

2nd MEETING OF THE “INNOVA” THEMATIC NETWORK

VIBORG, 25-26 SEPTEMBER 2012

Dissemination Report





INNOVA

SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS GROWTH BASED ON INNOVATION AND KNOWLEDGE

INNOVA Project

The “INNOVA” project is one of the 19 thematic networks funded in the third call of the URBACT II program for Urban Development out of more than 80 applications received, and started in Development Phase in May, having had the kickoff meeting at the Lead Partner city of Tomares in Spain back on June.

The 2nd meeting in Viborg gathered the original city partners of Tomares, Santa Cruz de Tenerife (Spain) and Monza (Italy), as well as Viborg with the new city partners from Łódź (Poland) and Durham (UK), with videoconference connection also to Seia (Portugal), Stoke-on-Trent (UK) and Bisceglie (Italy) in a 9 cities strong partnership. The main outcomes of this first meeting are presented in this report.



DAY 1: 25TH SEPTEMBER 2012

Formal Opening

The opening session of the meeting, held at the premises of Viborg Town Hall was formally opened by **Soren Pape Poulsen, Mayor of Viborg** on 25th September morning, in a speech where he welcomed all the partners of the INNOVA Project, provided them with a general description of the economic and social reality of Denmark, stressing the particularities of his city, and wished the INNOVA team cities every success in their task to join efforts in order to generate new jobs and secure the current ones, while continuing to improve the quality of life of its citizens.



experiences and knowledge that will allow a profound change in local policies. Therefore, the current city can be redesigned as a holistic model that guarantees sustainable social and economic growth by promoting innovation, the knowledge economy and the introduction of new, more participatory forms of governance.

Afterwards, he gave a concise description of the four work packages to be developed in the short coming Implementation Phase, and proposed to split into sub-themes the heavy bulk of work to be carried out in these packages. He then presented four work groups and their respective scope inside the global project.

He went on making an analysis of the starting situation and main challenges faced by the five initial partners and the new members of the partnership, listing their common strengths and weaknesses and the main challenges to address.

He finally reminded all the partners of their duty to be rigorous with the economic administration, and encouraged all the participant cities to take the most of this great opportunity to join efforts and create synergies that may help improve the life conditions of their citizens.

Presentations

Alfonso Barrios, Project Coordinator



Next, **Alfonso Barrios, Project and Financial Coordinator** thanked the municipality of Viborg for the warm welcome received and greeted the old and new partners of the program assisting the meeting. He continued by giving a general analysis of the economic, politic and

social circumstances that have driven Europe to the difficult situation that it is facing nowadays. He stressed the growing concern to search for a new productive sustainable model and the need of a public management model towards a more economically, socially and environmentally sustainable local development.

He pointed out that the purpose of the INNOVA network must be to provide a space for exchanging

Anders Stryhn, Viborg Kommune



Anders Stryhn, from Viborg, took up from the Mayor words to present a more detailed view of Viborg, its main assets and main challenges, and produced a detailed description of

different aspects related to its business structure, education, employment, social responsibility and the strategic impetus of Viborg municipality. He stressed the fact that while Viborg has a low unemployment rate compared with other European cities (6%), the figure has been increasing steadily over the last years, and in particular the cities faces a high social and budget pressure from a very high share of the active population (18-65 years old) which is outside the labor market and benefiting from local social benefits, which calls for innovative approaches. Next, he reviewed the agenda for the 2 days of meeting, thus concluding the first part of the morning dedicated to institutional aspects.

Networking issues

The second part of the morning has been dedicated to networking, with presentations from the five confirmed new partners. While the representatives of Lodz and Durham were present at the meeting, the ones from Stoke-on-Trent, Seia and Bisceglie were unable to assist and had to make their respective presentations via Skype.

Anna Kaminska, city of Łódź,



Anna Kaminska, from the city of Łódź (Poland) expressed the interest of her city to be a part of the INNOVA partnership and presented a promotional video of the city showing the deep economic and social transformation that it has undergone in the past few

years, especially in the fields related to business, education and arts.

John Tindale, council of Durham



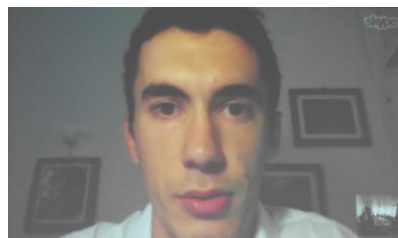
John Tindale, from the council of Durham (United Kingdom), presented some facts concerning the problems that they have to face nowadays in his council, and stressed the

importance to join efforts in order to find the right solutions.

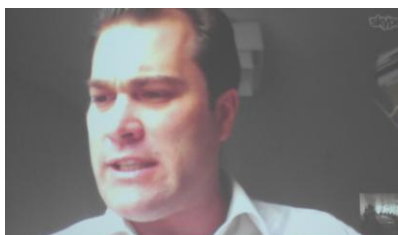
Videoconference

As the rest of the partners were not present, they used videoconference to make their presentations via Skype. The cities of Bisceglie (Italy), represented by advisor **Enrico Messinese**, Stoke-on-Trent (United Kingdom), represented by city officer **Sebastien Danneels**, and Seia (Portugal), represented by the elected councilor **Jorge Brito** and **Mónica Rosado** confirmed the high relevance of the subject addressed by INNOVA.

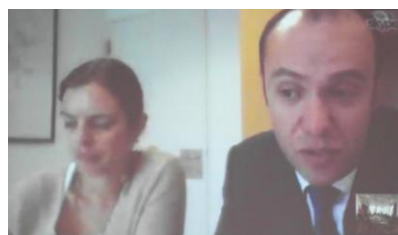
Enrico Messinese, Bisceglie



Sebastian Danneels, Stoke-on-Trent



José Brito and Mónica Rosado, Seia



In all three cases, a good match between the city objectives, especially in terms of job creation and addressing social needs and the project topics has been evidenced.

Eurico Neves, Lead Expert



The morning networking session has been concluded by the **Lead Expert, Eurico Neves**, that presented reviewed the main information needed from the partners in view of the final application for the Implementation Phase – in particular city profiles

(complementing the information gathered in the city visits), feedback in Local Support Group composition and activities, evidence of involvement of Managing Authorities and signed letters of commitment.

Discussions

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Steps towards de Implementation Phase

The afternoon session had been dedicated to update partners on the outcomes from the Development Phase and steps towards the Implementation Phase. On the absence of a URBACT Secretariat member **Eurico Neves**



presented partners the information provided in the recent Paris session (11-12 September) on next steps, and then the status of development of the Baseline Study, with a focus on measures to promote a

“Socially Responsible and Sustainable Economy” at urban level, that can compensate the (irreversible?) lost of jobs on the “traditional” market economy, and lighten the social and budgetary burden on local administrations due to the high rate of unemployment and/or social beneficiaries.

Finally the session was concluded with a round the table discussion on activities for the implementation phase.



It has been decided to host the kickoff meeting for this phase in Santa Cruz de Tenerife (in February 2013) and the final Conference in Monza, on April 2015, coinciding with the start of the Universal Exhibition in Milan dedicated to “Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life” (<http://www.expo2015.org/>).

Visit to the Animation Workshop (Arsenalet)

At the end of the session a visit has been organized to the nearby “Animation Workshop” (<http://www.arsenalet.dk/>), a leading centre for animation training, development and expertise with animation related activities within the areas of education, culture, communication and business.



It is a beautiful example of an innovative education and business incubator platform, that started as a alternative route for students that didn't easily fit into “traditional” courses such as arts, architecture or design and become a centre of excellence on animation and new media gathering students from all over the world and setting the basis for a cluster of new businesses in the city.

DAY 2: 26TH SEPTEMBER 2012

Visit at Aarhus University Foulum and Agro Business Park (incubator)

The second day of the meeting took place at Agro Business Park (<http://www.agropark.dk/>), located within the campus of Aarhus University Foulum.



The Agro Business Park and its activities, as well as the University (which in Foulum focus on agro sciences) are particularly relevant for one of the elected application sectors of the project (within the broader topic of social responsible and sustainable economy) which is the organic and bio food sector, extended also to the complementary field of biomass energy production.

Operational issues

The second day of the meeting was devoted to operational issues, covered in open discussions between the partners. The session was devoted

to operational issues, including communication issues and financial aspects, presented by **Communication manager, Juan Miguel Lobo,**



and concluding with bilateral sessions between the Lead Partner and the partners for preparing the budget for the next phase.

The INNOVA meeting concluded with a networking lunch, and the partners left Viborg looking forward to meet again Santa Cruz de Tenerife within the next phase. In the afternoon a meeting of the URBACT Local Support Group of Viborg has been organized attended by the Lead Expert.



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

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