

KICKOFF MEETING OF THE “INNOVA” THEMATIC NETWORK

TOMARES, 7-8 JUNE 2012

Dissemination Report



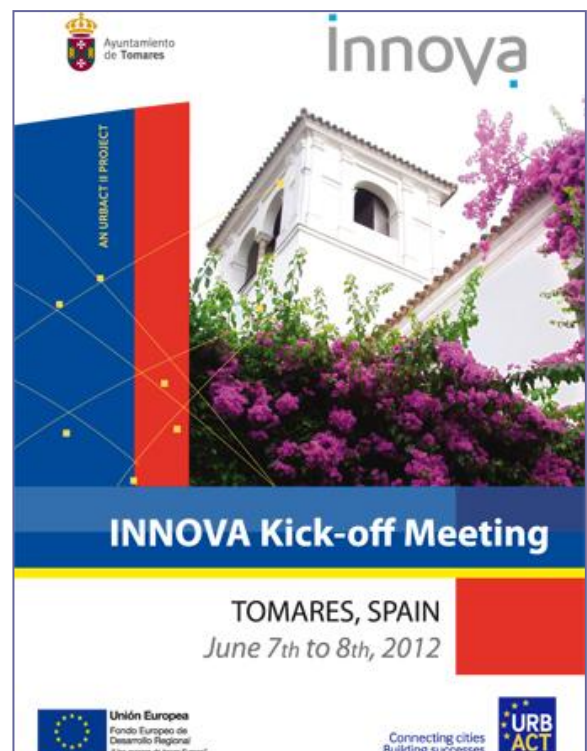


INNOVA

SUSTAINBLE BUSINESS GROWTH BASED ON INNOVATION AND KNOWLEDGE

INNOVA Project

The “INNOVA” Thematic Network, one of the 19 projects funded in the third call of the URBACT II programme for Urban Development out of more than 80 applications received, held its first meeting on 7 and 8 June at the Lead Partner city, the Andalusian city of Tomares in Spain. The meeting was participated by the partner cities of Viborg (Denmark), Santa Cruz de Tenerife (Spain) and Monza (Italy), while the city of Molfetta (Italy) had to declare absent due to the very recent electoral process that lead to a change in the city government. Present were also Melody Houk, Capitalization Manager at the URBACT Programme Secretariat in Paris, and Eurico Neves, the Lead expert appointed to the project. The main outcomes of this first meeting are presented in this report.



DAY 1: 7 JUNE 2012

Formal Opening

The meeting, held at Cajasol Institute in Tomares, was formally opened by the **Mayor of Tomares** on 7 June morning, in a speech where the relevance of the project for the city of Tomares was stressed, especially at a time where cities face the need to embrace innovation and social responsibility in order to generate new jobs and secure the current ones, while continuing to improve the quality of life of its citizens.



success and the focus on social responsible processes but with a major emphasis on what is now the major concern of most cities in Europe, which is the creation of jobs, in order to successfully reduce unemployment. He also mentioned the links between this project and

other projects on-going or under preparation at Tomares, focused also on social responsibility and on the promotion of a value supply-chain for bio-agro products, with expected impact on growth and jobs.

Eurico Neves, Lead expert



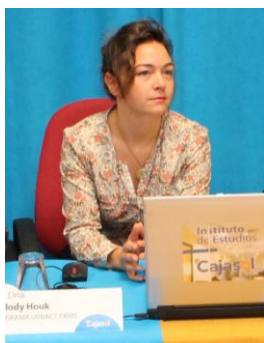
The fourth presentation of the morning was from **Eurico Neves, Lead Expert** assigned to the project, which provided a general overview of what can cities expect – and what is expected from them – over the full cycle of an URBACT project.

Eurico Neves reinforced

the need to correctly and quickly focus the “urban problem” addressed by the project as this will influence the baseline study which will be the starting point for all project implementation activities. He also highlighted the tangible results that are expected by the project at the end, in the form of Local Action Plans, which should consist of feasible and fundable actions that can contribute to solve (or minimize) the urban problem identified.

Presentations

Melody Houk, URBACT Secretariat



Next, **Melody Houk, from the URBACT Secretariat**, presented the expectations from the programme towards the INNOVA project, and the broad lines that must be complied by all URBACT projects. She particularly highlighted the innovative focus on Social Responsibility of cities

brought by this project, and the need to maintain a focused approach in order to achieve concrete and tangible results that can be useful not only for the cities involved in this project, but for other cities across Europe too.

Alfonso Barrios, INNOVA Lead partner

The following presentation has been made by **Alfonso Barrios from Tomares and Project Coordinator**, who presented the main objectives for the INNOVA project as presented in the application. Alfonso Barrios stressed the strong commitment from the city of Tomares to make this project a



In the afternoon, there have been presentations of the 4 cities present at the meeting, with a focus on strong and weak points as regards the general topic of the project. Synergy and complementarities between partners have been evident and should

now be reinforced by additional city partners that can add balance and value to this project.

DAY 2: 7 JUNE 2012

Operational issues

The second day of the meeting was devoted to operational issues, covered in open discussions between the partners. Two working were held sequentially, covering aspects such as:

Discussions

The urban problems to be addressed

The importance of focusing the project around a limited number of problems, in order to keep the project manageable and feasible, has been agreed by all partners. After discussion it has been decided to keep as main topic of the project: **Urban Social Responsibility for the creation of Jobs.**



Expansion of partnership

Expansion of the partnership: while the INNOVA partnership is now made of 5 cities for the initial development phase of 6 months, according to the rules of URBACT it must be extended to include between 8 and 12 cities for the following implementation phase of 27 months, starting in January 2013, keeping a balance between cities located in Competitiveness and Convergence regions of Europe. Following the approval of INNOVA by the URBACT programme, and the announcement of this in the URBACT site, several manifestations of interest from cities all around Europe to join the partnership have been received by the Lead Partner and Lead Expert. The partners reviewed these applications and selected a first group of cities from where the new city partners will finally be selected, taking in

consideration aspects as country and region of origin, commitment to social responsibility matters and similarities with the current partners.

Deciding on the meetings calendar

Deciding on date and location of next meeting and calendar of visits to cities: the partners decided that the second and final meeting of the development phase should take place at the end of September in either Viborg or Monza, the final decision being taken until the end of June. This meeting should already be participated also by the new partners and will lead the project towards the final application for the Implementation Phase. Also the partners discussed and agreed on an initial calendar of visits to the cities by the Lead Expert, a visit that will serve both to gather information for the baseline study and to set up and organize the initial meeting of the Local Support Group in each city.

Financial & Communication aspects

The working sessions were concluded with a review of financial aspects by Alfonso Barrios and Communication aspects, by the Communication manager Juan Miguel Lobo.



Finally, and after a press conference that confirmed the interest raised by the project amongst media in Andalucía and in Spain, the meeting was concluded by a cocktail reception offered to the Partner Cities by the Mayor of Tomares at the local Casino, a touristic landmark of the host city.

URBACT II

URBACT is a European exchange and learning programme promoting 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 challenges. It helps them 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 is 181 cities, 29 countries, and 5,000 active participants

www.urbact.eu/project



EUROPEAN
PROGRAMME
FOR
SUSTAINABLE
URBAN
DEVELOPMENT

