan and beyond.

URBACT Local Support Groups as drivers for change in local governance

Even though most projects were still ongoing when the survey was conducted, a vast majority of partners reported positive impacts on the ULSG process on local governance, mainly through an impact on policy-making (80%) and decision-making (76%).

A major achievement of the ULSGs at local level is their impact on local policies. More especially, it seems that they are playing an important role in fostering integrated approaches to the urban challenges addressed by the URBACT partners through the Local Action Plans. In this respect, the ULSGs really appear today as key players for the URBACT programme to reach its core objective. Beyond the programme itself, these first achievements are all the more promising as over 85% of partners foresee that the ULSG will continue to exist and operate after the end of their network. In a vast majority of cases (about 90%), it is expected that the ULSG will work on the implementation of the Local Action Plan, while 56% consider that the group will keep on operating yet on a different subject. Among others, the city of Stoke on Trent (UK) involved in the now closed **UNIC** network, has decided to build

on the ULSG to address other policy issues beyond the Local Action Plan on ceramics.

When asked about their needs in terms of support from the programme, partners taking part to the survey indicated 3 main priorities: fostering the exchange of good practices in running ULSG across projects, building up and activating a ULSG community at programme level, and finally strengthening programme support with regard to the production of Local Action Plans. The first ULSG Summer University in Krakow has been designed as a first response to the needs expressed by URBACT partners. Beyond this event, a webpage has been set up on the URBACT website (www.urbact.eu), as well as an interactive platform, dedicated to information, discussions and exchange of good practices related to ULSGs: wiki.urbact.eu. These are only first steps, but they may lead to a wider impact of the ULSGs across European cities. ●

(1) A two-fold process was set up at programme level to collect quantitative and qualitative information on the ULSGs: 1) collection of lists of ULSG members among all URBACT partners, including information on the institutions they represent, gender, etc.; 2) online survey among all partner cities, focusing on how they had set up their ULSG, possible difficulties they may have faced, etc. The results of this process are available on the URBACT website: http://urbact.eu/en/header-main/get-involved/local-support-groups/

Impact of the ULSG on local level?

100%

80%

60%

40%

20%

0%

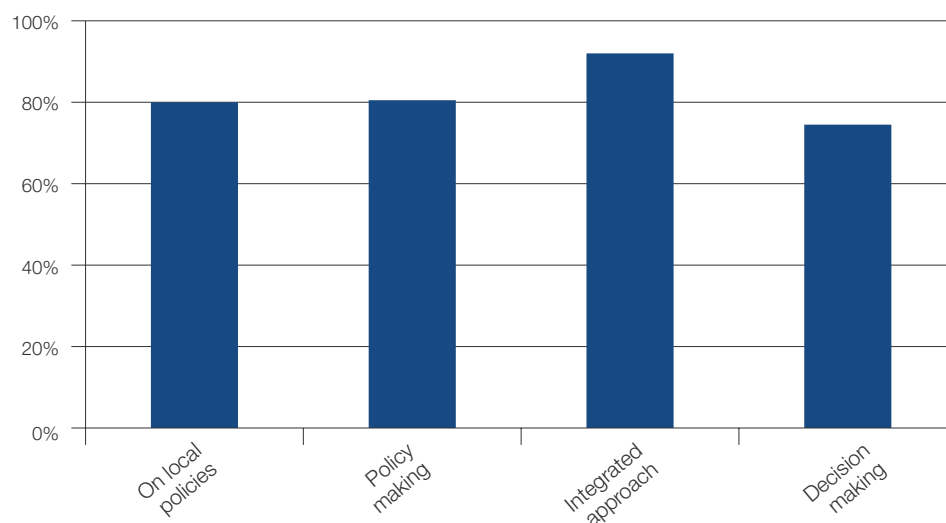On local policies | Policy making | Integrated approach | Decision making

A major achievement of the ULSGs at local level is their impact on local policies. More especially, it seems that they are playing an important role in fostering integrated approaches to the urban challenges addressed by the URBACT partners through the Local Action Plans.

PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERS IN ELECTRIC MOBILITY

THE EVUE EXPERIENCE

BY SALLY KNEESHAW
LEAD EXPERT OF THE *EVUE* THEMATIC NETWORK

The URBACT LSG model provides a mechanism to bring together stakeholders around a common aim in the hope that incorporating all potential interests and perspectives in the planning process will lead to more sustainable outcomes. In the case of electric vehicles (EV) this is a crucial element of strategies for the first phase of market development. The EVUE (Electric Vehicles in Urban Europe) Baseline Report provides an analysis of the various drivers and actions for each of the key groups involved. It states "the successful deployment of electric vehicles will require the close cooperation of all stakeholders, including public authorities and policy makers from all around Europe, the car industry, infrastructure and energy suppliers." "Leading and managing the multi stakeholder process will be key to success."[1]

Unlocking potential

It is clear that joint working with private sector companies is the most efficient way to unlock the greening potential of electric vehicles in European cities. But how can this be achieved? How do we best understand the perspectives of each stakeholder and create structures to attract and sustain the active participation of potential industry partners and investors?

A survey of stakeholders in **EVUE** Support Groups in 2010 showed that the great majority of our ULSGs have private sector partners mostly from utility companies, carmakers, infrastructure providers, car clubs, small business networks and consultancies. It has not been difficult to engage these partners. They have a commercial interest in the rollout of electro mobility. They see opportunities, and need to work with public authorities to get into supply chains and influence how strategies are delivered.

We asked both city administrations and private sector partners about the benefits and challenges of working together. First we report on the public sector perspectives.

Making Business Sense in Beja

Marcos Nogueira, Consultant for the Municipality of Beja, gives a view from this medium sized city in the Alentejo region of Portugal. The ULSG has several private sector stakeholders, and this reflects the municipality's wider efforts to engage business.

"For the municipality the key goal is to attract investment and accelerate growth. This can only be done working with the private sector. We need to get them involved to build the right strategies."

Beja has three important principles for its general engagement with the private sector.

● Integration

The municipality tries to provide a seamless service across departments to accommodate the range of issues that concern local businesses. "The local market is small, so companies can't grow by focusing on one product or service. They often operate in several sectors. **We find that business representatives like to cover many subjects in one meeting, for instance parking,**

land use and recruitment.** The municipality structure is also integrated so we can help businesses move from one sector to another easily. **We try not to be too formal or bureaucratic.**"

● Consensus

The municipality strives to create consensus and ensure that business interests are aligned with local policy.

"Our strategic thinking has to be transparent. We can't impose policies. We try to involve the private sector in developing our vision. The Mayor was elected here in an area where traditionally support for his party isn't great because he is able to build consensus."

● Continuity

"In order to build trust and confidence with investors and local businesses we have to have continuity. We can't stop and start all the time."

One way in which the Mayor of Beja, Jorge Pulido Valente, maintains private sector engagement is through a council of 30 to 40 people that meets twice a year for information exchange. It is not an official body and participants are selected on an individual basis, because they are active in the community, not because they represent an institution.

The meetings are designed to be "light and lively". They are hosted in a neutral venue, not municipal buildings, and organisers invite other speakers and intermediaries, not just politicians.

"The advantage for businesses to engage with us is that they get early information on local opportunities. This is a reward for their time investment."

City Council challenges

Beja is a small city where the Mayor is a prominent figure. He meets local people frequently and is able to drive progress. For other partners, especially in larger cities with multi- level governance and a myriad of agencies, this win-win situation can be harder to achieve.

Matthew Noon, Project Coordinator of **EVUE** and the Lead Partner from Westminster City Council in London, has found ULSG engagement to be more challenging. "Council

"Public officials can't be expected to know all the details like AC/DC, or charging standards. Private sector stakeholders also raise questions that help us all think and consider more solutions and options."

officers are generally focused on developing and achieving the policy aims and objectives adopted by elected representatives and regional/national government or responding to constituent concerns. Individual private sector engagement can be seen as a "vested interest" or they are unwilling to engage as it is not a "core" business activity. Through self-selection businesses may preclude themselves."

"The private sector takes a more direct approach and is not necessarily as holistic as public sector engagement. As such, consultative activities can be seen as irrelevant and time consuming. **The biggest challenge is getting the private sector to recognize the longer timeframes, approval or other bureaucratic processes that are imposed upon public sector activities that can slow things down considerably.**"

As a result, Matthew has found that the main benefit of the ULSG is in broadening the range of views and providing a mechanism for each sector to better understand the other. An additional advantage is that private sector stakeholders, such as Charging Point suppliers, bring technical expertise. "Public officials can't be expected to know all the details like AC/DC, or charging standards. **Private sector stakeholders also raise questions that help us all think and consider more solutions and options.**"

Clean vehicle collaboration

For **Eva Sunnerstedt**, Head of the Clean Vehicles Team in the City of Stockholm, many years of experience have led to good collaboration. "We actually have engaged with the private sector quite often on the issue of biogas (methane) as a fuel for vehicles. In order for it to be successful everyone has to see the need to act together and the benefit this can bring. It is important that all stakeholders **take the time to listen to each other and that good suggestions or decisions are actually achieved or carried forward – otherwise the forum will stop**".

> **"It is much better if you can identify the problems and challenges together and divide the work between you in order to make progress."**

Stockholm is selective with its private sector partners. "When we prepared for the Local Action Plan we interviewed almost every organisation in Stockholm and Sweden that had demonstrated any interest in EVs. The ones that showed great interest in Stockholm were the ones we invited to the LSG".

Eva's conclusion is that this investment in time and preparation is worthwhile. "It is much better if you **can identify the problems and challenges together and divide the work between you in order to make progress**."

Building more than the bottom line?

So how does it feel on the other side of the table? What do the private sector partners think about this cooperation with cities?

An injection of energy

Andrzej Szyp is E-mobility Project Manager in Vattenfall Distribution Poland S.A., Vattenfall's representative in the Local Support Group for the City of Katowice in the **EVUE** project. Vattenfall is one of Europe's largest generators of electricity and the largest producer of heat. It is committed to making electricity production cleaner and to seeing this contribute to sustainable transport. The company was pleased to accept the invitation to join the ULSG when Katowice joined **EVUE**.

"In our opinion cooperation is the key success factor in making progress towards sustainable urban transport and electric mobility. We would like to act as the e-mobility enabler. **If we see cities working in a holistic way in order to develop their approach and strategies – we would like to be a part of it and support such activities.** Being a part of the **EVUE** network we have a unique opportunity to gain knowledge and experience from cities being the early movers in this area."

Andrzej makes the point that Poland is a few steps behind in e-mobility. **Market models are not yet clear and this knowledge helps them to prepare for the market opening.** The **EVUE** network meeting held in Madrid in 2010 came to the same conclusions that business models for Emobility are still emerging. All partners value the opportunity provided by URBACT transnational exchange to explore the different approaches, investment strategies and potential solutions.

Andrzej's advice for ULSGs is to develop a close and honest cooperation between the partners, **sharing not only the best practices and successes but also mistakes and lessons to be learned**. "Good project management, a multi-purpose and highly

It is useful to see the difficulties that some cities face when there is not much public financing available for big projects, and to see how this market could evolve in future.

flexible project team, good understanding of market differences – these are, in my opinion, the most important success factors for reaching the **EVUE** objectives."

As for the benefits to his company Andrzej adds "the process of developing the e-mobility market has a number of stakeholders of existing and future industries. All the parties can gain more than they otherwise would have gained – it can be the win-to-win scenario".

And on a personal level - "my participation in **EVUE** transnational meetings gave me the most extraordinary and exciting opportunity to meet and work with very knowledgeable and experienced experts."

Leading the charge

By contrast MOBI.E[2] in Portugal is one of the more advanced national e-mobility programmes, and **Pedro Moreira da Silva** plays an important role in it. Pedro is a Director of EFACEC[3], the largest Portuguese group providing electricity energy transport and logistics solutions and part of a consortium of companies implementing the pilot phase of MOBI.E, putting charging infrastructure into

25 cities. It has also been involved in advising government on technical issues, business models and legislation. Pedro is a member of the Lisbon ULSG.

"**We need to work with cities. There is no single recipe for putting in public charging infrastructure.** For example, in Lisbon there are a lot of car parks, so the solution is not just on-street. But in a small town putting a charging point in a prominent on-street position is good for visibility and public awareness. It's very important to discuss the location strategy together with the bus company, utilities, petrol stations, car parks and shopping centres and to adapt solutions to each city."

Within the **EVUE** network cities are taking a variety of approaches to charging infrastructure, from low-tech simple key operation in Oslo to the sophisticated integrated RTD system that EFACEC is delivering. Cities discuss together how to procure charging points, which technology to use, where to locate them and how to communicate about them to potential EV drivers to overcome range anxiety.

Pedro is clear that there are benefits in the ULSG networking as all the stakeholders are potential customers. A bus company might develop an EV car sharing scheme, for instance.

EFACEC does not always find it easy to work with public administrations and the culture and bureaucracy vary from city to city. "In some places everyone has something to say about where a charging point is going and that takes time".

In Pedro's opinion the Lisbon ULSG is very effective. He presented the MOBI.E model at the **EVUE** Expert Seminar in Poland and found it useful to see the difficulties that some cities face when there is not much public financing available for big projects, and to see how this market could evolve in future.

"We are at the very beginning in this sector, not even in the development phase and it's very important to get to know people, to understand their thinking. Unless you do that and have a profile you will not be able to be

successful in the market. **EVUE** ULSG and transnational activities help us with that."

Back in Beja **Vitor Luzia**, member of the ULSG, sees the issue from the standpoint of running a small business, Irmaos Luzias, supplying agricultural equipment. He says: "At first I wasn't sure that this was a topic that concerned me, but now I am glad that being involved in **EVUE has made me think about what opportunities electric mobility might bring for my business, and I am developing plans that help position me better for this future market**". Vitor is an active member of the business community and this is a good example of the mutual benefits brought about by close contact between the administration and local entrepreneurs.

Sustainable Success

It seems from these examples that the URBACT LSG model can support a sustained engagement of private sector partners in EV plans in **EVUE**.

Clearly the motivations and cultures of public and private sector stakeholders are different, and part of the challenge for the ULSG is to accommodate these differences, to find a style of meeting and communicating that works for everyone. Partnerships need to be robust enough to thrash out conflicts and find solutions to complex situations.

The benefits reported by private sector stakeholders are improved market intelligence, profile, relationship building with potential customers and ultimately winning contracts. For cities the benefits include the investment and technical expertise brought by business to achieve urban policy. This convergence of interests around electric vehicle strategies can be used as a binding force to create real long term partnerships to get more green cars on the ground in cities. The insights described here confirm the need for URBACT type dialogue and action planning at both city and European level. ●

(1) http://urbact.eu/fileadmin/Projects/EVUE/outputs_media/2010-05-21_Final_EVUE_Baseline_study.pdf

(2) http://www.mobie.pt/en/homepage

(3) http://www.efacec.pt/PresentationLayer/efacec_ctexto_00.aspx?idioma=2&local=5&area=1

Top Tips for cities to engage the private sector

Keep up a good pace

Be professional and consistent: businesses don't like to see politicians fighting

Recognise the very different realities

Make the activity focussed and relevant

Understand the value of a forum like the ULSG to listen and question

Be open, honest and transparent

Promote neutrality, use non municipal venues, speakers, inputs

Invite experts to fill the knowledge gaps

Find time to get together in between meetings and build relationships

INVOLVING STAKEHOLDERS IN LOCAL POLICIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF HISTORIC URBAN CENTRES

EXPERIENCE FROM THE HERO NETWORK

BY NILS SCHEFFLER
LEAD EXPERT OF THE *HERO* THEMATIC NETWORK

Historic urban centres are highly contested arenas of diverse and often conflicting needs and development ideas. To develop a coherent development and protection strategy for such areas, the involvement of stakeholders is of utmost importance. The article illustrates the methods used by the URBACT II HerO network to involve the stakeholders in the development of the strategy and the benefits gained by doing so.

The unique feature of historic centres is their cultural heritage, represented through monuments, groups of buildings and also social values and traditions inherited and developed over time. These places are often multifunctional areas and focal points of life, work, trade, leisure, services and consumption. This leads to conflicting situations between the multiple and diverse demands put on these dense areas by residents, visitors, businesses and others, which also endangers the cultural heritage values. For instance an increasing number of tourists demands more space for hotels, pensions and gift shops provoking the replacement of housing space and daily goods retail stores, which are highly relevant for the quality of life of the inhabitants. Or shop owners demand exhibition space in front of the shop, which challenges the visual integrity of historic buildings or constrains the mobility of citizens passing by.

Thus, there is the need for a coherent and comprehensive local policy, which addresses, balances and coordinates the manifold interests and activities of the stakeholders and brings them in line with the safeguarding of the cultural heritage. This, with the intention to keep historic urban centres as attractive places "for all" and to safeguard the cultural heritage values for future generations. When developing such a policy, the experiences of the URBACT II network **HerO** – Heritage as Opportunity (www.urbact.eu/hero) demonstrate that the involvement of the relevant stakeholders is of primary importance.

Questionnaire on issues for the World Heritage Site, Liverpool.

Local Support Groups (LSG) have been a valuable instrument in this sense, bringing the different stakeholders together in a direct dialogue to develop a strategy with common vision, objectives and actions as a guiding framework for the development of historic centres and safeguarding of cultural heritage values.

Added-value and methods of involving stakeholders in the development of local policy

To come up with such a development and protection strategy for a historic centre three basic steps were carried out by the network partners, in which the LSGs were involved:
1. Analysing the current situation
2. Moving from vision to action
3. Setting up a Local Action Plan

1. Analysing the current situation

The analysis of the current situation served in the first place to achieve an overview and raise the awareness about the current situation of the historic centre and the demands placed on it; this both for the responsible department, working out the development strategy, and the involved LSG members. It helped to identify the concrete need for

actions and coordination to be addressed in the joint strategy. This was an important preparatory step to determine concrete and appropriate actions at the end of the development process of the strategy.

The methods used by the **HerO** partners to involve the LSG – and partly to reach wider stakeholders – comprised questionnaires, interviews and walkabouts to get a direct input. Further workshops were organised to discuss results and findings of the analysis of the current situation. These methods were mainly used to get answers to the following three questions in order to conduct a conclusive analysis:

1. *What is the cultural heritage which should be safeguarded? What are its needs and challenges?*
The responses of the LSG members helped to gather the personal viewpoints on what is the cultural heritage worthy of protection, and the challenges that arise in dealing with it.

2. *What are the demands of the "users" with regard to the development of the historic urban centre?*
Through the answers the municipality could present and better understand the needs of the LSG members as well as the conflicts between the needs and the demand for improvement, to be addressed in the local policy.

3. *Which guidelines and specifications for the historic urban centre and its cultural heritage already exist?*
This question helped to find out from the LSG members about already existing concepts, plans, objectives and actions for the historic centre and its cultural heritage, building upon these in the further development process of the strategy. Furthermore, together with the LSG these documents were analysed in terms of substantive conflicts, for which solutions were developed within the LSG.

The joint workshops with the LSG members, discussing findings and results of the analysis of the current situation, also improved the understanding of the aspirations of the other LSG members and those of the cultural heritage. This facilitated compromise, revising aspirations to seek win-win solutions which suit all stakeholders and the cultural heritage.

2. Moving from vision to action

To develop a consistent strategy with coherent actions, it has proven to be of help to start

to develop a vision for the historic centre and its cultural heritage to which all LSG members want to contribute. From this vision setting, objectives for the historic centre are derived and in a last step underpinned with concrete actions; thus ensuring a stringent and coherent progression from the vision to the actions. The main benefit of involving the LSG in this process was to gain their support for the jointly defined objectives and actions: "To

The case of Regensburg

In Regensburg the content of the management plan was elaborated in very close cooperation with the Local Support Group, representing different municipal departments, various external institutions and Regensburg's citizens. The Local Support Group met nine times within two years, most often in workshop form, moderated by an external expert. To form a basis for discussion, an analysis of all existing papers and concepts defining objectives and measures for the old town and an analysis of the demands for action were undertaken. The results were presented to the Local Support Group and discussed. Within the following meetings a vision for the site as well as the fields of action to be addressed in the management plan and the related objectives and actions werejointly defined.
A public consultation process called "World Heritage Dialogue" was organised to define further actions for the old town. An information evening was organised, flyers were printed and an information desk in the old town was installed to inform the public about the elaboration of the Integrated Cultural Heritage Management Plan - and to invite the citizens to participate in the public consultation. The latter was organised as a 2-day workshop that gave citizens the opportunity to develop ideas and express their concerns and wishes for the old town area.
To receive the political support of the process and contents of the Integrated Cultural Heritage Management Plan, Regensburg's City Council was informed in-depth about the approach before the process started and also on a regular basis about intermediate results. The final document is to be given to the City Council for approval.
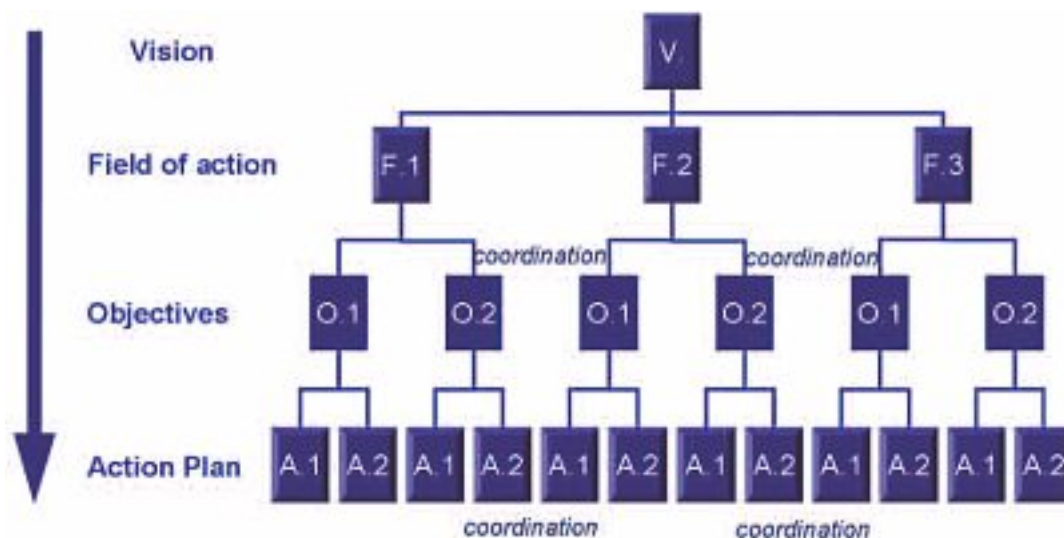
what I have contributed, I am more willing to support and comply with". Also the cooperation in the LSG allowed identification and discussion of conflicts arising between objectives and between actions, and so to find viable solutions.

The methods used by the **HerO** partners to involve the LSG – and a number of wider stakeholders – were mainly workshops and (public) debates. During such meetings the following three questions have been in the centre of discussion:

1. *What is the aspired future for the historic centre?*
Answering the question helped to define the shared vision with the LSG for the historic centre and its cultural heritage. It served as the guiding framework for the common deduction of objectives and actions in the further process. One method to develop the vision was to turn all challenges, opportunities and needs, identified during the analysis of the current situation, into positive messages.

2. *Which objectives support the achievement of the vision?*
This question helped to define necessary and relevant objectives, operationalising the vision with regard to the safeguarding and development of the historic centre. One method to involve the LSG and start off the discussion was to discuss and adjust together the existing objectives, identified during the analyses of the current situation, towards the vision.

3. *Which actions must be implemented in order to achieve the objectives?*
Answering this question helped to define the coherent and concrete actions in direct support of the objectives for the improvement of the historic centre and its cultural heritage. In addition, the conjoint development of actions allowed the coordination of actions between the LSG members, capitalising on synergy effects. One method to start off the discussion in the LSG was – as used in formulating the objectives – to discuss and adjust the existing actions, identified during the analyses of the current situation, towards the objectives.

3. Setting up the Local Action Plan

Having defined the range of actions, a good experience within the **HerO** network was to identify key actions, on which the available resources will be concentrated to spend the resources as efficiently and target-oriented as possible. One method to identify the key actions was to give each LSG member a certain number of points he/she could allocate to the preferred actions. The actions with the highest points or which had at least 40% of the votes were appointed as key actions.

The key actions were summarised in a Local Action Plan, which provided further detailed information on each action in preparation for its implementation. This information was collected together with the LSG, which partly helped to tap further (private) resources for the implementation of the actions.

Additional data attached to each action included identifying the responsible institution/person for the implementation of the action and the stakeholders to be involved; the estimation of the financial resources needed; and the funding sources to be engaged. It was also stated whether the financial resources were secured or not and in which year the action ought to be implemented. Also links to other projects were highlighted to secure their coordination.

Conclusion and lessons learned

The involvement of stakeholders, through the construction of a Local Support Group, in the development of a coherent and comprehensive policy for historic centres has proven to be a good experience for the **HerO** partners. The LSGs offered the

Field of action								
Objective	#	Project title + description	Responsibility (stakeholders to involve)	Financial resources	Funding by	Financing secured	Time schedule	Links to other projects
Objective 1 *Brief explanation*	1.1	Title of "Action 1" *Brief description; stating requirements*	Planning Department, Mr. A (Tourism Office)	50.000 €	Municipal budget	yes	2012	3.1
	1.2	Title of "Action 2" *Brief description; stating requirements*	Tourism Office, Ms. B (Preservation authority)	10.000 €	Municipal budget + ERDF	yes	2012	-
Objective 2 *Brief explanation*	2.1	Title of "Action 1" *Brief description; stating requirements*	Economic department, Ms. C (City Marketing)	250.000 €	Urban development program	no	2013	1.1
	2.2	Title of "Action 2" *Brief description; stating requirements*	City Marketing, Mr. D (Tourism Office)	5.000 €	Municipal budget	yes	2011	-

The case of Lublin

In the beginning of the elaboration of the Integrated Cultural Heritage Management Plan in Lublin a questionnaire on the needs, problems and opinions with regard to the historic area of Lublin was sent to several municipal departments as well as to the identified stakeholders of the Local Support Group. In this questionnaire, people were also asked to provide further information, for example on existing studies and relevant data on the area. Based on the input and conducted studies on the current situation of the historic urban area a draft management plan was prepared which was again discussed with the public. As Lublin is conducting such a process for the historic urban centre for the first time, the approach of involving further stakeholders and in particular the public debates were tested for a particular area as a pilot project to demonstrate the opportunities of cooperation with external stakeholders.

For this purpose, a meeting with representatives of the main users of the area was organised to define the key problems of the area. In six thematic meetings with the members of the Local Support Group, further stakeholders from the area, NGOs and experts from the local administration, these key problems were discussed to find common solutions. On the same days in the afternoon the public was invited, to inform them with the help of a model of the area. People were given the opportunity to explain and write down their ideas for the future development of the area. The process was presented on the municipal website, with the possibility of commenting on the ideas and results.

unique opportunity to bring different stakeholders together, which were relevant for the development and implementation of the strategy. It helped to bring the different demands onto the table, discuss them in an informal atmosphere, working out joint solutions and actions to be implemented in the future.

In particular the LSG helped the municipality to:
▶ recognise and understand the manifold needs;
▶ develop a strategy and solutions closer to these needs, and;
▶ balance and coordinate the needs among the stakeholders and bring them in line with the requirements to safeguard the cultural heritage assets.

The common elaboration of the development strategy also led to a stronger identification, by the involved stakeholders, with the vision, objectives and actions of the strategy (sense of shared ownership: "To what I have contributed, I am more willing to support and to comply with"). It fostered their willingness to co-operate and take actions for the implementation of the strategy. In addition, the common elaboration improved the understanding of the aspirations of others and those of the cultural heritage. Further it facilitated the compromising of individual aspirations to seek win-win solutions which suit all

stakeholders and the cultural heritage. To a certain extent this has helped to tap further (private) resources for the implementation of the actions.

Furthermore, the involvement created the opportunity to develop a better understanding of the value and benefits of the cultural heritage among the stakeholders, which in turn is facilitating the implementation of the strategy for the historic urban centre.

The common elaboration improved the understanding of the aspirations of others and those of the cultural heritage.

The benefits for the stakeholders of taking part in the LSG were in particular:
▶ the opportunity to incorporate their professional interests and concerns (of the institution the person represents);
▶ the consideration of their interests and concerns in the development strategy;
▶ the informal space provided by the LSG to exchange and discuss in an interdisciplinary group about needs, policies and actions with other stakeholders and so to find better solutions.

"To what I have contributed, I am more willing to support and to comply with."

But a LSG is not automatically helpful, certain aspects have to be considered and put into place. The key lessons learned for a successful involvement of the LSGs are to:
▶ focus and involve stakeholders who are highly concerned and in a strong position to support or block the development and the safeguarding of the historic urban centre (people/institutions with high interest and power);
▶ involve the stakeholders from the very beginning and according to their needs and interests – they have to benefit from their participation;
▶ take their opinions and feedback seriously and try to integrate their comments into the development strategy;

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▶ bring public and private stakeholders with different needs together and make them understand each other's needs;
▶ plan sufficient time for the involvement;
▶ avoid raising unrealistic expectations, and;
▶ have a skilled "neutral" moderator organising and animating the Local Support Group to contribute to the elaboration process of the development strategy. ●

Also a success factor was the involvement of the regional/national (Managing) Authority of ERDF/ESF funds to identify fundable actions through the regional operational programme.

LSGs offered the unique opportunity to bring different stakeholders together.

⊕ **HERO PROJECT**
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THE EMERGING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN COUNCILS AND CITIZENS

TRENDS TOWARDS CO-RESPONSIBILITY

BY JON BLOOMFIELD
LEAD EXPERT OF THE *TOGETHER* THEMATIC NETWORK

Hasan Uludag works as the education and development officer for the Konya Sports Club in Botkyrka, a municipality of more than 80,000 people on the south-western edge of Stockholm. Konya Sports runs twelve football teams from the ages of eight to eighteen, plus a club that plays in the Swedish professional league. Originally, Konya started as a club of Turkish migrants attracted to Sweden in the 1970s by manufacturing jobs. But now it is open to all-comers. When Hasan showed me the team-sheet for his Under 12s, the players had Kurdish, Iraqi, Pakistani, Bengali, Syrian and Swedish names, as well as Turkish ones.

Konya Sports get a 200,000 krona grant from Botkyrka council that covers the cost of using its modern pitches – artificial grass – and training facilities. But Hasan has wider ambitions. He is in discussions with the council for more land on which to build a multi-purpose community centre and even hotel. Further, with other associations in the voluntary sector, Konya Sports is trying to get social clauses built into a new procurement framework with the council so that local community organisations and their members can win contracts and secure jobs.

Changing Circumstances Require New Philosophies

This is just one example of the new forms of relationships between councils and their citizens that are being explored across Europe. The world is changing fast. Europe's cities are more diverse and people are living longer. The traditional welfare state is under pressure. There is a growing need for new types of services and innovative forms of service delivery. This article brings together experiences and examples from different cities who work in the URBACT **TOGETHER** project.

Inspired by the broad social thinking of the Council of Europe with its new Charter for Shared Social Responsibility, **TOGETHER** is exploring *the co-responsibility approach* where councils, civic associations and citizens in their different shapes and guises – parents, service users, patients, tenants, residents, passengers, etc. – all work together. It is a philosophy that is based on the observations and ideas of citizens themselves. The information is gathered together from sets of focus groups which ask citizens open-ended questions on what they see as well-being and ill-being. The results are then computed and analysed. This is a grass-roots, bottom-up approach. It does not happen spontaneously but is organised by the *URBACT Local Support Groups (ULSGs)* in each city. Crucially, the ULSGs in each city bring together a combination of these three elements drawn from the councils, civic associations and citizens. It is a partnership philosophy which recognises that the state cannot provide and deliver alone, but rather must work together in different ways with the various elements found within its area. Furthermore, this must be a partnership where each player shares in the decision-making. Hence the use of the term, co-responsibility. This article highlights developments in several of the participating **TOGETHER** cities, where the ULSGs are taking this new thinking forward.

> The traditional welfare state is under pressure. There is a growing need for new types of services and innovative forms of service delivery.

The TOGETHER project is exploring the co-responsibility approach where councils, civic associations and citizens all work together….(with) a philosophy that is based on the observations and ideas of citizens themselves.

Taking a Co-responsibility Lead

The philosophy has been piloted most extensively in Mulhouse in Eastern France. It has worked with the Council of Europe in developing this co-responsibility thinking over several years and organised the eight cities in the **TOGETHER** project where Mulhouse is the Lead Partner. Its ULSG brings together a wide mixture of local players, not just from the municipality but also from civic associations, neighbourhood groups and a variety of engaged citizens. The ULSG has developed nine pilot actions utilising this co-responsibility approach over the last few years, mainly in the social and educational arenas.

Multi-partite contracts: a changing relationship with benefit claimants

One interesting project has been with citizens on minimum income, run by the Social Services Department within Mulhouse. They have 1,350 clients on their books, to whom they give benefits, plus social advice and support. The Department has developed a pilot project using the co-responsibility method with its users. The intention has been to tackle the issue of social inclusion from a perspective of partnership and reciprocity rather than the more traditional authority/client relationship. The Department chose a representative sample of twenty five families and then held meetings with them along with a theatre animateur and a psychologist. The group used a combination of the well-being/ill-being questions with responses being written on post-it notes and more individualised work with the two support staff. Given the precarious situation of many of the users there was a lot of anger in the discussions, which was expressed in the post-it notes. The group worked together for a three month period at the end of which around half signed up to a 10-month programme of activity and a commitment expressed in a four-way multi-party social contract. The activity programme was based on the well-being/ill-being concerns expressed by the users and the workshops were designed to address these. The programme took place at the same time and place each week and runs for seven months. The first programme began in September 2008 and almost all the participants attended regularly throughout.

Lydia Meyer, one of the organisers, states clearly the thinking behind the project. "Our goal is to get the users to be autonomous, to be able to live on their own." Over half of this first group found work after the end of the course and the group is still meeting. The Department has now begun its second pilot programme, this time involving seventeen users. As well as improvements in the situation of individual users, the Department is hoping that the pilots will enable them to get better, more appropriate indicators for the precarious population with whom they deal.

The project is not without problems. When asked about the potential to generalise the process so that it can be used by all the Department's users, Lydia is clear. "We shall have to find a way to shorten and abbreviate the process." Throughout, the project regularly reported back to the Steering Group, as have all the pilot actions. As the ULSG seeks to generalise this approach it will be obliged to recognise that adopting co-responsibility methods to engage with users in precarious situations requires a much broader approach than is traditional. It also requires the mainstream staff to be willing and ready to follow new approaches. Furthermore, the method requires detailed organisation and is labour intensive. The pilot makes it clear that this type of co-responsible approach is not a cheap option.

Engaging Children and Parents

The "Maison des Parents" within the Mulhouse Alsace Agglomeration seeks to support and help parents and their children.

Its co-responsibility pilot project brings together 186 pupils drawn from two junior schools and a secondary school within one neighbourhood. The first part of the methodology was used with the pupils – the question on well-being – and more than a thousand responses were received. These were then computed and from this material the most frequently-cited topics were chosen. At a second meeting the group asked the pupils to evaluate their situation. The pupils made lots of suggestions, many of which were demands. However, the officers were able to draw from the material a range of suggestions with a strong co-responsibility theme which are now being pursued with both the pupils, parents and people who live in the neighbourhood. In addition, the project is looking to establish an after-school theatre forum to help win the attention of parents, get them involved in the issues and to spread wider the ideas around co-responsibility. The initiative is still at an early stage. The capacity of the project to retain the initial interest of the pupils and to produce valuable results has still to be demonstrated. However, it is already clear that there is a keen response from the school students and a real interest shown by them in this greater engagement. This is fertile ground on which the ULSG intends to build in the months ahead.

Family and social issues

Within the project, the main focus tends towards social and family issues, addressing the concerns which wider economic and demographic changes are placing on urban life. This is certainly the case in Covilha, situated in the north-east of Portugal near the country's highest mountain range. It is a city of 25,000 inhabitants and the focal point for thirty-one neighbouring villages and districts with an overall population of 70,000. Its traditional textile and manufacturing industries have severely declined with a range of new technical and service jobs replacing them. Here, as elsewhere, the world of work is changing. Many more women are engaged in the labour force and more service work is being undertaken outside of traditional working hours.

The Centre of Time is a multi-purpose community facility run by an NGO and housed in a community centre designed to meet the diverse needs of the local neighbourhood. It receives some core funding from the municipality but its other key relationship is with its users. Two of its staff outlined the thinking behind the initiative, which hinges above all on having a participative approach with the people who use the centre. The realities of contemporary economic life mean that there are new pressures on families and their time. The services which the Centre provides are designed to reconcile these time pressures of family life, work and leisure. The centre recognizes that its services have to be more flexible, more multi-dimensional and with the users involved in the shaping and evaluation of the services. Thus, the Centre offers a wide range of services including after-school activities for children; study support; ironing and laundry services; organizes birthday parties; a volunteer network; intergenerational activities; multi-media; and training facilities. Most are provided on-site but some off-site. Such a variety is a break from the tradition of a single service directed at one "client" group, for example, children or elderly. "Centro do Tempo" seeks to respond to the inter-dependency of modern life and find new ways, in partnerships with their users, of offering an integrated package of services.

Centro do Tempo has its origins in an EU Equal programme on empowerment. The initiative serves to remind the **TOGETHER** partners and each ULSG that its URBACT project

is occurring at a time when there are other initiatives already happening on the themes of citizen engagement and participation. The task in Covilha and elsewhere is to weave the distinctive aspects of the **TOGETHER** project with other engagement initiatives and to strengthen this overall perspective. In Covilha, the ULSG is drawing on this multi-purpose experience as it focuses on the diverse needs of its senior citizens.

In Pergine, a small city within the Autonomous Province of Trento (PAT) in north-eastern Italy, there is considerable interest in the well-being agenda and its potential impact on family life. The Autonomous Province has just passed a new family law on 2 March 2011 designed to promote the well-being of families. Luciano Malfer, the Director of Family and Welfare Policy, and his team have been the key architects of this law. He argues that "well-being is structured family policy. Well-being is for all citizens whereas welfare is aimed at the poor….we are focussing on normal conditions …we are looking to develop area family-friendly agreements in municipalities across the Province."

Malfer and his team are developing the concept of "family districts". These are places where there are family-friendly services, for example in restaurants and pubs; where work-life balance is promoted at work; where public transport is accessible to families with young children; where access to museums and leisure centres is encouraged by the use of family cards and discount pricing; where healthy life-styles and access is promoted by the provision of cycle paths, etc.

These ideas are being put into practice by the "Sportello Famiglia" a "Forum of family associations" managed as a not-for-profit association. This has an agreement and funding from the Province to manage a group of services for children and families. With three staff, the Forum provides a range of advice services for families through its help desk, which in 2010 dealt with 2,329 enquiries. But the Forum also acts as the public voice for more than forty local voluntary associations such as those working on drug issues, disabilities, diabetes, leisure and play activities, etc including those working in the Pergine area. In this way the Association has been able to develop a common vision and policy on family-related issues. Alessandra Viola and Valentina Merlini are the two staff who have been most involved with the development of the association since its establishment in 2006. The Forum has contributed to the drafting of the new family law. As Alessandra

explains it, "We were involved in drafting the law. We shall be involved in the operation of the new law. Article 21 gives us a specific role. The province will consult with the Forum on the configuration and planning of new services." Furthermore, Article 33 says that the province will evaluate the policy consequences of this well-being policy and the forum will be engaged in this process too.

Here is an existing practical example of how public authorities are beginning to implement aspects of the well-being agenda and how it can be undertaken with a co-responsibility approach with civic associations embedded in the policy and legislative process. **TOGETHER** and the ULSG in Pergine are building on this experience for the pilot initiatives with young people which they are currently developing.

The Economic Dimensions of Co-responsibility

These new approaches need not apply exclusively to social, family and educational questions. They can also relate to economic matters. In Botkyrka, more than a decade ago, the council recognised the need to stimulate and encourage new economic activity and that within this arena the cultural and creative industries offered a particular opportunity. So, it set up a company to develop the creative industries and gave it some disused industrial premises. Subtopia opened in 2002 with four organisations. Today, forty-five organisations and companies are based on

the site; 3,400 people work there; and in addition, each year 38,000 people attend conferences and seminars.

> **The council acts as the springboard for economic development, particularly for the small and micro business sector.**

Jonas Boutani Werner, Subtopia's film and media co-ordinator, is enthusiastic about the progress that has been and continues to be made. "Our job is to attract creative industries to work here and we have been really successful, above all with circus and performing arts but also with film and media." Companies are attracted by cheap rents – 500 krona per square metre a month – and free wi-fi, plus the ambiance. As Werner recognises, this is a slightly unusual project in that "we're growing it from the top down." Effectively, the council makes available the premises; manages the overall operation; but gives the opportunity for companies and cultural associations to base themselves in Subtopia and to develop in their own way with no restrictions placed on them. Thus, the council acts as the springboard for economic development, particularly for the small and micro business sector.

The municipality is keen to apply co-responsibility thinking to the social economy too. Dennis Latifi, the council's Development Officer for the Alby district within Botkyrka works closely with the local voluntary associations as a central part of his job of promoting effective community development within Alby. Along with Ingrid Ramberg from the Multi-Cultural Centre, he co-ordinates the engagement of Botkyrka in the **TOGETHER** project and oversees the work of the Botkyrka ULSG. The **TOGETHER** project and its ideas of co-responsibility and citizen engagement from the bottom-up coincide with the broad community development approach which is being pursued in Botkyrka, above all in Alby.

The Local Support Group which they have convened to oversee the project reflects the diversity of the Alby district with a mix of local associations, representatives of youth groups and migrant organisations, teachers and council officials. The Local Support Group consists of 24 people. As Ingrid says, "Our first step to find candidates was to scan existing formal and informal networks. We also consulted key persons within different fields of activities for new names. After having arrived at a list of top 25 candidates we sent out personal invitations which we also followed up by telephone calls. With one exception all invited accepted the invitation."

The ULSG comprises 13 men and 11 women. Half of the group live in Alby, the targeted neighbourhood. Two people are retired and four are around 20 years of age. Two are researchers, four come from the NGO sector, one is a senior politician. One is an architect; one comes from the local housing corporation; five work in the mayor's office; three come from the school sector and one is the local librarian.

The group is exploring a potential pilot co-responsibility action on the procurement of services. Ali Khan is the chair of the voluntary Council of Associations in Botkyrka and he sits on the ULSG. Along with Hasan Uludag and other local civic organisations he is working jointly with council officials on the criteria for the contracting of local services such as the cleaning, catering and security of community facilities and council buildings. Together, they are looking to draft specific criteria that will root these services much more closely to the communities they are designed to serve with the expectation that locally-based community organisations will win the contracts, so that the work will go to local people. Project work on the criteria is already underway. The thinking behind the proposal is aligned closely to the co-responsibility approach and is geared to helping disadvantaged communities in low income neighbourhoods both to find work and also to strengthen their own social organisations. Here is a good example of where **TOGETHER** and the ULSG is giving impetus and encouragement to local thinking and promoting favourable conditions in which it can flourish.

Taking things forward

The whole project is currently analysing the results of its work with local focus groups where citizens are asked open-ended questions on well-being and ill-being and their observations are then coded and computed. Early indications are that citizens have a much wider range of interests and concerns than just the "bread and butter" issues of income, work, health and education. For example, in Braine I'Alleud, a town south of Brussels, Belgium, they organised fourteen groups. In the more than two thousand observations made on the post-it notes, they found a whole variety of issues which had not been addressed in the town's current social Plan. They have picked up many cross-cutting issues, the topics that do not fit simply into local government Departmental boxes, but which nevertheless are very important to people. Issues raised frequently in the focus groups included a lack of respect shown both by other citizens and by public institutions; matters within the family; the importance of friendship and conviviality. These matters may appear rather intangible or less easily amenable to action by the municipality. However, it is possible to develop responses. For example, in the last few years many schools have developed policies to counter the bullying of pupils, whereas a generation ago, such an issue was usually ignored by school authorities. **TOGETHER** is in the process of collecting all the information from the focus groups and these findings are helping to shape both the pilot actions and also the overall thinking of each municipality. This focus group approach because it is open-ended and not problem-oriented tends to generate a much wider set of responses from citizens than a traditional consultative approach. And furthermore, it has the potential to address the matters that citizens see as central to their well-being.

In each city, **TOGETHER** and its URBACT Local Support Groups are seeking to build on and develop initiatives that arise from this wider framework of consultation. What makes the Botkyrka case particularly interesting is that the municipality has already established processes for community engagement but is seeking to strengthen these. The **TOGETHER** project offers the opportunity to inject new practices into these processes with the potential to deepen the democratic engagement of the local community and its organisations. In Mulhouse, which has been pursuing this approach longest, the ULSG reviewed progress at a seminar in May and is considering how its pilot actions, which pre-date the current **TOGETHER** project, can be generalised more widely across the city and thereby act as a trail-blazer for the other cities.

All the ULSGs know that they face a difficult task. But the spirit of new thinking and co-responsibility is evident on the ground. In the coming months each ULSG will be seeking to test out further the approach and apply it more widely across each city. ●

THE CO-PRODUCTION JOURNEY

SMALL STEPS MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE

BY ALISON PARTRIDGE
LEAD EXPERT OF THE *ESIMeC* THEMATIC NETWORK

The URBACT programme encourages co-production and co-creation practices within its Local Support Groups and Local Action Plans. But what do we actually mean by this and how successful are we at achieving it?

This article explores these concepts and introduces some of the work done by ESIMeC partners in the early stages of the project's Implementation Phase. It presents some of the themes of our LAPs, introduces some of the methods being used within ULSGs, outlines some of the hurdles that partners face in making co-production happen and provides examples of small steps that (we hope) will make a big difference in helping us to reach our destination.

Starting out – considering the travel mode

Dictionary definitions are always a good starting point when exploring a concept like this – some examples for co-production include:
▶ distributed production arrangements in which different firms often located in different countries produce different parts of the same end product (Business Dictionary);
▶ a film, television programme or theatre production organised by two people or organisations, rather than a single person or organisation (Cambridge Dictionary);
▶ produce (a theatrical work or a radio or television programme) jointly (Oxford English Dictionary).

Wikipedia goes one step further and says that co-production refers to the way services are produced by their users, in some parts or entirely.

But is this different to partnership working or multi stakeholder collaboration?

Perhaps if we move to the term co-creation we get closer to URBACT's aspirations – one media blogging website has a page to help co-create the co-creation concept (!) and over the course of several years has developed the following definition:

"An open, ongoing collaboration to define and create products, services, experiences, ideas and information."

The process is transparent, treats all stakeholders as equals and allows anyone to participate at any time. This does not preclude leadership and facilitation and it is here that URBACT partners have an important role to play.

ESIMeC brings together nine medium sized cities from across Europe to find innovative approaches to sustainable economic recovery, growth and resilience. The partner cities have identified **people** as their main assets and the project will help them to explore how workforce development and demand led skills provision can be the drivers for a thriving local economy.
www.urbact.eu/esimec

► Gävle in Sweden is focusing on improving the perception of higher education and skills amongst businesses and industry in order to get its young people ready for the skills needs of 21st century businesses.

It is anticipated that URBACT will make a sizeable contribution to achieving these ambitions. Partners recognise that multi stakeholder collaboration is a key part of this. All partners have set up their ULSGs and now that these have been in operation for almost a year it is a good time to reflect on progress and explore some of the challenges, achievements and lessons learnt relevant to the wider URBACT Community.

First steps

ESIMeC partners had very diverse starting points when establishing their ULSGs. Some partners were reasonably familiar with partnership working whilst others were used to a less multilateral approach. This section of the article introduces some of the methodologies partners have used to promote multi stakeholder engagement and progress towards co-production techniques:

Albacete

Albacete has experience of a civic consultation model as it has a pre-existing **forum of participation and uses a participatory budgeting process** each year where all citizens get the chance to comment on budget allocation in the municipality in an "open space" type methodology. This means that all actions are based on social dialogue:

"The results of the works made in collaboration usually are better because they have a more complete approach to the problem." (Albacete ULSG Coordinator)

Albacete is finding that linking its LAP into the wider city plan for employment is helpful, as this helps to maintain momentum between meetings. The thematic area (green skills for green jobs) naturally links the private and public sector and will help the city to upskill workers and stimulate economic recovery and growth. Specific needs are identified through a building energy efficiency audit process led by the council and then a discussion is instigated in the ULSG to agree which organisation(s) are best placed to explore and react to this need. The Action Plan is being built incrementally throughout the URBACT process as needs are identified and is **anchored in the city's strategic planning processes** throughout.

> **"The results of the works made in collaboration usually are better because they have a more complete approach to the problem."** (Albacete ULSG Coordinator)

ESIMeC's Route Finder

Within the overall project theme each of the partners' Local Action Plan will have a slightly different focus:
► the lead partner (Basingstoke, UK) is using the redevelopment of a town-centre based business park as a driver for sustainable economic growth by identifying and planning for future skills needs of employers who will be located at the new multi use site;
► in Spain, Albacete is trying to turn the negative impact of the shrinking construction sector on its head by stimulating new demand for "green" skills through an ambitious city plan for energy efficiency and sustainable consumption.
► Debrecen in Hungary wants to build on its successful triple helix innovation relationship between the university, municipality and business to ensure that training offered by the city meets the current and future skills needs of knowledge-based businesses.
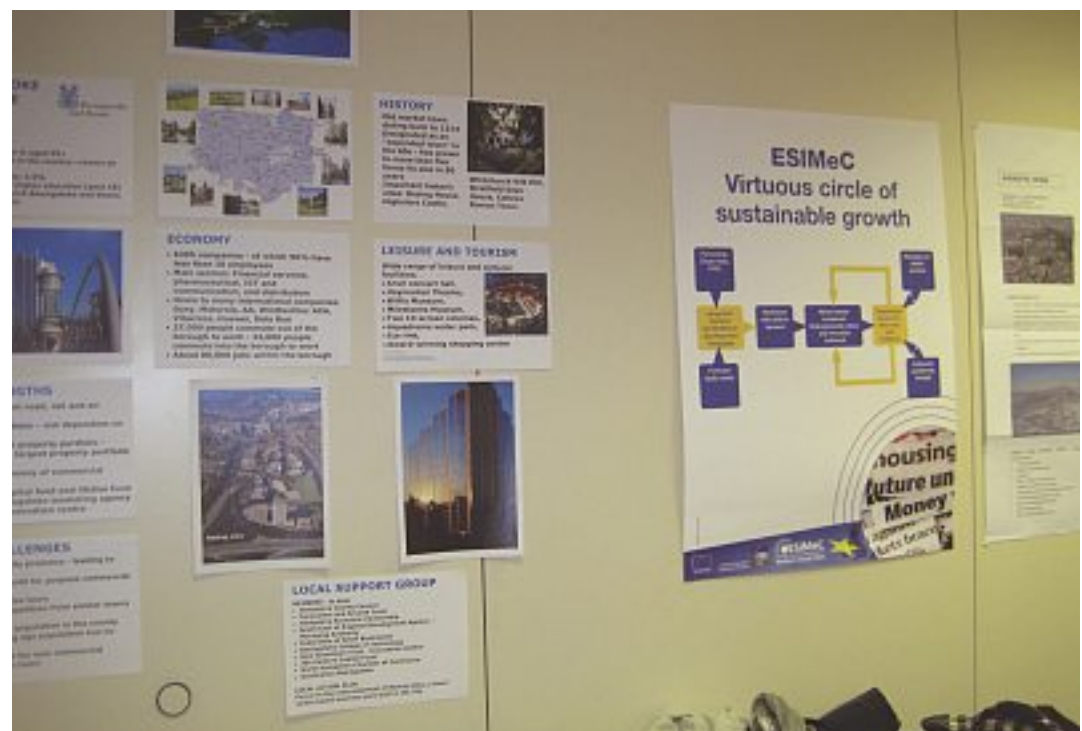
> **"Our ULSG includes a wide range of stakeholders with a diverse level of expertise and knowledge. They can identify issues and solutions that we, as a local authority, may not have thought of or do not have the expertise or means to address".** (Basingstoke ULSG Coordinator)

Basingstoke

In Basingstoke the Council is leading the action planning process and meetings include **small sub-group discussions** focusing on specific thematic issues. At its meeting in September 2010, for example, the aim was to agree priorities under each of the objectives which had been defined at the previous meeting. Following a site visit, each small group was asked to focus on one objective and to discuss potential priority actions which would help to achieve this. The **physical layout of the meeting was important** and made a difference – each small group sat around a table and focused on one question using a shared flipchart on the table. Once each group had discussed its specific objective the ULSG as a whole worked together to populate a spreadsheet which was projected on a screen during the meeting and forms the first part of the Local Action Plan.

In this case the ULSG meeting took place during the first **ESIMeC** transnational event so EU partners also participated in the process – one or two of them sat on each of the small tables. This gave a **fresh, different and sometimes challenging perspective** on local objectives and priorities.

"Our ULSG includes a wide range of stakeholders with a diverse level of expertise and knowledge. They can identify issues and solutions that we, as a local authority, may not have thought of or do not have the expertise or means to address". (Basingstoke ULSG Coordinator)

This meeting ended with a social event where members of the ULSG were able to interact informally and reflect on the progress made in a less structured environment.

The next steps in Basingstoke are to jointly work up key "deliverables" against each priority and to agree roles and responsibilities to take these forward. The ULSG is also considering the feasibility of piloting a "soft skills programme" for employment to help demonstrate the need for demand led skills programmes.

Cherbourg

"It was important to make ULSG members see that **ESIMeC** provides a very useful framework to address the topics that have already been addressed in the past, but didn't have the adequate support." (Cherbourg ULSG Coordinator)

Prior to **ESIMeC** Cherbourg (France) did not have a long history of partnership working.

> **"It was important to make ULSG members see that ESIMeC provides a very useful framework to address the topics that have already been addressed in the past, but didn't have the adequate support."** (Cherbourg ULSG Coordinator)

Members came to the table with diverse expectations and aspirations and different levels of knowledge and information. The ULSG coordinator soon realised that an early priority was to get people "on the same page" so he decided to implement a reasonably **structured approach to joint definition of a common goal**. This has started with a mapping exercise to identify existing maritime activities, strategies and plans of relevance to the LAP theme. Once this data has been collated the ULSG will come together again to carry out a SWOT analysis and they will then start to jointly develop activities which could be delivered together or by different sub sets of the ULSG within the overall strategic framework of the LAP.

Gävle

Gävle has also started by drawing a map of existing activities, in this case gathering information through a series of **qualitative bilateral interviews** with potential ULSG members and other stakeholders. The municipality is leading the process and writes agendas for ULSG meetings which always include time and space for additional subjects and questions. This helps to increase the level of ownership of the process amongst other stakeholders. Gävle intend to develop ideas and priorities for their LAP through an **interactive multi stakeholder workshop** and the municipality will then head a small "task force" consisting of a reduced number of ULSG members to actually put the LAP together. Once drafted they will open the LAP to a peer review and are also considering piloting one of the initiatives identified in the draft.

Hurdles along the way

ESIMeC partners have made some good early progress along the road to co-production. They have also identified and shared with each other some of the obstacles they have encountered along the way and started to work on how to get over these hurdles. These are explored below.

One of the key difficulties in starting out has been to **shift traditional organisational cultures and working methods**. Each city tends to have a certain way of planning for and conducting meetings and URBACT is encouraging them to throw away the rulebook and try new approaches. This does not come easily to some and others find it difficult to convince their senior officials and politicians that change is worthwhile and beneficial for all. However **ESIMeC** partners are realising that new meeting structures and methodologies can produce different behaviours amongst stakeholders, which in turn improve the quality of dialogue and decision.

Engaging private sector partners seems to be a perennial challenge in all partnerships and sustaining private sector interest throughout seems almost impossible unless there is a direct commercial interest. Partners are learning that they need to play the long game

with the private sector and some are considering only engaging businesses in activities of tangible and direct relevance, at least in the early stages. They believe that this approach will gradually help to build a positive dynamic within which businesses will begin to contribute more to the discussion and everyone will start to understand the long term benefits of collaboration. This may be better than the potential perception of being time wasters which could alienate the private sector. Cherbourg is considering setting up a private sector sub group to dig deeper into current employer skills forecasting and recruitment methods in maritime industries.

Linked to this some partners have had difficulties managing the **mismatch in knowledge and understanding** amongst the various stakeholder groups. Where these gaps are substantial some have embarked upon research and consultation exercises to collate robust information which will provide firm foundations from which to launch action planning activities. Besançon (France) for example has commissioned some research into the economic opportunities offered by jobs in culture and the arts.

Some partners have been victims of their own success, attracting high level representation to their ULSG at the outset. In Sabadell

(Spain) for example the membership comprises **senior level officials and politicians**. This comes at a cost and Sabadell have found that these individuals are **often too busy** to participate in routine ULSG meetings. As a result they have decided to set up a sub structure which will focus on operational issues enabling the higher level group to meet less frequently and focus on the strategic.

Developing a shared vision and a common objective has proved difficult in some partners – particularly where partnership working is reasonably new. Bistrita (Romania) is starting an ideas competition to help it with this aspect with ideas entered being brought to the ULSG for discussion.

Almost all partners have experienced difficulties **keeping momentum going** between meetings. More and more they are turning to slightly ad hoc and informal communication methods – simple phone calls and emails – to keep people engaged and to task.

Participation by **ULSG members in transnational events** has so far been a little patchy although **ESIMeC** partners are learning fast and now have at least two full "virtual meetings" between transnational events to help with this aspect:

▶ whilst the thematic focus is set out in the baseline study, the first of these virtual meetings allows the host and the lead partner/lead expert to set out the agenda more fully, explain who partners could find useful to invite to participate and set "homework tasks" in preparation for the event;

▶ the second virtual meeting tends to focus on the theme to be discussed and allows partners to say who they are bringing to the event. In some cases this prompts other partners to go away and invite different participants themselves. It is always helpful if people from the same or similar sectors or organisations get together at these transnational events.

Even when ULSG members do participate in transnational events it can be hard to **identify good practice which is relevant and transferable to the local context**. All **ESIMeC** events end with a short debrief session where partners are encouraged to identify this good practice and start to think about **potential for local replication** together.

Some partners have said that it can be difficult to lead, manage and facilitate ULSG work without **taking over** or being perceived to do so. This links into the importance of recognising talents and strengths of different stakeholders and interest groups and developing a clear and shared understanding of roles and responsibilities. Delegating tasks and/or asking different stakeholders to host or run parts of the meeting can also help with this.

The route to success

ESIMeC is almost a year into its implementation phase and discussions during the spring of 2011 have enabled the partnership to start to identify some of the **success factors** which will contribute to participative action planning in the next stages.

It is important to bring stakeholders together to work on **targeted, focused questions and issues** where everyone involved sees real **benefits and results from collaboration** and recognises that working together achieves more than working in isolation. It is imperative that the common interest is jointly

defined and owned by the group so that it becomes a higher priority for the group than individual stakeholder interests and there is a **shared vision of what success** looks like.

Partners need to **respect and appreciate the diversity** of stakeholder cultures and values which will help them to understand and make best use of the **varying strengths and talents** around the table. In time it will be important that **responsibilities and rewards are shared**.

ULSG structures, and the bilateral and multilateral relationships which are formed within them, need to be **dynamic** so that they can move with and react to changing circumstances. There needs to be **buy in at all levels** across the partner organisations so that the action planning process becomes a **win-win situation** for all. The importance of **regular informal and structured contact** between all stakeholders cannot be underestimated.

Finally, it is important to build in **time and space for regular review** in which partners assess how well the ULSG is performing and decide on action to improve if appropriate.

Conclusion – reaching our destination

The co-production/co-creation concept is relatively new. It is rooted in partnership working or collaboration and is about developing new ways to reinforce a multi stakeholder vision, that embraces and harnesses differences. Structured chaos is likely and everyone has a role to play throughout. Leadership is moving towards facilitation and is about creating the right conditions for constructive dialogue and activity. In many cases this is about getting the physical environment right – open style room layout, relaxed and airy surroundings – and providing people with tools to initiate a constructive dialogue. Through the **ESIMeC** network URBACT gives cities both the tools and the courage to try out co-production, to share these steps with peers, and to find out if it helps to deliver better relationships and strategies that will be sustained over time, for the benefit of local economies. ●

CO-PRODUCTION

A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON PARTNERSHIP

BY HANS SCHLAPPA
LEAD EXPERT OF THE *SURE* THEMATIC NETWORK,
AND **PETER RAMSDEN**, THEMATIC POLE MANAGER

A growing number of practitioners and policy makers use the term "co-production" when they refer to collaborations in the regeneration process. Many of us now frequently use "co-production" in place of "partnership working" without being aware that there are important distinctions in the meanings that these terms have.

This article suggests that the concept of co-production offers a fresh perspective on important aspects of partnership working in regeneration contexts. A number of examples from the SURE Network[1] are used to illustrate how core elements of collaborative regeneration practice can be seen in a new light when looking at them through the lens of co-production. The benefits of using co-production rather than partnership working as the terminology to explain and analyse collaborative processes in urban regeneration are then discussed. This article concludes with a discussion of the implications this concept might have for both policy makers and practitioners.

Reinventing "partnership working"

Contemporary area-based regeneration policy and practice put an emphasis on effective partnership working and an integrated approach towards problem solving. It also includes a strong participative element and emphasises the involvement of local communities in the strategy development and implementation process.

Partnership has been one of the four guiding principles of the Structural Funds since their reform in 1989. In an urban context, the partnership is both horizontal between actors on the ground and vertical, with managing authorities and policy directorates at regional and national level. There are many forms and styles of partnership ranging from collaborative ventures for different agencies and civil society to tackle complex problems

Introduction

When co-production was identified as a specific concept in the early 1970s, it generated substantial interest in America[2]. Academics and practitioners then suggested that the co-production of public services in areas such as health care, policing, or the management of open spaces could improve service quality and reduce governmental spending at the same time. These suggestions were made at a time when the American government was struggling with severe budgetary constraints and pressures for public sector reform. Today many national and local governments seem to be re-discovering this idea. In Europe in particular, where cities have been hard hit by the economic downturn[3], the structural funds are increasingly focusing on the collaborative generation of services, jobs and enterprise[4].

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together, to more institutional approaches in which large public and private agencies determine policy priorities and develop strategy.

While partnerships at their best can be shining beacons of collaborative working, there is widespread scepticism about the capacity of partnership structures to facilitate the sharing of power, risk, capabilities and resources between organisations and across sectors. Smaller organisations in particular, which tend to be closest to the grassroots of communities, lack the capacity to engage with partnership processes, and where they are included at the partnerships table they frequently lack the "clout" to influence the decision making process.

These are just some of the reasons why the term partnership has become problematic – especially in the member States that have been working for longest with these participative approaches[5]. This also explains, at least in part, why we are beginning to use different terms, such as co-production, to describe collaborative practice in urban regeneration. Nevertheless, this shift away from "partnership" and towards "co-production" raises the question of what exactly do we mean by co-production. Furthermore, are there compelling reasons to develop a sharper distinction between co-production and partnership working?

Defining co-production

There are different definitions of co-production. Two of its leading scholars, Victor Pestoff and Tacho Brandsen[6], have worked on this topic for some time and Pestoff gives a simple definition which includes co-production alongside co-management and co-governance.

▶ *Co-production* refers to an arrangement where citizens produce, at least in part, the services they use themselves. Co-producing citizens do not rely on financial or other inputs from public agencies to develop a new or improve an existing service. However, at the site of service co-production we frequently find public officials providing direct support to citizens, community groups or small non-profit organisations.
▶ *Co-management* refers to a situation where different organisations work alongside each other to co-ordinate the delivery of a service or project. For co-management to occur direct user or citizen participation is not necessary, but actors from different sectors

and organisations use their respective resources to directly contribute in practical ways to the delivery of a specific project or service.
▶ *Co-governance* is about the strategic planning of a service or a project. Actors from different organisations and sectors determine shared policy priorities and may translate these into strategic plans. Co-governance comes perhaps closest to what many regeneration partnerships are primarily engaged in[7].

It is important to note that in the development and delivery of every project or service we are likely to find all of these three dimensions to some extent. However, each of these dimensions is distinct from the other. Directly co-producing a service is different from working closely with another organisation to co-manage its delivery. There is also a clear distinction between co-production and co-management, which are directly concerned with the provision of a specific service or

> *Co-production* refers to an arrangement where citizens produce, at least in part, the services they use themselves.

project, and co-governance, which is primarily concerned with strategy and policy-making.

Some examples from the URBACT SURE network

To illustrate the different dimensions of co-production and to demonstrate that this concept easily relates to contemporary practice in urban regeneration we now provide some examples from the **SURE** network. **SURE** includes nine medium sized towns, which came together to learn from each other about inclusive socio-economic regeneration strategies. Each partner is at a different stage of development, and in many cases, it is not clear yet to what extent, their Local Action Plans will involve co-production, co-management or co-governance. One of the **SURE** partners, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council (DLR), has a long track record of working with local communities and of

supporting the establishment of institutional infrastructures, which enable citizens to participate in the provision, management and governance of local services. Hence, it was relatively easy to identify three examples, which illustrate the different dimensions of co-production in the regeneration process.

Shanganagh Community Garden: An example of Co-production

The Shanganagh Community Garden came about as a result of the development work done by Dave Lawless. Lawless works for the government funded RAPID programme[8], which provides community development staff and project funding for the most deprived neighbourhoods in Ireland. In his role as RAPID Co-ordinator, Dave consulted local residents on whether they would have an interest in developing a community garden on a piece of waste ground adjoining their properties. Despite a muted response from residents living next to the area of land, the municipality improved the ground and provided the basic infrastructure for an allotment, such as fencing and footpaths. Half expecting a very slow take up, Lawless was surprised when requests from local residents flooded in; within a few months, all of the 40 plots had been allocated to local growers. Most of them live directly next to their plots, but some come from a little further away:
"It was absolutely amazing, the response was fantastic. There are families, but importantly many older men who are engaging in this gardening project. That brings so many health and social benefits to them and the community. This is a real success!"

Growers pay for all the equipment and materials needed to cultivate their plot and grow their produce while a social enterprise provides horticultural training. Together they have transformed the wasteland into an oasis where fruit and vegetables are grown and where important social contacts thrive. It is now expected that the garden will be extended to give more residents the opportunity to grow their own produce and, equally important, connect with a rapidly *growing* social network.

This project also reflects a wider and emerging interest in community gardening in Ireland. In neighbouring Dublin, for example, the municipality actively promotes this idea to its citizens across the city[9].

Shanganagh Park House: An example of co-management

Shanganagh Park House is a local community centre, which provides space for several dozen projects and services. The municipality owns the building and contributes towards its running costs. The community groups pay a rent for the space they use which goes towards the payment of administrative staff and running costs of the building. Most of the people you meet in Shanganagh Park House are volunteers. They come to help with the running of crèches for small children, support women who suffer from abuse, or provide sports and educational activities for young people[10].

The management committee of Shanganagh Park House consists of representatives from the non-governmental organisations, which are using the building, local politicians as well as officers from the municipality. They share responsibility for the management of the facility, in particular making sure that sufficient income is generated without curtailing the range of services local people want to see at Shanganagh Park House. While much of this co-management work is routine, there can be very significant joint initiatives. For example,

only recently, the municipality raised over €1 million to refurbish the premises and the organisations using the building did their part by organising fundraising initiatives to obtain equipment and upgrade their service provision: *"When we started in 1977 everything was done on a shoestring. We had no heating and I used to scrub the bare floorboards every week. I look at the house now and think Shanganagh House is a shining example of what can be achieved when local communities and public agencies work together."* (Member of the Steering Group)

The RAPID Programme: An example of co-governance

RAPID (Revitalising Areas through Planning, Investment and Development) is a national programme in Ireland which operates in disadvantaged urban areas. In DLR, the RAPID programme was established in 2001 to tackle socio-economic disadvantage and social exclusion in two neighbourhoods, which also form part of the **SURE** target area. RAPID is supported by a local co-ordinator, Dave Lawless, who works with eight thematic sub-groups, each prioritising the resources that are available to regenerate the deprived neighbourhoods.
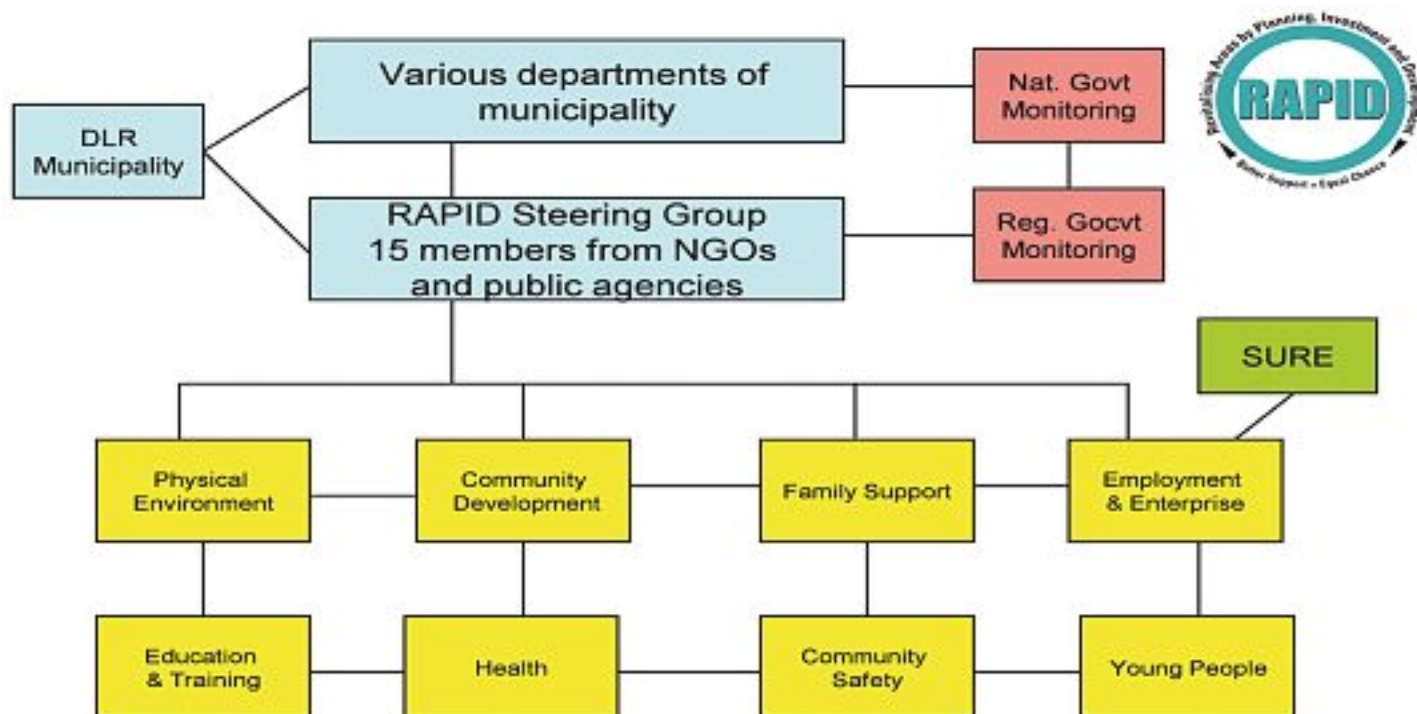
The diagram above shows how local and national government engage with locally determined priorities through the governance structure of the RAPID programme. The RAPID Co-ordinator reports to the Steering Group, which is made up of residents, politicians, non-governmental organisations and public agency representatives. Each of the eight task groups has a similar mix of members and the diagram also indicates how the **SURE** project fits into the overall programme structure. This structure is typical for regeneration partnerships. What makes RAPID different to many regeneration partnerships is that the co-governance arrangement is not focused on a single funding stream or a single issue. As such, the RAPID structure offers itself as a framework through which decisions on a range of funding opportunities and regeneration priorities can be made. Other partnerships, such as the Southside Partnership, which is an umbrella for a large number of regeneration programmes, also use the governance structure of RAPID to determine joint policy priorities and strategy across a range of issues such as health, housing, employment, crime and so forth. Furthermore, the participation of non-governmental organisations and residents is more than just "lip service" – without them dozens of projects, two of which were described above, would simply not come to fruition.

Parallel Production – a problematic approach

Parallel production is when civil society organisations, that are notionally part of the regeneration partnership process, end up "doing it alone" because relations with public authorities are weak. They work in parallel to public authorities while lip service is paid to "consultation" and "participation" and relationships are often solely focused on funding.

The following example comes from a study of three URBAN II programmes[11], which focused on the impact of European Union funding on non-profit organisations, which contribute to the regeneration process. This short case study represents a particularly stark example but sadly reflects regeneration practice found in many cities in Europe.

At the time, the URBAN II programme was being drawn up Youth Enterprise (not its real name) had worked in the neighbourhood for over 25 years, employed 250 staff and was running a wide range of services, largely from the properties it had acquired over time. Youth Enterprise wanted to create a community centre and use the URBAN II grant to refurbish a derelict building that had been donated to them by a private individual. It was very difficult for Youth Enterprise to secure URBAN II funding, despite its staff

having significant experience and success in tendering for substantial youth service contracts in the area. Not only because the application process was considered very demanding, there were also criticisms that the project selection and approval process was biased towards the interests of public agencies which dominated the URBAN II partnership:
"The URBAN Steering Committee gave preference to projects put forward by public agencies. ... Very few third sector organizations were given a chance." (Project Officer)

Once Youth Enterprise had secured some URBAN II funding, the monitoring and reporting requirements put significant strain on staff, in part because the organisation had not used European Union funding before. Staff also felt that the programme management team offered very little support both in helping them respond to the monitoring requirements or in dealing with other problems, they encountered in delivering their project:
"The programme manager shows no interest whatsoever in what we are trying to achieve here. They only show up when they have official delegations who want to see an integrated youth training project." (Project Officer)

Officials from the municipality who were responsible for the programme management team, consultants that had been recruited specifically for the implementation of

URBAN II, saw no reason why they or the programme management team should be expected to provide additional support for service providers such as Youth Enterprise: *"I don't know in detail what their problem is. I can't get involved in all the URBAN projects. The question is if they do have substantial problems what are they going to do about it? That's their problem, isn't it?"* (municipal official)

While Youth Enterprise had a highly successful track record in securing funding from public agencies, the director and his colleagues had learned to minimise the influence public officials would have on their work: *"I am glad when they don't get involved in our work. That always creates problems. We develop solutions with residents, not with public agencies."* (Director)

Clearly real co-production goes beyond the normal contracting that takes place between funders and providers of services in traditional programme delivery arrangements.

Implications for regeneration policy and practice

Regeneration is a complex process and all the partners have to contribute for it to work. It is often impossible to say why, when and where the collaborative process unwinds and turns into something that is adversarial and competitive. As the case of Youth Enterprise shows, partnership structures in themselves – especially those structured around funding opportunities - do not always provide any assurance that services or initiatives will be created in a collaborative and mutually supportive way. Despite the Structural Funds regulations insisting on the partnership principle and collaboration between public agencies and local communities, this often does not go beyond a simple funding relationship. Financing social enterprises and civil society organisations is of course an important pre-condition for the co-production of a service, but frequently obtaining and accounting for funding is anything but a collaborative process.

One of the key benefits of thinking about regeneration practice in terms of co-production, co-management or co-governance is that our attention is drawn to the interaction of the actors. There are different expectations associated with officials responsible for the development of policy priorities in time limited regeneration programmes compared to officers who engage with volunteers to create a new project or support the delivery of a service. Nobody should be expected to deal with all aspects of regeneration practice, but the term "partnership working" has become synonymous with all manner of political processes, practical actions and institutional structures typically associated with the development of integrated solutions to urban problems. The terminology of coproduction, in contrast, helps us make important distinctions about different, and often highly specialised, aspects of partnership working.

Focusing on the practical actions of individuals has further advantages. For example, when trying to encourage the adoption of successful social innovations in different European countries, policy makers and practitioners frequently struggle to convince their colleagues back in their own country that such approaches can be made to work in their local contexts. While there may indeed be many legal and institutional barriers to the adoption of practices from abroad, it is probably easier to change the behaviour of regeneration practitioners than to change the regulations, which govern the way in which public agencies operate. Identifying effective behaviours supports the transfer of good practice because behaviours can be learned, copied and adapted in ways, which respond effectively to the institutional context in which they take place.

Moreover, when we talk about how a project has been co-produced or co-managed our attention is focused on the benefits as well as challenges, which resulted from the actions taken, by funders and providers of services. This allows us to move beyond simply blaming the regulations, the institutions or the strategy for the lack of collaboration and instead helps us focus on the elements that matter in the creation of sustainable regeneration interventions, namely: constructive and task orientated collaborations between public agencies and local communities. Developing some simple indicators of co-production, co-management and co-governance could be the first step towards creating new benchmarks for effective collaborative regeneration practice. This might also re-energise debates about effective approaches to integrated urban regeneration because partnership both as a concept and as a terminology appears tired and overused.

Conclusion

Unpacking co-production has advantages over conventional discussions of partnership. It allows us to reflect more clearly on the purpose of the collaboration and on the relationships that are involved in the production, management and governance of a service or policy. In the context of urban areas, these distinctions can give us a better set of tools for understanding the processes at work than the broad concept of partnership. This approach allows us to ask the question "partnership for what?" and look at the inner workings of regeneration partnerships that make all the difference between success and failure. ●

(1) http://urbact.eu/en/projects/disadvantaged-neighbourhoods/sure/homepage/
(2) For a historical overview see: Brandsen and Pestoff, 2008, Co-production, Routledge
(3) Soto et al., 2010, Cities Facing the Crisis: Impact and responses, URBACT http://urbact.eu/fileadmin/general_library/Crise_urbact__16-11_web.pdf
(4) The latest such initiatives is the Social Innovation Europe programme: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/policy/social-innovation/social-inno-event_en.htm
(5) For a contemporary analysis and discussion of the topic see: Seitanidi, 2010, The Politics of Partnerships
(6) Brandsen and Pestoff, 2008, Co-production, Routledge
(7) Pestoff, 2011, New Public Governance, Co-production and the Third Sector, Routledge
(8) http://www.dlrcdb.ie/rapid.htm
(9) http://www.dublin.ie/uploadedFiles/City_Development_Board/RHS_Panel/FINAL%20City%20Guide%20to%20Community%20Gardening.pdf
(10) http://www.shanaghcdp.ie
(11) Schlappa, 2009, The Impact of European Union Funding in Cross-National Perspective, Aston University

> One of the key benefits of thinking about regeneration practice in terms of co-production, co-management or co-governance is that our attention is drawn to the interaction of the actors.

CO-PRODUCTION OF LOCAL ACTION PLANS

A CENTRAL ELEMENT OF REGIONAL GOVERNANCE IN DEPRIVED URBAN NEIGHBOURHOODS

BY PETRA POTZ
LEAD EXPERT OF THE *REGGOV* THEMATIC NETWORK

In this article experiences and examples from the RegGov network[1] are presented to stress the necessity of exploring new potentials of cooperation and to create synergies within the Local Support Groups that cannot be expected from the traditional working structures. So far, these innovation potentials have only been partially explored. Before implementing long-term integrated plans, a very precise identification of persons, parts of departments, and agencies which need to be involved is a precondition.

Introduction

Across Europe, disadvantaged neighbourhoods in the cities have complex and interwoven problems. However, they also have unrealised potential that can be further developed. The problems include deficits in the physical and environmental structure, as well as in the economic and social

infrastructure. Most areas have low incomes and above-average unemployment rates, often in city economies that have been facing the challenge of economic restructuring and job loss. The co-location of different disadvantaged groups often creates a bad image for the neighbourhood. In spite of these difficult conditions, these neighbourhoods offer niches and possibilities for a huge variety of groups in need of support, and they fulfil an important social function in terms of integration of excluded groups.

The need for common agreements on strategic principles concerning the many facets of integration has been confirmed in three examples presented below:
▶ a housing company assuming responsibility for neighbourhood management (Duisburg);
▶ community organizing for co-responsibility of the residents (Ruda Slaska);
▶ a public-private joint venture for youth unemployment (Södertälje).

The main challenge of **RegGov** has been to foster integrated urban and neighbourhood development policies and to create participatory processes in policy-making and policy implementation:
▶ allowing for a lasting and efficient "horizontal and network cooperation" between all relevant actors on the local level and making sure that all key players and organisations in the Local Support Groups contribute to the development and implementation of Integrated Local Action Plans, so that all possible resources are activated and integrated and all possible synergies are realised;
▶ with a special focus on the question of how to achieve improved and more reliable forms of "vertical cooperation" from the neighbourhood across the city level to the level of Managing Authorities. The importance of this topic has been raised through the mainstreaming of the urban dimension in European policy. This has given regional authorities all over Europe a new responsibility in the field of integrated urban and neighbourhood development under Article 8 of the ERDF regulation.

Regional Governance was not considered to be a crucial issue. Besides the promotion and support of a catalogue of projects for disadvantaged neighbourhoods based on integrated Local Action Plans and schemes, one key issue still remains unclear in many cases: how to establish long-term perspectives of structures developed within limited projects and the role, the expectations and potentials of private actors in these strategic

consolidation processes. In North Rhine-Westphalia an analysis on the experiences and potentials of transferability and sustainment of integrative neighbourhood development has been recently published[2].

Main forms of relationship and actors within the integrated approach

The Local Support Groups set up in all partner cities have contributed to anchoring the integrated approach in the co-production of the LAP and to creating a broad consensual platform on neighbourhood development throughout the city. The variety of stakeholders involved in the LSG stresses the need to identify the "right" constellation of groups and persons involved for each neighbourhood. At the same time, it is the pre-condition for local consensus and co-production.

There are three main types of relationships regarding the improvement of the conditions of deprived neighbourhoods. Some of them are rather institutionalised and established, others have relatively loose connections.
▶ *Local horizontal cooperation:* Relationship between different actors within the neighbourhood and between the neighbourhood and the city administration.
▶ *Network cooperation:* Relationship and strategic networks between cities within a determined area.
▶ *Vertical cooperation:* Relationship between neighbourhoods, cities and Managing Authorities and other regional policy directorates.

An important fourth dimension is the combination or the link between the different types of cooperation, in certain cases developed and run in terms of a multi-level approach.

Consequently, the promotion of all different types of cooperation and relationships means the involvement of actors from different categories and with different interests and competences. For example:

> **The variety of stakeholders involved in the LSG stresses the need to identify the "right" constellation of groups and persons involved for each neighbourhood. At the same time, it is the pre-condition for local consensus and co-production.**

Territorial level of competences, e.g.	Neighbourhood City Region/Intermediate level State European level
Sectors and departments, e.g.	Urban development Economic affairs Social affairs/Welfare Employment Education/Schools Culture, Sports etc.
Public sphere, e.g.	**Public** Public administration Politicians and decision-makers Public companies *Semi-Public* Welfare organisations (partially) Housing companies
Private sphere, e.g.	*Private economic actors* Companies and entrepreneurs not locally based Local business owners (partially) Housing companies Single owners *Civic actors* Civic organisations representing (parts of) the community: youth/children, migrants/ethnic groups, handicapped, elder people etc. Social enterprises working on active inclusion and service delivery in disadvantaged neighbourhoods Associations of inhabitants Engaged individuals and residents

New alliances: Private involvement and commitment are essential

The **RegGov** partner cities have been facing a broad range of challenges regarding their respective disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Horizontal and vertical cooperation are necessarily linked. The experiences from Duisburg (DE), Ruda Slaska (PL) and Södertälje (SE) are good examples of the involvement of local stakeholders at different levels and with different backgrounds. Action fields such as economic development that are important for neighbourhood

Action fields such as economic development that are important for neighbourhood development usually extend beyond the borders of a quarter or neighbourhood. The perspective has to include all levels necessary and involve both elected levels of government and other agencies and NGOs.

development usually extend beyond the borders of a quarter or neighbourhood. The perspective has to include all necessary levels necessary and involve both elected levels of government and other agencies and NGOs.

They all have in common:
▶ a preparatory phase of overcoming single or separate activities building trustful relations, testing new alliances and identifying common interests and potential win-win situations;
▶ and a consolidating perspective of anchoring and embedding persons and structures in a strategic realm where decision-making bodies are involved and political consensus can be prepared.

Duisburg: A housing company assuming responsibility for neighbourhood management

The City of Duisburg cooperated with one of the big housing companies, with the aim of stabilising the social situation in the disadvantaged neighbourhood in a sustainable way. Even after a series of consistent urban renewal measures, the neighbourhood Dichterviertel still suffered from a problematic image, a low retention of tenants and an above-average vacancy rate. The City of Duisburg and the main landowner, Evonik Wohnen, a big housing company, identified questions of social cooperation, identification with the neighbourhood and integration of migrants as decisive issues for reaching social stability, functioning neighbourhoods and a positive image – and consequently a lower vacancy rate. With a neighbourhood manager present on location, problems in the social realm and emerging conflicts in the public space can be recognised and mitigated at an early stage. Working groups promote civic participation and the common search for solutions for problems identified in the neighbourhood. The education, culture and leisure activities carried out within the neighbourhood management have many positive effects:

▶ they offer concrete help;
▶ they promote intercultural encounters and dialogue;
▶ they raise the appraisal of residents' own living space and the identification with the neighbourhood;
▶ they have positive effects on the external image supported by a focussed press and public relations activity;
▶ the activities are steps toward an intensive networking in the neighbourhood.

A steering group of the neighbourhood management is working strategically with representatives from the three cooperation partners: the City of Duisburg, the housing company and the Development Agency EG DU. Members of the "Network Dichterviertel" are representatives from different municipal departments, municipal and church institutions, associations and organisations (also of migrants), from the district council and from the City Council of Duisburg.

The key assets of a residential neighbourhood are satisfied inhabitants who live in good social coexistence with low vacancy rates and high amenity value. This means

having strong neighbourhood identification and well-kept dwellings. All activities have to be developed in a way that they can be carried on in a self-sustained way after the end of public funding. The importance of voluntary effort cannot be underestimated. Only the initiative of key persons in the neighbourhood makes it possible to connect residents to the project and encourages them to become engaged for their neighbourhood.

From the beginning, the project was planned as a Public Private Partnership project. The financial promotion within the programme "Urban Restructuring Old Federal States" was only possible because the private partner, the housing company, also became actively (and financially) involved. Meanwhile, only residual funds from the programme are being used. Funds from labour market projects are new elements of co-funding. The housing company has raised its financial engagement within the framework of the cooperation as well[3].

Ruda Slaska: Community organizing – Activities of the local community as a shield against deprivation and social difficulties

"Kaufhaus" is an old working-class neighbourhood close to the steelworks dating back to the beginning of the 20th century. Many of the residents are poor and are recipients of public assistance. No significant renovations have been undertaken on the housing stock since its construction. The apartment buildings are heated with coal, and between

Duisburg-Dichterviertel (Photo: EG DU).

**Kaufhaus estate: active residents
(Photo: M. Szydlowski).**

each floor there are only common bathroom facilities. The first design projects for public spaces are now underway. A social work centre and a daycare centre have been constructed. Residents had lost confidence in municipal activities because many promises had been made, but change is very slow in coming. These were the main challenges when the community work began in the neighbourhood, with the goal of stimulating activity on the part of local residents.

In early 2008, the Municipal Welfare Centre took the opportunity and applied for EU funds. There were two reasons for this: first, there was already a functioning Local Revitalization Programme for the City of Ruda Slaska, with many projects aimed at the Kaufhaus estate. Secondly, there is high concentration of Municipal Welfare Centre clients. The idea was the creation of a sustainable development policy for this area and the reduction of social exclusion.

After more than three years of effort, some first successes have been recorded. From a community point of view, the greatest success is the identification of a few active neighbourhood residents who have great influence on the rest of the community. The opening of a common meeting space in the neighbourhood played an important role. This sprang from the need, as expressed by the inhabitants, for a meeting place. The fact that inhabitants who acted together were able to achieve more results with authorities empowered them. Over time, it became clear that the community can be an equal partner for authorities and institutions. Meanwhile it can be stated that their efforts were viable. There is an active group of inhabitants who want to change something in their lives, their surroundings, and their neighbourhood. Inhabitants, in cooperation with the Welfare Centre and the housing management office,

have renovated some stairwells in the neighbourhood, which has an impact on the standard of living and the image of the estate. At every step we can find evidence of the principle "unity is strength".

Recently, there has been some dynamic development within the community which at first glance is a positive aspect, but has to do with balances of interests between institutionalisation and a stronger role within local policy on the one hand, and basic activities at neighbourhood level and a consulting role on the other hand. The step planned by some residents taking part in the Local Activity Programme is to build an association to gain more power and political meaning as an NGO. The idea of this NGO is to support the local community and work for the benefits of the Kaufhaus neighbourhood. They see the established Local Support Group as very narrow and underestimate their current role as an advice body and source of information about the neighbourhood towards other actors (house management, municipality, local private sector, schools etc.). At this moment only few of the residents which are part of the LSG want to be further organized. The relationship between NGO and LSG is not clear yet. In terms of governance it will be important to keep the balance and to use the energy and motivation of the active residents not so much on power relationships and the preservation of the institution, but on the concrete issues of their neighbourhood[4].

Södertälje:
The Telge-Model – A socially innovative public-private joint venture

There is a strong need for new solutions to address the multiple challenges of disadvantaged groups. In Södertälje, an integrated form of corporate social responsibility, especially of company-building between public and private, has been established with an explicit focus on unemployment as the key issue in enabling people to feel integrated in society. One of the pressing problems in the city of Södertälje is unemployment, especially of newly arrived immigrants and the long-term unemployed. Usually in Sweden this is a national-level competence and not the responsibility of the Municipality, but the steps taken were simply not sufficient. This is where the analysis at local level came in and the independent search for solutions and the involvement of big companies began.

The City Council Committee of Södertälje decided that the public company Telge should

support the municipal services, especially in the sector of unemployment, but also to cover the needs of construction of new public housing blocks. Negotiations between the Municipality, the public company Telge and nationally active companies within the private sector led to agreements. So far three public-private partnerships have turned into company formations to serve the needs mentioned above.

In terms of social innovation the three business units of Telge Company, the employment agency, the house building and construction company and the temporary staffing agency, are engaged in a new kind of partnership, with big private companies as co-owners working explicitly on the main structural problems of deprived neighbourhoods.

▶ *"Telge Manpower Jobbstart AB", an employment agency co-owned by the international company Manpower.*

The target groups are, in particular, newly arrived immigrants and the long-term unemployed. The

**Ronna neighbourhood in Södertälje
(Photo: P. Potz).**

objective is to "cut unemployment periods from 7 years to 6 months". Each month, 60 unemployed persons from the target group are enrolled into the programme of this company. The programme sees to it that they are coached and trained individually and that there is one specific contact person helping to find the right job for that particular person. The objective is to get them into regular employment.

▶ *House building & construction "Telge PEAB", co-owned with Peab AB, a construction company operating in the Nordic countries.*

Telge Peab is a cooperation between the municipal company and the construction company Peab, with the Municipality holding 49% of the shares. The employees are either long-term unemployed construction workers or immigrants with craftsman experience from their home country. From the Municipality's point of view, this offers a chance for long-term unemployed persons to establish themselves as skilled workers and to become financially self-dependent. From the view of the Public Housing Company of Telge, this is the chance to begin the regeneration of the housing stock with less investment, since the labour cost would be cheaper during the skills training. During this period, the recruited trainees will be paid by the social benefits system and by the national unemployment benefit system.

▶ *Temporary staffing "Telge Tillväxt AB" (tillväxt = growth), co-owners are private companies in the sphere of retail, food, banking, trucks, construction, insurance and recruitment. The National Labour Agency is on the company's board as well.*

The temporary staffing service's target is a 50% cut in youth unemployment, i.e. unemployed among 18 to 24-year-olds. This activity started in 2011. Young people are both very expensive in terms of public subsidies, and if permanently unemployed they are most at risk of engaging in various criminal activities, black market activity etc. The long-term aim is to ensure employment for the young generation. 150 unemployed and unskilled young people will be hired in 2011, about 10% of the target group, without any pre-selection. During the first three months, they will be employed by Telge to clean up the city, after which point they will be "rented out" to other companies (by the hour or by the day, as needed). There will be appropriate skills training in cooperation with the private companies concerned. During the time span of 12 months, these young people should leave the company after having gained training and some work experience in their field. Funding comes from the companies hiring the youngsters and from the national agency, with money that anybody can receive[5].

Ten Recommendations: Challenges and Conditions of Good Multi-Level Governance

The work of **RegGov** with the Local Support Groups has led us to proposing ten policy recommendations for how to develop good multi-level governance in urban regeneration.

Dissemination of RegGov outputs (Photo: EG DU).

1. Strengthening regional governance from the bottom to the top: No local neighbourhood projects without integrated city-wide strategies
2. Integrated urban development: Area-based and cross-sector approaches
3. Activating and enabling inhabitants: Short-term successes and long-term visions
4. City networking: Give institutions a face and build up mutual trust
5. Coalition-building: Cooperation as a principle of work
6. Physical and infrastructure investments: Linked to socially integrative activities
7. Monitoring at all involved levels: Early warning system and seismograph of results
8. Special funding programmes: A chance for social innovation input in mainstream policy
9. Bundling where necessary: Stronger integration on programme level
10. Urban agenda: Strong role of cities in the next EU funding period

These recommendations are addressing decision-makers and authorities at all levels drawing the attention to the integrated approach. With these ten principles in mind we see a positive future for the urban dimension. ●

(1) RegGov has been dealing with "Regional Governance of Sustainable Integrated Development of Deprived Urban Areas". Cf. especially the Final Report: http://urbact.eu/fileadmin/Projects/Reg_Gov/documents_media/Reggov_finalreport_web.pdf

(2) Cf. MWEBWV 2011: Sustainment of Integrative Neighbourhood Development in Disadvantaged Urban Areas in North Rhine-Westphalia. Ministry for Economic Affairs, Energy, Building, Housing and Transport of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia (MWEBWV), Dusseldorf. http://urbact.eu/fileadmin/Projects/Reg_Gov/outputs_media/Handbook_Sustainment.pdf

(3) Cf. RegGov Final Report, Case Study Duisburg, pp. 44-51

(4) Cf. RegGov Final Report, Case Study Ruda Slaska, pp. 77-81. My thanks go to Michal Szydlowski for the update (May 2011)

(5) Cf. RegGov Final Report, Case Study Södertälje-Telge, pp. 63-69.

Cover photo (EG DU): Local Action Plan Launch Event at RegGov Final Conference, Duisburg, May 2011

⊕ **MORE INFORMATION**
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IN SEARCH OF SUSTAINABILITY IN TRANSFORMING YOUTH POLICY

EXPERIENCES FROM MY GENERATION THEMATIC NETWORK

BY ROBERT ARNKIL
LEAD EXPERT OF *MY GENERATION* THEMATIC NETWORK

Young people in Europe – and beyond – are not just disillusioned about their life prospects – they are angry and ready for action, which has already boiled over in many countries.

At the beginning of the My Generation URBACT project one of the first workshops was held in Patras in January 2009. At that same time there was a wave of unrest and riots across Greece. As the project ends we have seen the resurgence of protest in Greece, the rise of the young generations in the Arab countries, and the anger of the *indignados* in Spain. The young want to be heard, and they want solutions.

So the youth issue is very much on the European agenda. What can we learn from the experience of My Generation, concerning this set of challenges? The reasons behind the present unrest of the young generations are complex, and so indeed are the necessary solutions. It would be unreasonable to assume that a three-year project, however successful, could give many answers. Nevertheless, My Generation has some important messages on what could be done with the young, and what cities could do with their policies and projects to have a better connection to their youth.

A change of paradigm is needed in youth policies

Three main problems plague both projects and policies in Europe, and this is particularly true concerning youth: target-group thinking, fragmentation and low sustainability. As a target group, the young are left in a passive role, treated not as a vital resource, but as a problem to be solved. This seriously undermines the effects, credibility and sustainability of results. Whereas the life-situations of the young would call for a comprehensive approach, uniting community and social work, education, employment, entrepreneurship, police-work and others into a whole, they are often fragmented and operating in silos. There is a lack of cooperation and limited combining of resources – including the resources of the young themselves to start with. No wonder various youth initiatives, however promising they seem with temporary project support and resources, often exhibit low sustainability. Reinventing the wheel starts with new projects.

Target group thinking is the result of the still-prevailing, overly rationalistic, supply-driven "planning and designing paradigm", where some groups of more or less wise specialists identify a problem and a "target group', then design a project, and call in stakeholders to run it. Very often the last stakeholders to be called to run, not to speak of design, the project are the people supposed to benefit from it. They end up in a passive and token role, which severely undermines the effects, sustainability and transferability of results. This kind of approach is of course not typical only for youth projects, but has been the prevailing way a good deal of working-life development has operated for decades[1]. It was thought that with expert, specialist scientific and political design, some kind of perfect or better solution must be "imported" to the workplaces, more or less like a commodity. Over years, in a painful way, it turned out that all solutions must be adapted through a local learning process, and all actors have an equally important role in finding solutions – the workers, managers, administrators, consultants and scientists.

The starting point of My Generation

The **My Generation** URBACT project started in November 2008 and ended in the Summer 2011. It was a learning network on good practices in connecting to the young generation, to design better youth policies and build tomorrow's cities with today's youth. The partners in the project were Antwerp, Belgium; Birmingham, UK; Gdansk, Poland; Glasgow, UK; Gothenburg, Sweden; Patras, Greece; Riga, Latvia; Rotterdam, the Netherlands; Valencia, Spain; Warsaw, Poland and Tirgu-Mures, Romania.

The partner cities in **My Generation** had similar challenges, but also their own acute problem areas. A common challenge was the disengagement of a great number of young from local communities, education and employment. This had led, in varying degrees to the deterioration of neighbourhoods, gang-related violence, ethnic strife, rising drop-out rates and high youth unemployment. This complex set of challenges is mirrored by the fragmentation of city policies and efforts trying to deal with youth issues. The young were often treated as a source of problems and not as partners in the solutions.

At the beginning of the project it was obvious that some cities had already done a lot to engage with the young, whereas for some investment in this direction was new. Also the strengths and weaknesses varied. Some cities were innovative in reaching out to young in trouble, some others in finding new solutions in education, and some in connecting education to employment and business. But nobody had the perfect solution, covering the entire "landscape" on youth policies. A comprehensive youth policy needs good practices in reaching those hard to reach, good practices in building on informal skills of the young, and to connect these better to formal education and good practices in connecting education to employment and entrepreneurship. Addressing this youth policy landscape, a new "ecology" is needed, starting with real involvement of the young, and connecting their activities to community work, public services, education and the business community. **My Generation** set out to do this.

> **As a target group, the young are left in a passive role, treated not as a vital resource, but as a problem to be solved.**

A case in point is what has also happened in innovation policy: First it was thought that the cooperation between science (generating knowledge), public administration (creating funding and cooperation) and the industries (generating wealth and practical solutions) was the "engine" to find new solutions. Today innovation is in the middle of a paradigm change towards *open innovation*, emphasising broad cooperation in innovation and user-centric innovation policy. An era of linear, top-down, expert driven development, production and services is giving way to different forms and levels of coproduction with consumers, customers and citizens. This is also challenging the public authorities and the production of public services[2]. Coproduction is equally important in developing the next generation of youth policies.

First lesson from My Generation: the young as genuine co-creators

My Generation set out to do things differently. Participating in URBACT and **My Generation** made it possible to take steps in transforming youth policies and actions towards a new culture of co-creation. This is the key to all the other conclusions.

At every stage and in all activities **My Generation** has asked: How are the young themselves engaging in our project? How could this be improved? In order to foster good contact and co-creation with the young, **My Generation** had to transform the way workshops and meetings were run, and what kind of communication and products were used and made: they had to be active, creative and use all the senses. And there is no harm in meetings being fun, too!

So **My Generation** insisted from the very beginning that every city had young people on board at every stage, including the Local Support Groups. In URBACT the Local Support Groups were supposed to be multi-actor/multi-stakeholder "miniature hubs" of youth policy coordination, and a potential element to work towards a new ecology of youth policy – and better future sustainability of project results. This is of course only potentially a new beginning, but as it turned out, even this seemingly small change turned out to be quite revolutionary, in fact a major cultural change, in the cities.

But how do you do that? How do you get the young on board? This challenge led My Generation to the other key learning point and message: In order to be able to get the young genuinely aboard, the whole "ecology" of the action, the way things were done, the "mode" in which the project was run, needed to be transformed.

can be very creative and talented in many things. They just need encouragement and a chance to show it and build on it. Community work, education and the business world need to be transformed to better embrace these "life-based skills" – be they in music, dance, sports, computers, making films and pictures, using social media or wherever.

This is at the very core of the **My Generation** message. **My Generation** provided an opportunity to the partner city groups to *experience* what a dialogical, engaging and co-creating way of working actually IS, and not just to hear presentations about it[3]. This experience can then be taken back home, and build upon, adapting it to the local circumstances. The most important aspect of this experience is having the young genuinely aboard, but a good second is the engagement with the local communities, public officials, educational, business and scientific communities.

This dialogical experience is, we believe, more important than the actual solutions derived within a short project time span. After all, the starting-points of the cities vary in project experience and policy environments, so everybody has its own relevant "zone of proximal development". But every city could learn something about better engagement, dialogical experience, and challenge itself to move ahead, and adapt to the changing circumstances.

This idea of transforming the ecology of engagement is of course not an isolated phenomenon concerning only youth policy. It is very much in line with the development of the understanding of learning and development in very different fields of activity, ranging from knowledge management, workplace development and innovation, concepts of learning organisations and recently the "digital explosion", producing a hybrid environment of learning. It is at the centre of the new paradigm of social innovation that is emerging. The common thread running through all these is a new appreciation of experiential, or "tacit" knowledge, and the need to better connect this tacit knowledge into explicit, formal knowledge. The key here is to provide "learning spaces", where connecting socially, expressing and articulating yourself (not only by words, but by other means like movement, gestures, pictures, metaphors), connecting to already existing formal knowledge, and finally experimenting yourself, *creating* something, trying out yourself, form a continual, transformative learning process[4].

Second lesson: Transform the ecology of engagement and action

It is no big secret that the young do not respond well to the kinds of workshops and activities churned on the basis of the still-prevailing rationalistic "planning and design" paradigm. Come to think of it, who does? This mode produces seminars running in monologue, workshops and meetings crammed with Powerpoint presentations by experts, decision makers and project planners. There is a huge gap from this mode to reach out to disengaged young, whose life might be in a mess, and who are suspicious of the bunch of helpers hunting them down and suddenly wanting to do them good.

We need to transform our entire "ecology of engagement", or to be more precise, we

Transforming youth policies and actions towards a new culture of co-creation.

need to tune in to the change that has already occurred, and is in fact the more natural way of people to communicate and learn. We need to use all channels and modalities of human communication and action: to use dialogue, movement, dance, music, pictures, video. This is precisely what we have done in **My Generation**. We have emphasised real life stories, youth ambassadors, mediators, champions and youth role models, championing young talent and creativity. At every stage and in all activities we were asking: How could we enrich our working methods, so that it facilitates engagement?

One important "vehicle" to tap into the resources of the young, related to transforming the "mode" of workshops, was emphasising the importance of informal knowledge and skills. Many young people have great difficulties in relating to the learning environment provided by schools, and end up with miserable and useless diplomas, if they do not drop out altogether. There is a need to transform the education system, which should be better geared to new ways of learning. It is a message to build all kinds of opportunities for informal, "life-based learning" skills to emerge and flourish, and connect this better to formal learning. As it turns out, young people with bad school histories

This is precisely what **My Generation** has tried to tap into: providing learning spaces, where people engage, express themselves, are connected to broader knowledge and also create something themselves, trying out the concepts and understanding emerging in the learning journey of **My Generation**. As an example: instead of having lectures on what young people think in a particular city, in one of the **My Generation** workshops the young were given a crash course by professionals on making videos. Then the young were assigned to go out in the streets and make creative videos of young people – what they think, how they see the city. These were fed into YouTube. In other words the young learned useful skills (making videos, group-work, using the Internet) and at the same time expressed themselves (and the interviewees) creatively.

Because of the prevalence of the rationalistic "planning-design" mode in project thinking, **My Generation** has made a special effort to pay enough attention to the "underdog": the informal, creative and tacit. At the end of the day, it is of course about striking a good balance between the more cognitive and expressive modes.

Third lesson: Transform the ecology of the youth policy Cityscape

So we need to have the young as co-creators, and this calls for a transformation of engagement and the way we do things. But can this be sustained?

Nobody can solve complex societal challenges alone. The key idea of **My Generation** has been about establishing better contacts in the cities between the actors in the "youth cause", particularly the local communities, various forms of education and the business community. All the workshops, in different ways and different degrees, were multi-actor workshops with young, professionals, city people, entrepreneurs, politicians. At every stage and in all activities we have asked: Where do we need better contacts? How can **My Generation** act as a catalyst and a platform for better contacts? What about the decision makers? Where do they want to make a new breakthrough?

Often youth policies are fragmented or missing completely, so youth activities in particular are left separated. Cities try, with various projects, to strengthen neighbourhoods, activate

> ## Nobody can solve complex societal challenges alone.

young people, combat drop-out from education or unemployment – but separately, often unaware of each other, and wasting already scarce resources. What is worse, the various measures – reaching out to disengaged young, education and employment are not connected, there is lack of actors and good practices to go over the boarders, to build bridges, to travel with the young across the difficult transitions as a friend, a coach, a role model. So a success in, say, getting young activated, is wasted, when the next steps (and the transition help) – building skills and finding employment – are missing. The young become even more *indignados* with this approach, than at the start!
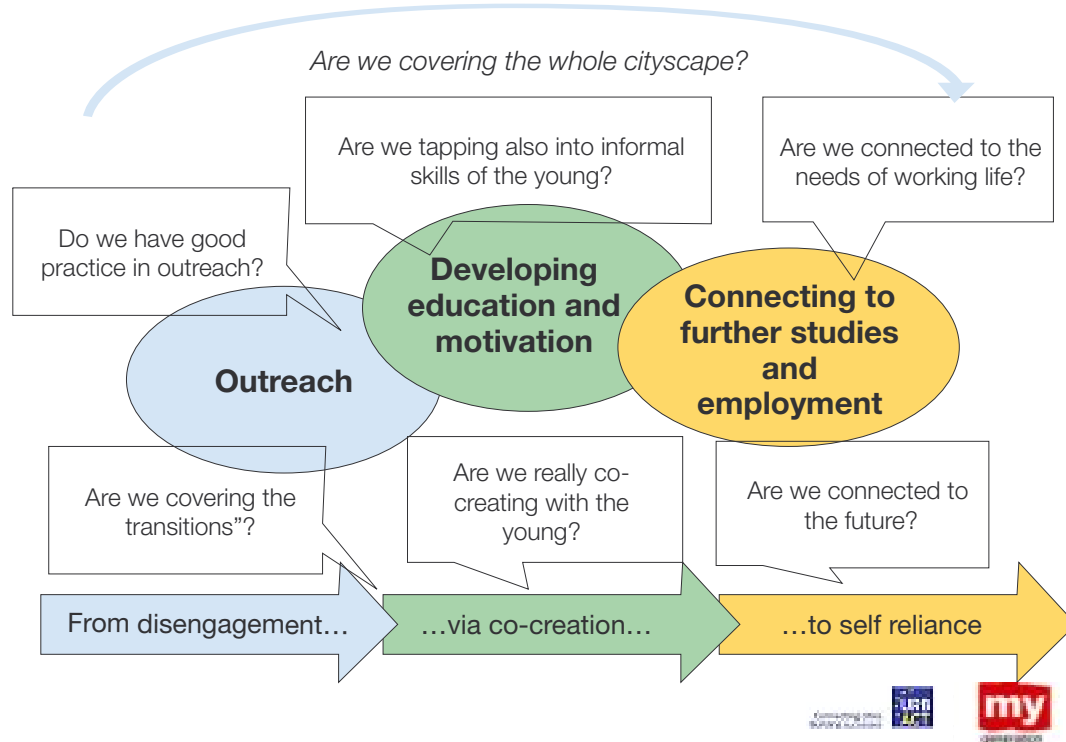
The **My Generation** cities had very different situations and policy landscapes to address these challenges. Some cities had a lot of experience in reaching out to young people in trouble and transforming that to positive activities, whilst some cities were only taking first steps here. Others had a lot of experience

in building on the informal skills of young people, and providing hands-on coaching, where for some this was new. Others, again, were experienced at the employment and business end of active transitions towards a self-reliant young life, where some cities had not connected the business community to these activities.

But nobody had the complete and perfect solution. This is where the **My Generation** YOUTH POLICY CITYSCAPE concept, a way of looking at the total "ecology" and resource needed for an "ideal" city youth policy coverage in terms of good practices, was useful. In the picture an example is given of one version of the cityscape with a few key questions concerning youth policy.

> ## The key idea of My Generation has been about establishing better contacts in the cities between local communities, education and the business community.

MY GENERATION YOUTH POLICY CITYSCAPE

Are we covering the whole cityscape?

Are we tapping also into informal skills of the young?

Are we connected to the needs of working life?

Do we have good practice in outreach?

Developing education and motivation

Connecting to further studies and employment

Outreach

Are we covering the transitions"?

Are we really co-creating with the young?

Are we connected to the future?

From disengagement… …via co-creation… …to self reliance

YOUTH POLICY CITYSCAPE as a tool for developing city policies and sustainability

Outreach, Education, Transition to working life, tapping into informal skills, having the young as co-creators, connecting local communities, the educational community and the business community – all constituted the "ecology" of youth city policy, as understood in **My Generation**, based on its learning journey. We started calling this a YOUTH POLICY CITYSCAPE, which could then be used to identify good practices in the various areas of this "ecology", and also to identify missing links, actors and practices.

No city has a perfect coverage of the CITYSCAPE, and all cities can improve and learn from others. To reach better results, cities need to cover the entire youth policy CITYSCAPE. This means they must have good practices in Outreach – reaching out for young in trouble, in Education – like tapping into informal skills - and in connecting to Employment – like providing work practice, apprenticeship and coaching for entrepreneurship.

What has already been achieved?

Rotterdam's example – also using its experience as European Youth Capital – has been inspiring, both in the calibre of the young people who have come forward but also through the innovative ways of ensuring that the youth voice is heard. The concept of the Youth Council for example, has emerged as a key structure for attracting young people and providing them with influence in their city. Many other **My Generation** cities have gone down this route and set up Youth Councils. So in terms of sustainability, Youth Councils and Youth Mayors are a fruitful element.

Trust is at the heart of altering relationships and obtaining sustainability, and another way of building this is to embed services within young people's communities. Using resources to recognise young people's skills – informal and formal – and to create pathways into professions is another effective model we have seen. In Antwerp the Youth Competence Centres lie within communities where many young people have been switched off by formal education. Using credible role models, and drawing youth in through media and sport Antwerp – and cities like Birmingham and Glasgow – are making those initial

connections to build upon. So another key element in sustainability is putting in place structures in and close to the communities.

In Outreach and community engagement we have the experience of many cities using sport, arts and events. From Birmingham we have Street Games and World Worth Living (coaching and empowering in small groups), from Riga new Voluntary Organisation cooperation, from Gdansk use of Skate Parks in engaging with young people otherwise out off the city's radar screen. In transition to Education and challenging and transforming education we have the experience of Youth Competence Centres, C-stick of Antwerp (making a lively CV on a computer stick, also making informal skills "visible") and Community Schools of Rotterdam (addressing drop-outs and providing a second chance to complete education). In mediation, guidance, and connection to employment and business we have the experience of guidance centres and one-stop-shops, companies run by young entrepreneurs acting as brokers and go-betweens, Young Business Incubators in schools, and Chambers of Commerce reaching out to young entrepreneurs and providing them guidance.

All these experiences and activities – Youth Councils, Youth Mayors, Youth Competence Centres, Community Schools, Street Games, Young Chambers of Commerce, Young Business Brokers, Young Business Incubators – and many others – are already in many instances *permanent* structures and activities in the cities, so they have much more potential for sustainability than just temporary projects. What is more, these ideas are cross-pollinating each other, so that the cities are completing their YOUTH POLICY CITYSCAPES. The various good practices need to be connected better to provide an as seamless chain of active transitions as possible. But, as said, nobody yet has the perfect YOUTH CITYSCAPE in place. All European cities are welcome to fill in the gaps! ●

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MORE INFORMATION
MY GENERATION project:
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SUSTAINABLE LOCAL POLICY-MAKING WITH ENGAGED STAKEHOLDERS

THE UNIC EXPERIENCE

BY EURICO NEVES
LEAD EXPERT OF THE *UNIC* THEMATIC NETWORK

Ever since the Greeks invented democracy to govern their city-states the issue of participation has always been on the political agenda. "*Man is by nature a political animal*", Aristotle stated. And while participation in Athenian democracy and the other Greek cities that followed it was by no means open, the in-group of participants was constituted with no reference to economic class and participated on a scale that was truly phenomenal by today standards.

"In our age there is no such thing as 'keeping out of politics'. All issues are political issues" – George Orwell

Democracy has evolved since but participation has had its ups and downs. Listen to the "man or woman in the street" today and he or she will probably tell you that they're fed up with politics. But that in itself is a political statement that should be, and often is, taken into account by political forces. Participation is still key to democracy and the closer the governance is to citizens the more important it becomes – as in city governance.

URBACT, the European programme for promoting sustainable Urban Development, has acknowledged this fact from its inception in 2002, and has been pushing this model forward ever since. While URBACT projects focus on exchange and mutual learning between city authorities for the development of better urban policies, projects must ensure quality and realistic outputs by involving key players from each partner city via Local Support Groups. These groups of local stakeholders should participate in the exchanges throughout the project, contributing to the definition of Local Action Plans in each city and validating and participating in the deployment of its activities.

The URBACT Local Support Group of Stoke-on-Trent.

At a time where user-led and open innovation concepts are increasingly being adopted through organizations around the world, including city governing boards, the role of Local Support Groups as an open innovation practice should be highlighted. The Local Support Group from a URBACT project partner city represents the end users and other stakeholders, for which Urban Development Policies, within the Local Action Plan, are conceived. And as one of the central roles of the Local Support Groups will precisely concern design and implementation of the Local Action Plan, which includes actions directed to them and that will affect their lives, this is indeed an open innovation process, with a committed participation of end-users that is being fostered by the URBACT programme, in what is a pioneering initiative at the level of European Programmes.

The concept has now become a landmark of URBACT and each partner in each project knows that they must create and animate their Local Support Group throughout the project, normally 3 years. But does it really work? Is it sustainable and inductive of an enhanced level of participation in the city? What happens once the project ends?

The feedback from the **UNIC** project, one of the "Fast Track" Thematic networks of URBACT II, as regards local participation is quite positive. Yes, it is working. And, yes again, most Local Support Groups will remain active after the end of the project, with some even going mainstreamed and becoming a permanent council for advising the city authority in the field covered by the project.

The UNIC Experience – stakeholders' participation has been vital for the development of new local policies in the Action Plans

UNIC is a project about change and how to address industrial heritage in the ceramic sector to build new competitive factors for a new, global knowledge economy. The path followed by **UNIC** is relevant for all cities depending on traditional industries that want to embark on a similar process of smart growth.

Since the start of **UNIC**, in December 2008, Local Support Groups have been actively involved in all cities — first in the exchange and mutual learning process that took place in the network, with active participation in the

several meetings and events organized, and later in the validation and implementation of the Local Action Plans. Local Support Group members from the 9 **UNIC** cities – university professors, company representatives, museum curators, but also artists and craftsmen, have been regularly present at **UNIC** meetings, often taking the floor to speak about their experiences and expectancies and networking amongst them. The experience of participation has therefore been not only at local level but also at European level.

Different Local Support Groups for different cities

Local Support Groups in **UNIC** have been as varied as the partner cities themselves. While they have all followed the focus on ceramics, they have significant discrepancies in terms of size (ranging from 19 external organisations in Pécs to 4 in Faenza), nature of participants (with some cities with direct participation of industries while others have privileged the participation of associations), level of openness and method of organisation.

Stoke-on-Trent, arguably one of the cities where participation has been more significant, has taken the strategy of opening the Local Support Group to as many participants as possible, placing a "federative factor" in the development of Local Action Plan. The preparatory phase involved consulting fifty or so people from a number of different areas (museums, shops, tourist authorities, etc.), and not all were "full-time members" of the Local Support Group, meaning that while they normally didn't get the chance to participate in project meetings abroad or would periodically meet with city representatives to get updates on the project, they still get the chance to sit around a table to talk about a project that touched them all. Other cities have also stressed the importance of keeping the Local Support Groups open to additional actors throughout the process, and while it is early for a definitive assessment, those seem to be most successful cases in terms of adherence of local stakeholders to proposed activities.

Rachel Nicholson, City Council officer in charge of the project at Stoke-on-Trent, highlights the importance of the local participation process for the development of the Local Action Plan:

"Before formalising our Local Action Plan, we thought it was essential to bring together all the various ceramic stakeholders in Stoke-on-Trent and the region (industrials, univer-

sities, labor unions, etc.) in order to jointly discuss the project. This preparatory step of dialogue and confronting points of view took us six months, during which we carried out a full analysis of the current situation and challenges. This work allowed us to build a shared vision of the ceramics cluster for 2025 and of the actions needed to reach this objective. Our Local Action Plan was born.

Catherine Fehily (Photo: R. Nicholson)

At the same time as we put together the Local Action Plan in the format URBACT asked for, we formalized a founding document that expresses our vision for 2025 and four recommendations to implement. It was build with the involvement of the 18 members of our Local Support Group, but we opened the consultation to fifty or so other stakeholders in the ceramic sector."

The same enthusiasm about the Local Support Groups activities and the cooperation opportunities it offered is shared by members such as Catherine Fehily, Director for Enterprise, Research and Knowledge Transfer, Staffordshire University:

"Our involvement with the UNIC Local Support Group helped us to cement existing strong relationships and to develop new cooperation, both within the ceramics cluster in Stoke-on-Trent and with colleagues across Europe. The whole group now gels together and understands the importance of each contribution to this growing industry".

Other cities agree on the importance of involving local actors as early as possible in the process; they should participate in the identification of problems and in the design of adequate solutions and not only in the validation of solutions conceived by others. But while initiating such a process can be facilitated by the enthusiasm that normally follows the start of a new project or activity, keeping up the pace throughout the 30 months of project implementation is a more challenging matter.

The challenge of keeping local actors motivated

All **UNIC** cities agree on the difficulties in mobilising the relevant local actors and finding the time for regular meetings amongst all participants. From weekly to biannual meetings,

most of the participants agreeing that monthly or once every two months could be the best compromise, and stress the leading and mobilising role that must be played by the city authorities.

António Soares, responsible for the **UNIC** project at the City of Aveiro, points out *"the need to establish effective communication and monitoring tools between the City governing bodies and the Local Support Group in order to ensure its sustainability during the project"* – something that in Aveiro has been implemented through the organisation of regular meetings every 3 months. This is a habit that the city officers intend to keep even after the formal conclusion of the project, for the moment as an informal group – but an eventual formalization of the role of this group is still being considered.

Overall, and while it is important to acknowledge the level of heterogeneity of the different Local Support Groups from City to City, all partners rate the stakeholders contributions to their Local Action Plans at a very high level.

But now that the Local Action Plans are complete and signed, and the **UNIC** project is over, what will become of the Local Support Groups, and how can stakeholders keep up with policy development in their city?

Keeping in with politics after UNIC – the example of Stoke-on-Trent

While the conclusion of the **UNIC** project in June 2011 also means for most of the partner cities the conclusion of the formal activities of the Local Support Group, things are not expected to go back to what they were before in terms of stakeholders' participation in local policies. And there is at least one city – with others considering similar processes – where the Local Support Group has been institutionalized into a permanent advisory structure to the City Council, with a role to play in local policy making.

This has happened in Stoke-on-Trent, the city whose history is so rooted in the ceramic sector that it is known in the UK as "The Potteries". Even before the end of **UNIC**, and putting into practice one of the main actions included in the Local Action Plan, the temporary Local Support Group has given origin to the permanent Ceramic Development Council.

This new structure has been created with the objective of establishing a body, led by industry and including other cluster stakeholders, that has the capacity to provide strategic leadership, direction and a prioritized action plan to develop the local ceramic cluster over the medium to long term, in alignment with local economic development policies.

Rachel Nicholson explains the process of creation of the Ceramic Development Council and how it was originated from the former Local Support Group:

"Before the UNIC Local Support Group (LSG), there was no one organisation that acted as a single strategic coordinating body for the Stoke on Trent Ceramic Cluster. Given

> **"In Stoke-on-Trent, and putting into practice one of the main actions included in the Local Action Plan, the temporary Local Support Group has given origin to the permanent Ceramic Development Council."**

the history and breadth of the cluster, and the wide variety of the issues that collectively need to be addressed, it is unsurprising that there were a number of separate industry organisations, each dealing with the specific matters for which they were established. It is important that these organisations continue to function and are mutually supportive of one another.

The creation of the LSG under UNIC has lead to the establishment of a single coordinating cluster body providing the vehicle for better collaboration, communication and dialogue between all existing stakeholders, which we strived to maintain after the end of the project."

The new Ceramics Development Council will provide the whole ceramic industry (firms in the supply chain, prime manufacturers, studio ceramicists) locally and its associated stakeholders with an effective and inclusive mechanism to consider and respond, including proactively, to strategic challenges to the strength and competitiveness of the cluster. This will be done in close cooperation with the City Council, for whom it will function as an advisory body, and that funds the costs of operation of the Council from the city budget.

An industry representative from Stoke explains how the stakeholders view the Council:

"We are now working in an industry that has one voice and understand that there is strength in numbers. Collectively, we now have the important task of growing our sector and show that it is technologically advanced and at the heart of cutting edge research and innovation."

Profiting from the LSG momentum, the new Council is expected to meet 5 times per year to move the Local Action Plan initiatives forward.

Similar initiatives, albeit at an earlier stage of development, are planned in Limoges, Delft,

"For the UNIC cities, there is clearly a before and an after UNIC in terms of participation of ceramic sector stakeholders in the conception and implementation of local policies with an impact in their sector and in city development as a whole."

Aveiro and Castellón, with the creation of permanent fora building on the collaboration and participation developed through the Local Support Groups of **UNIC**. In Limoges the plan is to create an "assembly" of ceramics gathering the players from the Limoges territory and the Limousin region, which could benefit from local support for its activities and for taking on board a number of events, such as the European Ceramic Society Conference that will be held in 2013.

In Delft, the Local Support Group will be kept active and involved in the preparation of the Cultural Action Plan for the Cultural Heritage Department of the City Council, after which it may become a permanent advisory structure with the goal to reinforce the very important Delft Blue heritage by combining both historical and innovative, technical components.

Aveiro, as mentioned earlier, is keeping the periodicity of meetings with the Local Support Group, while considering a more permanent nature. And in Castellón the goal is to set up a "Ceramics Observatory", gathering the current members of the Local Support Group and producing periodic recommendation for the City Council to influence local policies.

In all these cities, the experience of **UNIC**, and the role played by local stakeholders in the conception and deployment of the Local Action Plans has shown both local politics and stakeholders the benefits of participative policy planning. In some cities this will lead to changes in the organizational landscape, with

the introduction of new bodies, while in others it may be a change in attitude, with better communication of policies.

What impact in local governance from increased participation of stakeholders?

Policy assessment and evaluation is a long-term process, and with the **UNIC** project just concluded it is clearly too early to assess the impact of the changes in governance induced by the increased participation of stakeholders, as a result of URBACT LSG methodology.

But first indicators are clearly positive. Large-scale events, with a strong impact in the local economy, such as the Limoges "De terre et de feu" exhibition and Stoke-on-Trent British Ceramics Biennial, have benefited from stakeholders mobilization to reach its largest-ever levels of participation in the last edition of both events. Pécs have used its Local Support Group to capitalize on the urban transformation caused by the European Capital of Culture 2010, whose global assessment is positive.

And for most of the **UNIC** cities, there is clearly a before and an after **UNIC** in terms of participation of ceramic sector stakeholders in the conception and implementation of local policies with an impact in their sector and in city development as a whole. ●

"The experience of UNIC, and the role played by local stakeholders in the conception and deployment of the Local Action Plans, has shown both local politics and stakeholders the benefits of participative policy planning."

➡ URBACT II PROJECTS

PROJECTS	ISSUES ADDRESSED	LEAD PARTNERS
CITIES, ENGINES OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & JOB CREATION		
Creative Clusters	**Creative clusters in low density urban areas** (diversifying local economic base; using cultural activities as catalysts for development; setting up physical, social, educational environment to attract and retain talented people in "the creative city"; etc.)	Obidos - PT
ESIMEC	**Economic strategies and innovation in medium-sized cities** (workforce development and demand-led skills initiatives to ensure a sustainable economic recovery, growth and resilience in medium-sized cities)	Basingstoke and Deane - UK
FIN-URB-ACT	**SMEs and local economic development** (support systems for SMEs and innovative/high-tech projects; pathways to partnerships between cities and Managing Authorities; communication on support schemes, etc.)	Aachen - DE
OPENCities*	**Opening cities to build-up, attract and retain human capital** (identifying factors of "openness" and their impact on city attractiveness; increasing and promoting city openness to attract international migrants, etc.)	Belfast - UK
REDIS	**Science districts and urban development** (integrated policies for the development of science/knowledge districts; multi-level governance issues; etc.)	Magdeburg - DE
RUnUp	**Strengthening endogenous potential of urban poles** (improving local governance of innovation; promoting triple helix partnerships for local economic development; setting conditions for the stimulation of knowledge-based activities, etc.)	Gateshead - UK
UNIC*	**Traditional industries and innovation** (strengthening local industries and promoting innovation in the ceramics sector; promoting ceramics traditions as a driver for urban renewal; promoting cultural and industrial heritage, etc.)	Limoges - FR
Urban N.O.S.E.	**Urban incubators for social enterprises** (fostering inclusive development policies; consolidating inter-institutional partnerships; connecting local authorities and the Service sector, etc.)	Gela - IT
WEED	**Women at work** (improving working conditions, promoting/supporting entrepreneurship, fostering employment in IT and scientific/knowledge-based sectors, etc.)	Celje - SI
CITIES, ACTIVE INCLUSION & GOVERNANCE		
Active A.G.E.	**Strategies for cities with an ageing population** (supporting employment; improving long-term and home-based care services; fighting social exclusion and insecurity; fostering inter-generational solidarity as a driver for elderly-sensitive urban development policies; assessing the impact of ageing in urban planning; etc.)	Roma - IT
Building Healthy Communities*	**Urban factors influencing health** (indicators and criteria for a healthy sustainable urban development; healthy sustainable lifestyles; use of structural funds in addressing health issues)	Torino - IT
CityRegion.Net	**Urban sprawl and development of hinterlands** (planning tools and financial schemes for a sustainable city-hinterland development; cooperation at regional level)	Graz - AT
EGTC	**Sustainable development of cross-border agglomerations** (local and multi-level governance systems)	Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière - FR
HOPUS	**Design coding for sustainable housing** (governance for the implementation of design coding; quality standards for urban and architectural design, etc.)	University La Sapienza, Roma - IT
Joining Forces	**Strategy and governance at city-region scale** (spatial planning; mobility and transports; environmental issues; development of knowledge-based economies; attractiveness and competitiveness; social inclusion, participation, empowerment; governance mechanisms, etc.)	Lille Metropole - FR
LUMASEC	**Sustainable land use management** (managing urban sprawl; fostering attractiveness; strategies for local decision-makers, etc.)	University of Karlsruhe - DE
My Generation	**Promoting the positive potential of young people in cities** (transforming passivity and alienation into positive personal and professional aspirations; fostering active transitions from education to work; holistic coordination of youth related initiatives, etc.)	Rotterdam - NL
NeT-TOPIC	**City model for intermediate/peripheral metropolitan cities** (managing urban identity; governance issues; fighting urban fragmentation; regeneration of brownfields, military sites, etc.; transforming a mono-functional city into a multifunctional city)	L'Hospitalet de Llobregat - ES
Nodus	**Spatial planning and urban regeneration** (improving coordination of area-based regeneration and regional/metropolitan planning; integrated policies, etc.)	Generalitat de Catalunya - ES
OP-ACT	**Strategic positioning of small and medium-sized cities** (sustainable, efficient financial and economic structures to face demographic change, advanced de-industrialization and the effects of the crisis)	Leoben - AT
Roma-Net*	**Integration of the Roma population in European cities** (access to key services, active inclusion into the labour market through education, and development of self-help initiatives)	Budapest - HU
Suite	**Sustainable housing provision** (economic viability and social mix; environmental quality standards, etc.)	Santiago de Compostela - ES
TOGETHER	**Developing co-responsibility for social inclusion and well-being of residents in European cities** (Integrated strategies to foster cooperation between public authorities, citizens and private stakeholders, and indicators for the management of such strategies)	Mulhouse - FR
CITIES & INTEGRATED SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT		
ACTIVE TRAVEL	**Tackling transport problems by promoting walking and cycling in small and medium-sized cities** (Integrated strategies for cities to promote environment-friendly means of urban transport and improve energy efficiency)	Weiz - AT
CASH*	**Cities' Action for Sustainable Housing** (Solutions for sustainable renovation of social housing and the provision of affordable housing units in urban areas)	Echirolles - FR
C.T.U.R.	**Cruise Traffic and Urban Regeneration** (physical and environmental regeneration of port-areas; cruise traffic and port-heritage as drivers for economic and social development; planning and management of cruise development, etc.)	Napoli - IT
CoNet	**Approaches to strengthening social cohesion in neighbourhoods** (area-based and integrated approaches to neighbourhood development; new governance structures for the integration of socio-cultural, educational and economic dimensions, etc.)	Berlin - DE
EVUE	**Electric Vehicles in Urban Europe** (Integrated, sustainable strategies and leadership techniques for cities to promote the use of electric vehicles and to improve their attractiveness)	Westminster - UK
HerO*	**Cultural heritage and urban development** (revitalization policies; protection of visual integrity; integrated systems for the management of cultural heritage)	Regensburg - DE
JESSICA 4 Cities	**JESSICA and Urban Development Funds** (design and implementation of funding schemes; territorial evaluation and diagnoses; city projects and Operational Programmes, etc.)	Regione Toscana - IT
LC-Facil	**Implementing integrated sustainable urban development according to the Leipzig Charter** (tools for the definition, implementation, monitoring of integrated policies for urban development; testing the "Sustainable cities Reference Framework" developed by the Group of Member States and Institutions)	Leipzig - DE
LINKS	**Old European cities as a key for sustainability** (Integrated strategies to improve the attractiveness and quality of life in old historical centres, foster sustainable housing, while preserving architectural identity and cultural heritage)	Bayonne - FR
RegGov*	**Governance in integrated urban development** (long-term integrated policies and financial planning for sustainable regeneration of deprived areas; monitoring progress and achievements; sustainable partnerships; city-region governance; neighbourhoods at risk, etc.)	Duisburg - DE
REPAIR	**Regeneration of abandoned military sites** (socio-economic regeneration of abandoned military heritage sites as a driver for sustainable urban development)	Medway - UK
SURE	**Socio-economic methods for urban rehabilitation in deprived urban areas** (enhancing sustainable growth through diversification of local economies in deprived areas of medium-size cities)	Eger - HU

*Fast Track Label

→ THE URBACT II PARTNERS

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URBACT is a European exchange and learning programmepromoting 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 changes. URBACT helps cites 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 II is 300 different sized cities and their Local Support Groups, 37 Projects, 29 countries, and 5,000 active stakeholders coming equally from Convergence and Competitiveness areas. URBACT is jointly financed by ERDF and the Member States.

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