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IMPLEMENTATION OF LOCAL ACTION PLANS

STATE OF PLAY IN CALL 1 PARTNER CITIES

Synthesis of the results of the study on the Local Action Plans produced by partners of networks approved under the 1st call "LAP implementation component"

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1 - Background

The study commissioned to FORS/ Eurêka 21 included an online survey launched in cooperation with the URBACT Secretariat. All partners involved in thematic networks of the 1st Call for Proposals[1] were invited to report on the implementation of their Local Action Plans one year after their submission and the closure of their network. This document presents the results of this part of the study (the other main component was a desk review of the Local Action Plans submitted by call 1 networks as a result of their activities).

69 out of the 184 partners involved filled in the online survey, i.e. a 38% response rate. One of the main reasons to this response rate is the significant turn-over of staff in charge of URBACT activities in partner cities once a network is completed. This made it almost impossible to establish a contact with some partner cities and, when contact was established to identify a person in a position to provide the relevant information in the timeframe of the study.

Nevertheless it should be underlined that the 69 answers cover all 19 thematic networks approved with partners from 21 out of the 27 Member and Partner States represented in the First Call for Proposals (51% from Competitiveness regions and 49% from Convergence regions).
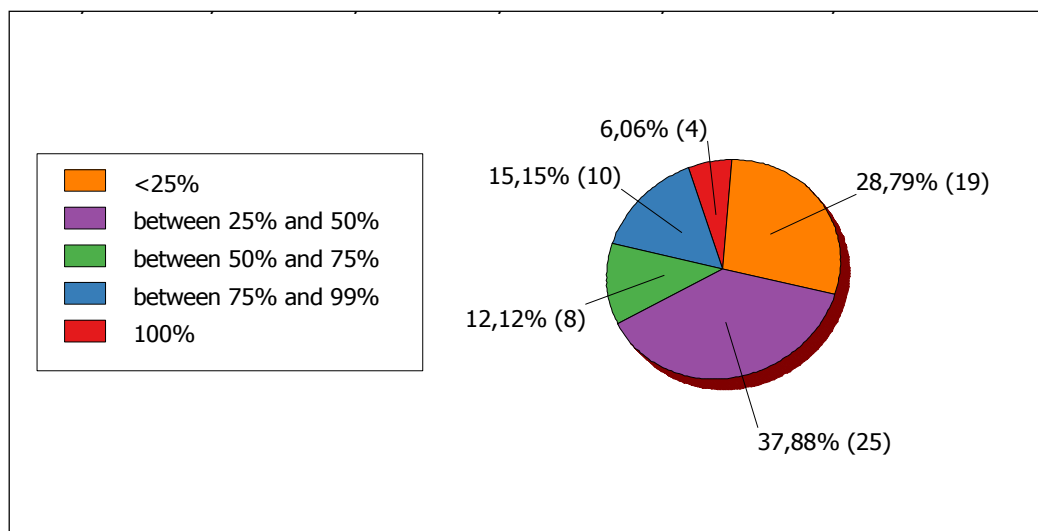
2 – Overview on Local Action Plan Implementation

2.1 Level of implementation

When asked about the state of play in the implementation of the LAP one year after the end of their URBACT project, **90% respondents declare they have started to implement** actions foreseen in their LAPs.

Partners were also requested to provide information concerning the level of implementation of the Local Action Plans. The chart below shows that the extent of implementation varies a lot across partners.

Graph 1 - Level of implementation of Local Action Plans

Legend:
- <25%
- between 25% and 50%
- between 50% and 75%
- between 75% and 99%
- 100%

Values: 6,06% (4); 15,15% (10); 28,79% (19); 12,12% (8); 37,88% (25)

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[1]   Considering that the Working Groups delivered their LAPs one year earlier than the thematic networks (which made it difficult to get back to relevant persons in the partner institutions) and having in mind the particular nature of the plans produced by WG partners (various types of partners involved including a number of universities and research centres), it was decided to address the survey only to partners of the 19 approved Thematic Networks. The 2 Fast Track Networks, closed in 2007, have not been included in the survey.

When looking at the level of implementation, it appears that only 4 partners declare full implementation of their LAPs at that point in time[2]. The situation for the other respondents in terms of level of implementation is as follows:

- over 50%: 27% partners (70% from Competitiveness regions).

- 25% - 50%: 38% partners (68% from EU15)

- below 25%: 29% partners (Competitiveness and Convergence regions are almost equally represented (respectively 42% Competitiveness and 58% Convergence)

Several factors account for the heterogeneous situation in the implementation of the action plans:

- **Timeframe of the Local Action Plans**

The information collected by the online survey provides a picture of the state of play at a given moment in time (one year after the official end of the thematic networks). The review of the LAPs produced under the 1st call shows that most of them were planned over a 5-year delivery time frame. When considering the partners stating they are implementing their LAPs, 58% refer to plans to be delivered over a period of 5 years (versus 24% short and mid-term).

- **Shifting from LAP to implementation**

In a number of cases, the transition from the design phase of local policies to the implementation of actions foreseen includes an additional preparatory phase, when cities "translate" the Local Action Plans into more detailed operational documents (e.g. technical specifications, addendum to the master plan, etc.) which implies additional work, further verifications and approvals by decision-making bodies. Additional documents are usually requested also by the Managing Authorities of Operational Programmes in order to allocate the requested funding (e.g. official decision for local co-funding, environmental impact assessment). Such processes "delay" the actual implementation over time.

- **Political support at local level**

Partners acknowledge that strong political support is a pre-condition for a successful elaboration and implementation of integrated Local Action Plans. Ensuring this support over the whole period of implementation, beyond the elaboration of a Local Action Plan, can be challenging for the municipal teams involved. In the survey, a number of respondents indicated changes in the local political majority as the main reason for a delayed implementation of the LAP (if not its definitive stop). Political changes which can have an impact on the delivery of the LAP may occur at municipal level as well as at regional or national level. In the case of Naples (CTUR network) for instance, the arrival of a new president within the regional authority resulted in a complete rescheduling of the calendar for the attribution of ERDF for the LAP, postponing the delivery of several actions foreseen (most of which are still pending so far).

- **Financial provisions for the actions foreseen**

Even though exploring funding available for implementation has been a continuous process throughout the production of the LAP, effective access to the funds needed remain a major issue for several of the 69 partners taking part to the survey. 58% respondents state having started implementing the LAP but declare that they are still looking for funds needed for the implementation of the whole plan.

The mismatch between the calendar for the allocation of mainstream funds (including ESF) and the schedule of the LAPs, the budgetary cuts subsequent to the recent financial downturn, the difficulties to mobilize the needed local co-financing are all factors which can produce delays in the delivery phase of the Local Action Plan.

Although these factors can have a significant impact on the implementation process, the online survey provides a rather positive perspective for the coming years, as 72% respondents having

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[2] Gijon, Regensburg, Reims and Aachen (all relate to soft actions in terms of local governance)

already implemented some actions believe that the LAP will be fully implemented in the future.
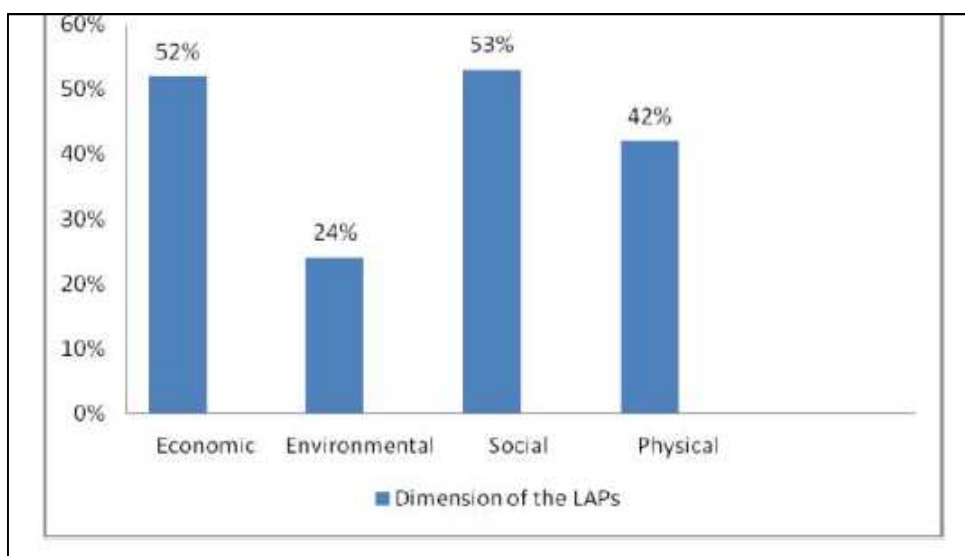
2.2. Implementation of LAPs and the pillars of integrated urban development

Referring to the actions implemented so far, partner cities were requested to provide information on whether the actions addressed economic, social, physical, environmental issues. Answers show a great variety both in terms of policy-areas covered and types of actions delivered, with a predominance of actions related to economic and social issues.

As shown in the graph below/

- over 50% respondents state having implemented actions addressing issues under the economic and social pillars

- 42% respondents state having implemented actions addressing issues under the physical pillar

- (including urban renewal but also programmes for sustainable housing, reconversion of former military sites)

- 24% respondents state having implemented actions addressing environmental issues (mainly new urban green spaces, energy-efficient retrofitting and water/waste management systems)

Graph 2 - Policy areas covered by actions implemented

When looking at the interconnections between the different policy areas covered by the actions implemented, the following trends appear:

- close to 50% respondents are actually implementing actions addressing 2 main policy areas (the combination of social and economic measures being the most frequent with 20% of cases);

- 25% respondents are implementing actions covering 3 main policy areas;

- 7 out of the 69 respondent cities are implementing actions addressing all 4 dimensions (economic, social, physical and environmental).

These figures reflect a good level of integration in the implementation of the LAP themselves, and thus a capacity of local authorities to actually develop integrated responses to their local challenges. Moreover, as these figures draw a picture at a specific moment in time, one has to bear in mind that further integration may be achieved over time, when more actions will be

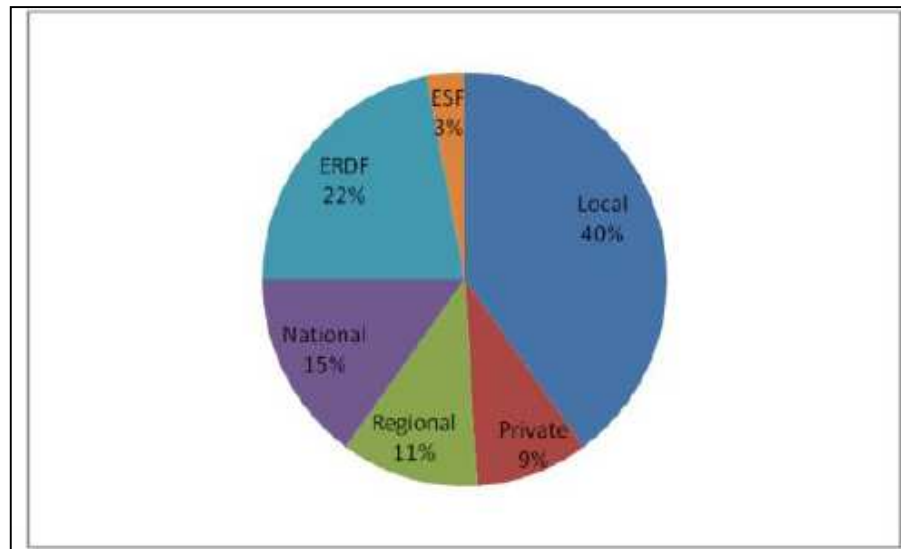implemented (provided funding has been secured).

In particular, looking at the most frequent combination of social and economic actions it is possible to highlight two trends:

- The level of integration of the two dimensions is higher in the framework of LAP promoting active inclusion of target groups (migrants, youth, women, elderly)

- In several cases, cities developing Local Action Plan with a strong focus on local economic competitiveness have included additional social actions in order to provide immediate answers to the categories of citizens most affected by the recent financial downturn.

2.3 Funding of the Local Action Plan

Project partners were asked to provide information on the funding secured for the implementation of their LAPs, both in terms of sources and amount. Answers to the survey show the importance of local funds in the financial engineering for LAPs being implemented.

Graph 3 - Percentage of partners using types of funds for LAP implementation

- **Local funds**: 40% respondents report having secured local funding to start the implementation of the Local Action Plans.

- **Structural Funds**: 25% respondents report the use of Structural Funds in the delivery of their Action Plans, with a large predominance of ERDF (mentioned by 22% respondents versus 3% reporting using ESF). This is to be considered as a positive achievement considering that the LAPs have been delivered in 2011 when several OPs were already fully committed or with very little resources left. It is worth underlining that, in more than 50% of the cases; ERDF has been used to support projects for local economic development and jobs related actions. Only in few cases, all situated in EU12 Member States, ERDF has been used to finance major infrastructural investments (e.g. water and waste management system in Zabrze, Poland). When it comes to ESF, it is interesting to notice that only 3% partner cities appear to have used ESF whereas 1/3 of the 1st call networks had an explicit focus on social issues. Interestingly enough, the cities having secured ESF funds have also secured ERDF funds for LAP implementation.

- **National funds**: 15% respondents have mobilized national funds. In particular cities have secured two main types of funds:

- funds linked to mainstream national policies: these can relate to national social policies (e.g. the city of Sodertalje applied for the national programme for active inclusion of migrants "Mentorship Sweden") or to policies promoting local economic development (e.g. the agreement signed between the city of Bialystok and the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development for the construction of the new scientific park).

- funds linked to national area-based initiatives for deprived neighbourhoods (e.g. Vaulx-en -Velin where connections were created between the LAP and the initiatives delivered in the framework of the national *Politique de la Ville*).

- **Regional funds**: 11% respondents had access to regional funds. Here the information provided in the online survey do not allow a more detailed description of the types of funds secured.

- **Private funds**: 9% respondents have secured private funds. In particular in at least two cities these were secured in the framework of broad Public Private Partnership schemes (as in the case of a parking foreseen in Naples or the creation of a joint venture for management of the new scientific park in Manresa). In other cases the contribution of private actors was less formalized and mainly linked to joint initiative for inclusion in the labour market of marginalized groups (e.g. the cooperation scheme established between the city of Sodertalje and the Regional Business Association in the framework of the programme Regional Matching)

In the survey, participants were invited to provide information on the amount of funds secured for LAP implementation. Out of the 69 respondents, 41 cities have provided figures. These can be grouped under 4 categories:
- less than 100.000 euros
- 100.000 – 1.000.000 euros
- 1.000.000 – 10.000.000 euros
- more than 10.000.000 euros

- **Less than 100.000 €**

City	Country	Project	Amount	Source of Funding
Alzira	ES	WEED	15 000	Local
Madrid	ES	BHC	17 050	Local, ERDF
Opava	CZ	Repair	20 000	Local
Pori	FI	Urban Nose	20 000	Regional
Zabrze	PL	Co-Net	25 000	Local - ERDF
Sacele	RO	Net-Topic	50 000	Local - ERDF
Regensburg	DE	HerO	50 000	Local
Barnsley	UK	BHC	68 000	Not specified
Riga	LV	My Generation	77 000	Local, EU (INTERREG IV A)
Faenza	IT	UNIC	90 000	Local

- **Between 100.000 € and 1 mln €**

City	Country	Project	Amount	Source of Funding
Enna	IT	WEED	100 000	Local, Regional,National
Barakaldo	ES	Net-Topic	108 000	Local, Regional
Graz	AT	City Regions Net	115 000	Local, ERDF
Leipzig	DE	Fin-Urb-Act	200 000	Local, Private, ERDF
Starogard	PL	Active Age	300 000	Local, ERDF
Vaux-en-Velin	FR	CO-NET	400 000	Local, National
Patras	EL	Run Up	400 000	National - ERDF
Aveiro	PT	Fin-Urb-Act	900 000	Local - ERDF

- **Between 1 mln € and 10 mln €**

City	Country	Project	Amount	Source of Funding
Solna	SE	RuN Up	1 145 000	Local - ERDF
Limoges	FR	UNIC	1 300 000	Local – Regional - National, ERDF
Mizil	RO	Creative Clusters	1 300 000	Local – National – ERDF - ESF
Naples	IT	CTUR	1 300 000	Local – Regional – National - Private
Magdeburg	DE	REDIS	1 700 000	Local – Regional – National - ERDF
Lodz	PL	BHC	1 400 000	Local
Gijon	ES	CO-NET	1 700 000	Local - Regional
Roma	IT	Fin-Urb-Act	2 000 000	National
Naples	IT	HerO	2 500 000	National - Private
Sesto san Giovanni	IT	Net Topic	2 600 000	Local - Private
Agueda	PT	Run Up	2 700 000	National
Campobasso	IT	Run Up	3 000 000	Local - ERDF
Sodertalje	SE	Reg Gov	3 300 000	Local - National - ERDF
Manresa	ES	REDIS	3 500 000	Local – Regional – National - ERDF
Kobanya	HU	Reg Gov	4 246 000	Local - ERDF
Leszno	PL	Run Up	7 500 000	Local -ERDF
Halandri	EL	Reg Gov	7 920 000	National - ERDF
Obidos	PT	Creative Clusters	10 000 000	Not specified

- **More than 10 mln €**

Bialystok	PL	REDIS	41 000 000	Local, Regional, National, ERDF

In total, more than 105 million euros have been levered for sustainable urban development projects by partners involved in the 1st round of URBACT networks (2008-2011). While this includes a major regeneration project implemented in Bialystok (Poland) for the creation of a science park with a 40 million euros budget, it does not include other achievements in cities that did not take part to the survey so the global picture is actually wider.
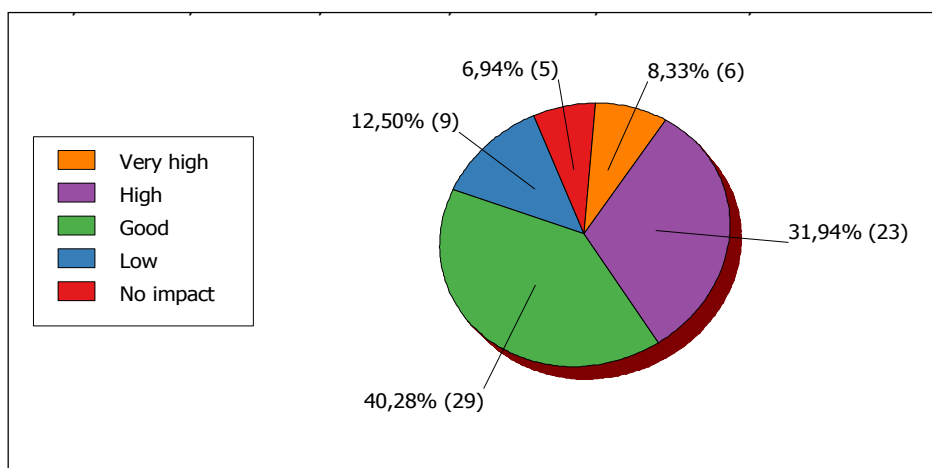
3. Impact of the ULSG/ LAP process at partner level

Partners were invited to report on their impact of their participation in URBACT, and more especially on the production of a Local Action Plan in the framework of a transnational exchange network, with the requirement to develop the action plan through a participatory and integrated approach with local stakeholders (URBACT Local Support Group).

The results of the survey among call 1 partners show a very positive impact of the ULSG/ LAP related processes on local policies, on local governance as well as on individual professional skills.
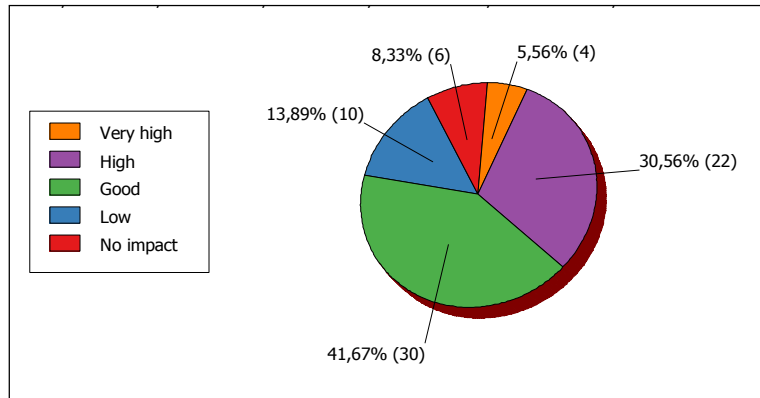
- **Impact on local policies**

For 40% respondents, the impact of the URBACT experience described above on the improvement of local urban development policies has been high/ very high while another 40% report that there has been a good impact on these policies.

Graph 4 - Impact on local urban development policies

The results are also positive when it comes to fostering the integration of sectoral policies related to urban development, with 36% reporting the impact has been high/ very high, and 40% reporting a good impact.

Graph 5 - Impact on integration of sectoral policies related to urban development

🟧	Very high
🟪	High
🟩	Good
🟦	Low
🟥	No impact

8,33% (6) 5,56% (4)
13,89% (10)
30,56% (22)
41,67% (30)
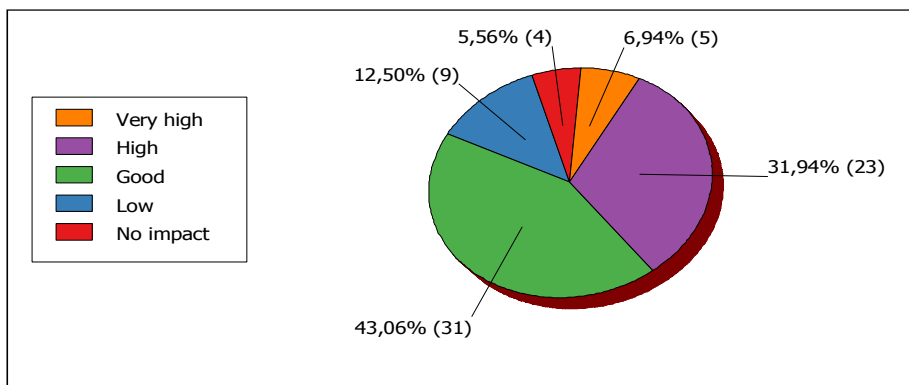
- **Impact on local governance**

Designing integrated Local Action Plans for sustainable urban development requires the definition and the enhancement of strong interconnections with different departments within the same municipality as well as with different levels of government and stakeholders.

The participative dynamic initiated in the framework of the Local Support Groups by the cities involved in a URBACT Thematic network can produce long term effects on how local policies are designed and implemented.

In this respect, the survey shows a very positive of the programme, with almost 80% respondents reporting a good, high or very high impact of their URBACT experience on the **working methods within their own institution**. This includes the definition of new organisational models (particularly cross-department and multidisciplinary teams within the municipality) as well as new mechanisms for internal communication and coordination.

Several cities have reported that the LSG offered for the first time the possibility to representatives of different departments and offices to sit down and work together on a integrated project for the city.

Graph 6 - Impact of URBACT experience on working methods within local institutions

🟧	Very high
🟪	High
🟩	Good
🟦	Low
🟥	No impact

5,56% (4) 6,94% (5)
12,50% (9)
31,94% (23)
43,06% (31)

A genuine and effective participative planning process goes beyond the involvement of different actors within the local authority, in order to establish positive and fruitful **working relations with other key local stakeholders** (from others levels of government or/and from different sectors of the civil society). This is why it is particularly encouraging that 45% of respondents declare that the process of co-designing a Local Action Plan within the Local Support Group had a high and very high impact on how local authorities create working partnerships with local stakeholders, particularly associations and NGOs.

The long-term effects of the experience of working with local stakeholders to co-produce local policies are also confirmed, with 60% respondents declaring that the **ULSG is still, in one form or another, active after the end of the URBACT network**.

More particularly:
- 21% ULSG continue to be active building on a different composition
- 14% ULSG still operate with a mandate to tackle similar issues in other target areas
- 10% ULSG continue to be active as it was during the network life
- 8% ULSG operate with a mandate to follow up the implementation of the LAP
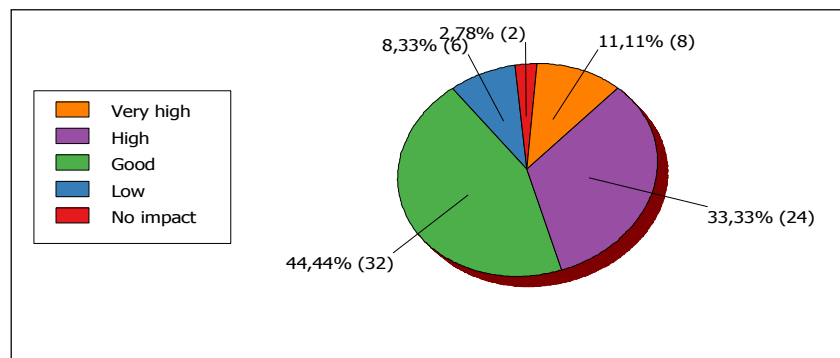- 7% ULSG still operate with a mandate to work on another policy challenge

- **Impact on individual professional knowledge**

Building on an average of 2 staff members per local authority involved, one can consider that more than 360 persons have experienced the URBACT framework through the 1st call networks. Civil servants, technicians as well as elected representatives from the 27 Member and Partner States involved in the 1st call had the opportunity to meet colleagues from other countries, to share experiences and learn about different solutions developed in other cities to address sometimes similar challenges. At the same time, these individuals have also experienced (in some cases, for the first time) the challenges and dynamics related to participative action-planning.

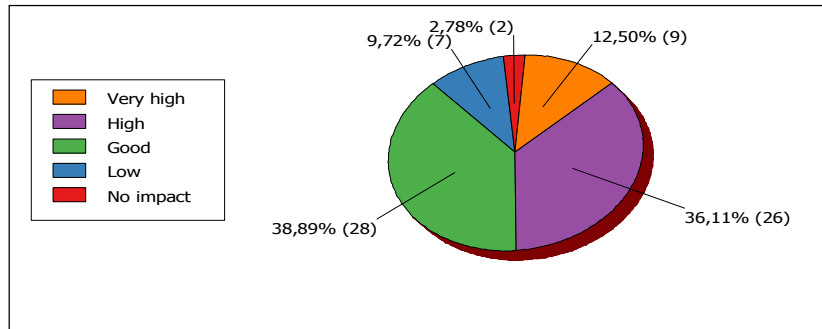Both experiences (at transnational and local level) have been considered as particularly useful.

First in terms of **personal knowledge on integrated urban development, with almost** 90% respondents reporting a positive impact.

Graph 7 - Impact on personal knowledge on integrated urban development
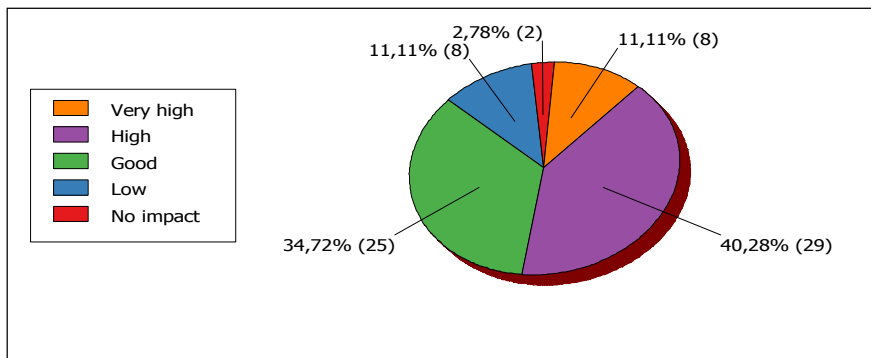

Second in terms of capacities and skills, with more than 80% respondents reporting that their experience had a positive impact on **local capacities and skills about cross-sectoral working and participative planning** (see the 2 graphs below).

Graph 8 - Understanding of cross-sectoral working and integrated local management

Legend:
- Very high
- High
- Good
- Low
- No impact

2,78% (2)
9,72% (7)
12,50% (9)
36,11% (26)
38,89% (28)

Graph 9 - Professional skills and capacities in participative action planning

Legend:
- Very high
- High
- Good
- Low
- No impact

2,78% (2)
11,11% (8)
11,11% (8)
40,28% (29)
34,72% (25)

LIST OF THE 69 CITIES PARTICIPATING IN THE SURVEY

City	Country	Project
City of Graz	AT	City Region Net, HERO
City of Antwerp	BE	My Generation
City of Dobrich	BG	Active Age
City of Kladno	CZ	Net Topic
City of Opava	CZ	REPAIR
City of Aachen	DE	Fin Urb Act
City of Berlin	DE	CO-NET
City of Leipzig	DE	Fin Urb Act
City of Magdeburg	DE	REDIS
City of Munich	DE	City Region Net
City of Ragensburg	DE	HERO
City of Rostock	DE	CTUR, REPAIR
City of Atheniou	EL	URBAN NOSE
City of Haidari	EL	Net Topic
City of Halandri	EL	Reg Gov
City of Patras	EL	Run Up
City of Thessaloniki	EL	Active Age, REPAIR
City of Gijon	ES	CO-NET
City of L'Hospitalet de Llobregat	ES	Net Topic
City of Madrid	ES	BHC
City of Manresa	ES	REDIS
City of Helsinki	FI	CTUR
City of Pori	FI	URBAN NOSE
City of Amiens	FR	WEED
City of Chalons en Champagne	FR	City Region Net
City of Limoges	FR	UNIC
City of Nanterre	FR	Net Topic
City of Reims	FR	Fin Urb Act
City of Vaulx-en-Velin	FR	CO-NET
City of Kobanya	HU	Reg Gov
City of Dublin	IE	CTUR
City of Campobasso	IT	Run Up
City of Enna	IT	WEED
City of Faenza	IT	UNIC
City of Naples	IT	CTUR, HERO
City of Roma	IT	Active Age, Fin Urb Act
City of Sesto San Giovanni	IT	Net Topic
City of Vilnius	LT	HERO
City of Riga	LV	My Generation
City of Rotterdam	NL	My Generation
City of Delft	NL	UNIC
City of Bialystok	PL	REDIS
City of Kielce	PL	City Region Net
City of Krakow	PL	SUITE
City of Leszno	PL	Run Up
City of Lodz	PL	BHC
City of Lublin	PL	HERO
City of Starogard	PL	Active Age
City of Zabrze	PL	CO-NET
City of Agueda	PT	Run Up
City of Aveiro	PT	Fin Urb Act, UNIC
City of Matosinhos	PT	CTUR
City of Obidos	PT	Creative Clusters
City of Alba Iulia	RO	CO-NET
City of Mizil	RO	Creative Clusters
City of Tirgu Mures	RO	My Generation
City of Sacele	RO	Net Topic
City of Lidingö	SE	BHC
City of Solna	SE	Run Up
City of Sodertalje	SE	Reg Gov
City of Barnsley	UK	BHC
City of Medway	UK	REPAIR
City of Salford	UK	Net Topic