The Leipzig Charter and sustainable urban development – a European perspective

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LC-FACIL Kick-off meeting, Leipzig, 2-3 July 2009

Promoting sustainable urban development in Europe

No EU competence for urban development, but

1) Urban dimension of Cohesion Policy (Regional Policy)
   – European Commission (DG REGIO)

2) Informal intergovernmental cooperation on urban development policies
   – 27 EU Member States (chaired by the EU Council Presidency)

➢ Close cooperation

1) Urban dimension of Cohesion Policy

EU Structural Funds: **European Regional Development Fund** (ERDF)

- Urban Pilot Projects (1989-1999)

- URBAN Community Initiative (1994-2006)

- Urban Mainstreaming (2007-2013)
  = Urban dimension integrated in ERDF Operational Programmes
  - Objective 1 (Convergence)
  - Objective 2 (Competitiveness)

- URBACT Programme (2002-2013)
  - Objective 3 (Territorial cooperation)

Connecting cities
Building successes

URB
ACT

Urban Audit

2) Intergovernmental cooperation on urban development

- **Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities** (LC)
  - Adopted at the Informal Ministerial Meeting on Urban Development in May 2007 in Leipzig under the German EU Council Presidency
  - Political commitment of Member States to implement the LC

- Informal Ministerial Meeting in November 2008 in Marseille under the French EU Council Presidency
  - Reconfirmation of political commitment
  - Decision to create a common **Reference Framework for sustainable European cities** to further implement the LC

The Leipzig Charter

Main recommendations:

1. Making greater use of **integrated urban development policy approaches**

2. Paying **special attention to deprived neighbourhoods** within the context of the city as a whole

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1. Making greater use of integrated urban development policy approaches

Main strategies for action

    a) Creating and ensuring high-quality public spaces

    b) Modernizing infrastructure networks and improving energy efficiency

    c) Proactive innovation and educational policies

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2. Paying special attention to deprived neighbourhoods within the context of the city as a whole

Main strategies for action

a) Pursuing strategies for upgrading the physical environment
b) Strengthening the local economy and local labour market policy
c) Proactive education and training policies for children and young people
d) Promotion of efficient and affordable urban transport

➢ **Towards a common European methodology for sustainable urban development**

➢ Emerging of a common European "*Acquis Urbain*"
- Building on **common principles** (integrated approach, multi-level governance, partnership principle)
- Following **common objectives** (achieving sustainable development in all its different – economic, social, environmental and cultural – aspects)

➢ European cities contributing to the overarching goals of the EU
- Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs
- EU Sustainable Development Strategy

→ Especially in times of economic and financial crisis – How to use the few resources most effectively?

The idea – A common Reference Framework for sustainable European cities (RF)

What should the RF **do and be**?

- A practical tool for cities
  - Helping cities to take sustainable decisions
  - Supporting the dialogue between different actors and levels on the basis of shared objectives, criteria, methods and measurement instruments
  - Providing good examples

- Represent the diversity of European cities, be flexible and open
  - For different types, functions and sizes of urban settings
  - For different scales (city-regions, cities and towns, neighbourhoods)

What should the RF **not** do and be?

- A binding or obligatory instrument
- A tool to benchmark or label cities (?)
- "Reinvent the wheel" (use existing tools and instruments)

How to set up the Reference Framework?

Two groups will work in parallel:

- Group of Member States and European Institutions (**MS/I Group**)
  - chaired by France (with support from experts)
  - 16 Member States involved on a voluntary basis (BE, CZ, DE, ES, FI, GR, HU, IT, LU, NL, PL, PT, SE, LV, RO, UK), plus CH and TR
  - DG REGIO
  - EUROCITIES, CEMR (Council of European Municipalities and Regions)
  - URBACT
- Group of cities (project under the URBACT II programme): **LC-FACIL**
  - 8 cities from all over Europe (with support from Lead Expert)

- ➢ Combined top-down and bottom-up approach
- ➢ Close cooperation and coordination is necessary

How to set up the Reference Framework?

Each group will be supported by a wider circle:

- Group of Member States and European Institutions (**MS/I Group**)
  - Every member is asked to set up a National Support Group
    - Gathering stakeholders from different sectors and administrative levels
    - For example: DE, FR, HU and UK (countries with initial LC-FACIL project partners)

- Group of cities (**LC-FACIL**)
  - Every project partner must set up a Local Support Group
  - „Second circle" of interested cities from all over Europe

- ➢ Broad communication and involvement is required to create ownership

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www.ec.europa.eu/regional_policy

Brochure "Promoting sustainable urban development in Europe –
Achievements and opportunities" (EN, FR, DE)
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/presenta/pres_en.htm

www.urbact.eu

www.rfsustainablecities.eu

Thank you very much for your attention !