WRITING ABOUT INTEGRATED URBAN DEVELOPMENT

URBACT GUIDE
June 2019

INTRODUCTION

Print and digital communication can be a powerful tool to inspire cities.

Information about other cities — or activities in their own city — can make policymakers think differently, consider new ways of approaching their work, try out or adapt practices from other places and improve their own policies.

By sharing URBACT knowledge, experience, and above all stories, stakeholders including National URBACT Points, Lead Experts, Programme Experts, Communication Officers and cities involved in URBACT networks are key players in this process.

THE GUIDE INCLUDES:

1. BEFORE YOU WRITE

Good writing starts with good preparation.

1.1. Know your audience

Be clear about who you are writing for.

URBACT's audience includes:

> **urban practitioners** working in and for cities (mayors, elected officials, staff working in municipalities and councils)

> **beneficiary cities and potential beneficiaries**[1]

> **regional and EU level policymakers** in charge of cohesion policy, urban policies and structural funds.

> **EU urban policy actors**

> **national authorities** in charge of urban affairs

> **internal audience** (programme experts, network experts, National URBACT Points (NUP), Managing Authorities (MA), Monitoring Committee (MC))

> **universities** working on urban development

> **urban planning agencies**, urban experts and consultants working for cities

> **Media/press**

For details *see p10 of URBACT III Communication Strategy*

What are they most interested in? What do they care about?

What do they want to hear or learn about? What lessons should they learn from your story in order to make it useful?

---

[1] *Beneficiary cities are local administrations that received funding from URBACT III programme. Potential beneficiaries are local administrations that could potentially join an URBACT III network.*

www.urbact.eu

Don't assume your audience knows the meaning of integrated urban development jargon — terms like "transit-oriented development" or "sustainable mobility", for example – or what URBACT is and does in detail. Explain, without alienating readers who do know.

Consider the geographic reach of your audience: a national and international readership, sometimes a specific city.

Give some context. For example, when referring to a local park, add that it's close to the city centre and popular with families on weekends.

1.2. How to find a story?

URBACT and its city networks are loaded with good stories to tell. Give first priority to URBACT cities, practices and experiences.

> **Tip!** *Write a headline or tweet for it. Use that as a sort of mission statement to remind yourself of the story you're trying to tell.*

Keep it timely and relevant to current discussions and debates.

1.3. Research

You may want to interview people involved in URBACT networks, or subject-matter experts who can offer valuable background or context.

Writing about a new tramway line that will connect an underserved neighborhood to the rest of the city? Consult an expert, like an academic or transportation consultant who has studied similar tramway lines in other cities to offer some context.

Other stories might rely on press releases, reports and other documents. You can also draw on your own observations or experiences.

www.urbact.eu

1.4. Know why your story matters

A story about integrated urban development needs to matter to your readers. Ask yourself: "So what? Why should I care about this?" And, answer.

For example, if you're writing about an innovative city programme for welcoming refugees, specify that it's of interest to city leaders across Europe as they wrestle with the challenge of integrating a growing number of refugees. Or maybe the programme represents an innovative way of accessing EU funds to deal with the problem? Perhaps it's a programme that has demonstrated good results and is easily replicable in other cities?

1.5. Explain your story in one paragraph

Try writing your story in one paragraph, including why you think readers will care about the story. The essence should fit in 2 or 3 sentences.

Use the one-paragraph summary as a "chapeau" or a "nut graph."

See under chapter **Erreur ! Source du renvoi introuvable.***Chapeau versus nut graph*

2. STORY TYPES

Stories should fit one of the 6 story types below:

> 1. News (up to 1 000 words)

> 2. Listicles (600 - 800 words)

> 3. Portraits: Interviews, 24 hours with (800 - 1 200 words)

> 4. Solution-type stories (Solution and city stories, transfer stories) (1 200 - 1500 words)

> 5. In-depth reportage (2 000 words) (*Exceptional use only*)

> 6. Theory long form articles (2 000 words) (*Exceptional use only*)

Choose one story type before you write. For more information on layout and user friendly templates to work with check the ARTICLE TEMPLATES

2.1. News (up to 1 000 words)

A news is based on a piece of news relevant to a Europe wide urban practitioner audience - for instance, if you have a new publication to present.

Ask the six standard questions: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?

Get the answers from authoritative sources - a person you interview, a press release, a report or another document, report or guide.

Access detailed template: NEWS (up to 1 000 words)

Examples:

- *200 European Cities publicly present the results of 2 years of common work*

- *'Cities in Action-Stories of Change' publication just released!*

2.2. "Listicles" (600 - 800 words)

Listicles were made for the internet. The term refers to an article made up of a list *such as "*10 *cat videos that will keep you laughing all weekend".*

It is possible to write listicles that are extremely informative and substantive. The format remains popular with busy readers (hence the 'Commuter Reads label) - it delivers a finite amount of information, in easily readable chunks.

Use it if you have solutions and tips to share for instance.

Examples:

- *4 Ways cities are breathing life back into empty spaces*

- *EU Green Week inspiration: 5 networks to watch*

Access detailed template:

LISTICLES (600 – 800 words)

2.3. Portraits (800- 1 200 words)

Our efforts to focus on human interest stories is clear in this section. In addition to interviews, we propose different formats where people shine.

This is also an opportunity to shine a light on the people who make URBACT work.

Remember to include direct quotes, photos and a full biography for the reader to get to know the subject.

This section includes stories such as:

- **Interviews, Q&As & Roundtables (> 1 200 words)**
- **24 hours with … (800 – 1 200 words)**
- **Meet the faces of URBACT (800 – 1 200 words)**
- **Local heroes (800 – 1 200 words)**

Interviews, Q&As and Roundtables (< 1 200 words)

Interviews can be a good way to give a lively insight into one topic, especially if the person interviewed is a reference in his/her domain. They give a face to the topic and they are easily read and referred to by other actors on social media.

Q&As always require some editing for length and clarity.

You can also write interviews in your "voice", using many quotes from the interview. Use this approach if the interviewee had a few scattered meaningful things to say, but the full transcript would be too much to read. This is also a good format if the topic requires a lot of background and context in order to understand.

Example: *Why Pope Francis keeps reaching out to mayors*

And, why not a Roundtable? Why do a Q&A with just one person when you can get input from many people? Consider prompting a group of people with a question and make your "story" a compilation of their answers. Spread this on social media to get a wider conversation going.

Examples:

- *The story behind Warsaw's new LGBT+ Declaration*

- *European Cities play a key role for economic recovery: interview with Andrea Cozzolino, Member of the European Parliament*

24 hours with…

These are destined to be short human interest based stories which readers can identify with. Structure will be dependent on the subjects' daily routine, but need to be short and snappy.

Its purpose is to share the human side of city practitioners, politicians or others – and to be relatable, as well as inspirational

Keep in mind the flexibility of the format, depending on who and where - focus on the interesting parts in the day, balancing some work/some life and keeping it real and easy to relate to. A touch of humour is also allowed!

Local heroes

The Local Heroes enables the author to give credit where it's due and show the real people behind the achievements. Everyone loves a hero!

Introduce the star of the story, interview him or her and tell the story of their achievements. Mayors make great protagonists, but so do other city officials, community leaders and citizens with a cause. Make sure that if you're giving this person credit for an initiative, he or she deserves it!

Access detailed templates: PORTRAITS (800-1 200 words)

2.4. Solution-type stories (Solution & City stories, Transfer stories) (1 200 words – 1500 words)

Many URBACT stories are "solutions" stories, meaning case studies of innovative practices in one city that other cities can learn from.

These stories focus on understanding what works, doesn't work and how things can be done better. They can also refer to challenges and to the ways cities work together.

This section includes all city stories such as:

- ■**Focus on a city stories (>1 200 words)**
- ■**Comparison stories (>1 200 words)**
- ■**Transfer stories (> 1 500 words)**

For more detail check the ARTICLE TEMPLATES

Focus on a city (>1 200 words)

A "focus on a city" story looks at a city, its expertise, and what leaders there did to become the leader on the chosen issue. Then it asks: What can our city learn from their example?

Example: *How Eindhoven unlocks the collaborative capacity of the city through social service delivery*

Define the solution

This can be harder than it sounds — especially when writing about integrated action plans (usually urban policies that have multiple dimensions and touch on the work of many individuals). Ask — what's the innovative policy or programme or approach? The more narrowly you define the solution, the easier it will be to write a coherent story.

What are the main ideas? What is the key thing here that someone in another city could take away from this experience? That's likely your solution.

Example: *Turin: A European success story with URBACT and Urban Innovative Actions*

Comparison stories (>1 200 words)

This aims to inform one city's leaders by looking at another city's example. The emphasis is not necessarily looking at the very best city at something, rather, to find another city of roughly the same size with a very similar situation, and see how they do things.

For example: Two cities of 100 000 people might have a lot to learn from each other on how to boost retail in the city centre? Or, two post-industrial cities might have stories to swap about cleaning up polluted land or rivers? URBACT's city networks are prime candidates for these features.

Transfer stories (>1 500 words)

Cities are increasingly looking to identify, adapt and reuse policies or programmes that have been successful elsewhere. Learning from others' mistakes and success factors saves cities time, money and energy in the development and implementation of similar local projects or policies.

Catch cities in the act of learning — and tell the story of how it happened! It is particularly relevant for Transfer Networks, to tell the story of how ideas and solutions have been transferred from one city to another. These stories aim to inspire city leaders to do more of this kind of city-to-city learning, and also to inform them about the rewards — and challenges.

How did the idea spread? And, how was it adapted to suit the political, legal, cultural or economic context of a new city?

Ideally the transfer story should include at least two interviews — one a leader from "City A" (the city that had the idea/practice/policy in the first place), and another from "City B" (the city that is learning/adapting/transferring the practice/idea).

The sources — especially from City B — need to be very familiar with the implementation and the lessons learned. Any additional reporting should be from the perspective of City B, as that's where the act of learning is happening. An Idea Exchange story should always try to answer the following questions:

- What made City A a leader in the chosen policy/programme?

- What are the main results/benefits of this policy at local level?

- How did City B get the idea/practice/policy from city A?

- What problem is City B trying to solve?

- How did City B adapt and implement the idea/practice?

- What changes were necessary to adapt City A's policy/programme to City B's context?

- What's working? What's not working?

- When relevant, what were the results at local level after adapting the practice/policy in City B?

- Did City A actively help City B to learn? How?

- What did both cities learn through this exchange? What comes next?

Transfer stories take place almost daily within URBACT networks but few are captured and communicated as such to a wider audience.

Find these stories and illustrate the added value, results and benefits of cooperation amongst cities!

Example: *Two cities united by a love of good food*

Access detailed template: CITIES STORIES

See some KEY TIPS: 14 Top tips for your City stories

2.5. In-Depth reportages (2 000 words)

URBACT will occasionally publish in depth reportages written by journalists. These articles will be commissioned to journalists by the Secretariat.

ATTENTION: We do not encourage the networks or NUP to use this kind of format. In these cases, please consult the Secretariat Communication team.

www.urbact.eu

The in-depth reportages are for exceptional case studies. It can be a follow-up to a city story. It will take a broad look at a city's approach to a particular problem, situating how URBACT and other initiatives have helped to transform a given urban environment in recent years.

Unlike the other formats, the target audience of such a piece is beyond the audience of city practitioners and will be developed in tandem with external bodies (editors, for example, in mainstream media outlets).

The venue for such pieces would be on targeted media identified in the press document and partnerships. Where possible this format will make use of 'on the ground' interviews, and could be supplemented with high quality photojournalism or illustration.

 Access detailed template:

IN-DEPTH REPORTAGE (2 000 words) (Exceptionally only)

2.6. Theory long form articles (+2 000 words)

An exception to the rule, URBACT will occasionally commission in depth, expert pieces from experts. To be discussed with URBACT Secretariat in detail.

If a theory needs to be explained, illustrated by examples, in order to better situate URBACT's work in the urban policy and urban research debates, a commission will be specifically made to an URBACT expert by the URBACT secretariat. It may be linked to URBACT Knowledge Hub activities.
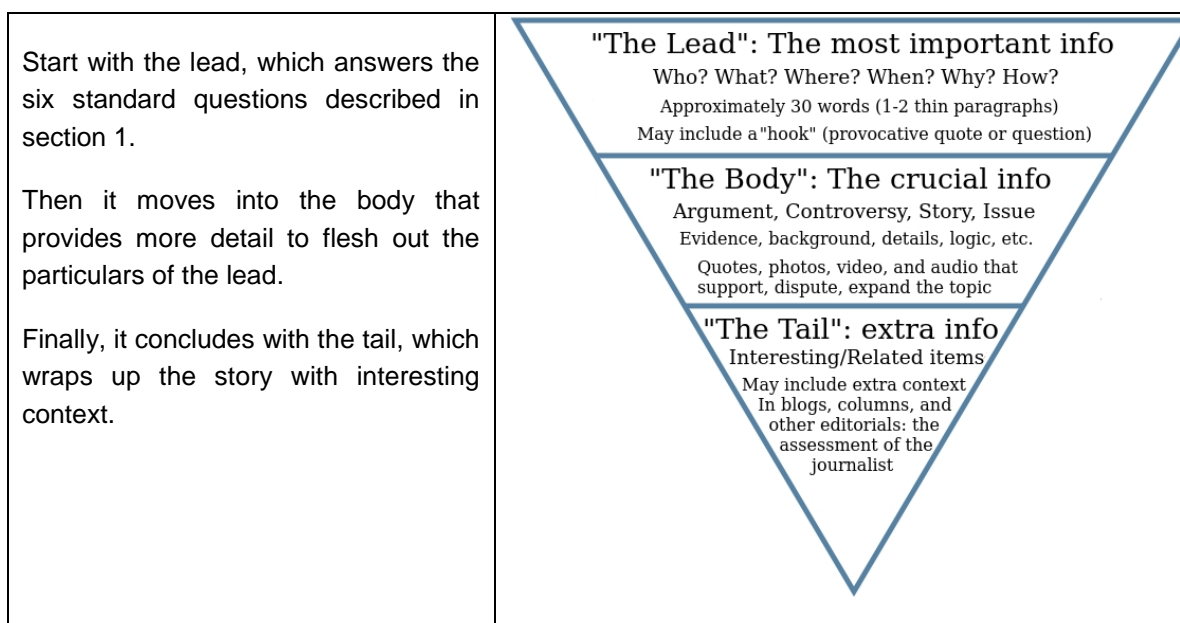
Example:

- *The housing paradox: more financing - less affordability?*
- *The housing paradox: what can local municipalities do?*

Access detailed template: THEORY LONG FORM ARTICLES (+2 000 words) (Exceptionally only)

www.urbact.eu

3. GENERAL URBACT WRITING TIPS

3.1. Use a basic inverted pyramid structure

The most basic way to structure a news-style article is through what's called the inverted pyramid.

Start with the lead, which answers the six standard questions described in section 1.

Then it moves into the body that provides more detail to flesh out the particulars of the lead.

Finally, it concludes with the tail, which wraps up the story with interesting context.

"The Lead": The most important info
Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?
Approximately 30 words (1-2 thin paragraphs)
May include a "hook" (provocative quote or question)

"The Body": The crucial info
Argument, Controversy, Story, Issue
Evidence, background, details, logic, etc.
Quotes, photos, video, and audio that
support, dispute, expand the topic

"The Tail": extra info
Interesting/Related items
May include extra context
In blogs, columns, and
other editorials: the
assessment of the
journalist

3.2. Chapeau versus nut graph

Chapeau versus nut graph Use the one-paragraph summary (from section 1) as a summary to clue in readers on the main points. It keeps readers oriented about the overall purpose of the story and draws them in further — the summary intrigues so they read the rest of the piece.

Use a "chapeau" - a summary starting the article, oftentimes set apart from the rest of the text (usually 3 lines longs and not more than 10 lines).

The "nut graph" comes a few paragraphs in. If you have successfully humanized your story, then you hopefully have a strong character. That person could lead the story (Zoom In). With this approach, the character-driven story will draw in the reader, who will then learn the necessary info through the nut graph.

An example of nut graph, "Jane Smith used to travel 75 minutes by two buses in order to reach her job as a cleaning lady in downtown Sheffield. But the newly opened Tramway Line D has reduced her commute to a mere 20 minutes. That allows her more time to spend with her kids, where she takes them to the popular park that runs alongside the new tramway, which opened last year.".

3.3. Show, don't tell

Use actions, motions and dialogue to make a point. Paint a picture. Avoid telling: "Joan Clos has an eye for urban detail. "Instead, show Joan Clos' eye for urban detail in action: "As cars and taxis whizzed by on Second Avenue, Joan Clos hunched over a curb. He reached out to touch the steel coating on the curb's concrete corner, something you see on sidewalks all over Manhattan. "If you put in this metallic protection, it's a very good investment," Clos said, ignoring the loud traffic as his shock of silver hair nearly scraped the sidewalk. "You protect the stone and it can last for much more time."

3.4. Make the words 'for example' your best friend

Stories about policy and urban management can become very abstract. Illustrate via examples.

For example: "Now, UN-Habitat is thinking more at a city scale. The agency under Clos works almost like a consulting firm to assemble a multidisciplinary team that aims to shore up a city's overall urban management.

3.5. Beware of acronyms

Just because most reports start with a three-page glossary of "acronyms used in this report" does not mean you should use them.

Acronyms destroy writing. And they are easy to avoid.

If writing about the Greater London Authority, don't automatically put (GLA) in parentheses and use GLA on future references. You can also refer back to "the authority", "local officials", or the name of the actual person at the Greater London Authority who is doing the work.

3.6. Avoid jargon

Words like "sustainability", "resilience", and "smart city" can be hard to avoid. And in some contexts they make total sense. Ask yourself if buzzwords like these are really the most precise way of describing what you're talking about.

www.urbact.eu

3.7. Vary sentence structure

It's always a good idea to write short sentences, especially, when English is a second language for many. Be careful. Put two or three long sentences together and it puts readers to sleep!

For instance:

"The harbour area of Caen (FR) became a no-go area after the shipyard closed. A first step towards redevelopment was 'territorial marketing' to attract people back – at least to safe parts of the site. The city set up artistic and cultural events, such as drawing walks, bike rides, canoeing tours and guided site visits. Thanks to growing popular interest, temporary uses then sprung up in former industrial buildings."

From [4 Ways cities are breathing life back into empty spaces](#)

Similarly, avoid long complex sentences. Almost any long sentence can be broken up into shorter sentences.

3.8. Avoid "passive voice" & use "active voice"

Be clear about who is taking action!
"*The policy was passed by the council.*" >> "*The council passed the policy.*"

3.9. Use the imperative

Compel your reader to action. Be more direct.

Instead of the suggestive: *"One might look at the following Copenhagen city council ordinance when planning a bicycle action plan"*

Try: *"Is your city mulling over a new bicycle action plan? Look at what Copenhagen city council did last month with its new ordinance."*

www.urbact.eu

4. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE WEB

Readers are blasted every day with information.
Here are a few tips for getting — and keeping — their attention.

4.1. Web users don't read. They scan.

Here's how people read different kinds of web pages – illustrated in three *"heatmaps" from their "eyetracking" study* by The Nielsen Norman Group, a web user-experience consultancy.
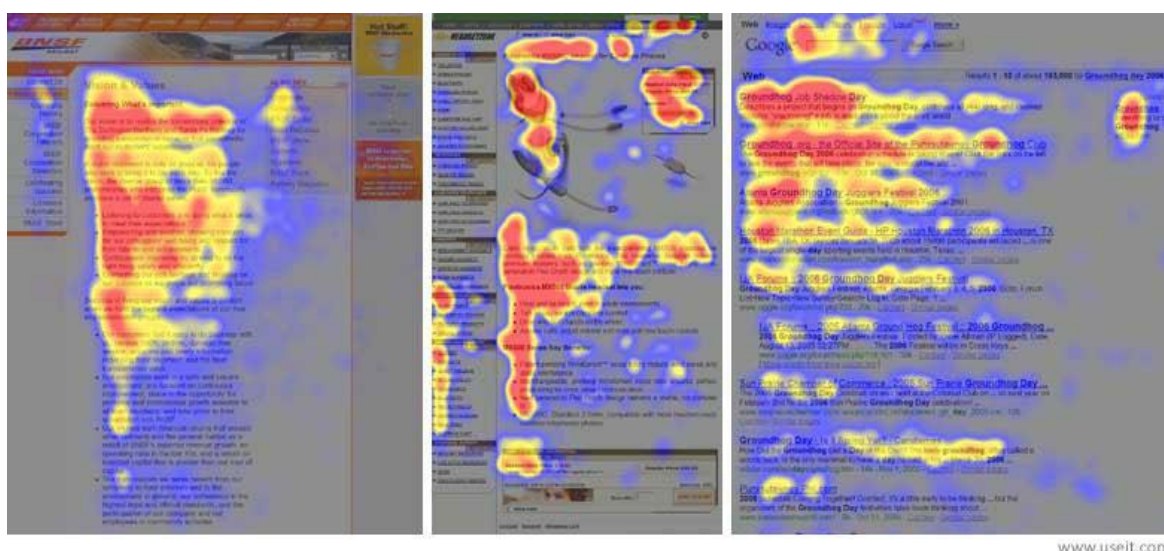
A few tips:

- ■**Get to the point quickly:** beyond the third paragraph, you'll lose your chance to convince readers to stay with the story.
- ■**Break up copy into sections:** readers never want to see a "wall of text" on their screens. Use subheadings to break up pieces that run longer than 400 words. Try to keep paragraphs to 2-3 sentences if possible.
- ■**Use photos and graphics:** make sure you have the rights to use them and credit them.
- ■**Use bullet points:** don't bury your points in paragraphs that readers may skim past or ignore.

www.urbact.eu

4.2. Headlines

Headline writing is an art.

Readers are scanning thousands of headlines a day making lightning-fast decisions about what is worth their time to click on.

Often your headline will be seen without any photo or context to "sell" the story.

The headline should deliver a clear and accurate statement of the promise you are making to the reader. Resist the urge to be clever. You don't want to make your readers work too hard to 'get it'.

If your headline doesn't instantly make sense, it will be skipped.

A few tips:

- If you've really thought through the story you're trying to tell, writing a headline should be easy. For example, if you've set out to write a story about lessons Turin learned while revitalising an old industrial area, then — voilà! — "Lessons Turin learned while revitalising an old industrial area" makes a perfectly good headline.

- A number can help a headline, particularly if your story is a "listicle".
For example: "Six ways to get the community engaged in your project".

- Words like "Why", "How", and "What" can help start a headline.
For example: "Why London's traffic congestion is worse than ever" or "How Paris is reducing air pollution" or "What Madrid learned by closing a street to traffic". This story has answers.

- For more on how to write good headlines, see this post on Poynter.com: "10 questions to help you write better headlines".

4.3. SEO. Search engine optimisation.

Using specific keywords that people are searching for will help with search results.

For example, "Why Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo thinks cities can deliver on climate change" offers a few specific keywords ("Anne Hidalgo and climate change") that people might reasonably be searching the internet for.

Branding: is to give a clear message of what URBACT is and does.

Content: relates directly to the content of your article. It indicates to the reader (and the search Engines) what the article is about.

URBACT chosen keywords include:

Branding keywords:	**Content key words:**	**Keywords linked to specific URBACT campaigns/projects:**
City solutions	Sustainable urban development	Remaking the city
Sustainable cities	Urban planning	Gender Equal Cities
Cities of change	City planning	URBACT City Festival
Driving change for better cities	Action plans	Techplace
Knowledge to action	Make better cities	URBACT Campus
	Building capacity	
	Better cities	
	Cities networks	

Using these words, specifically in sub headings and titles – as well as in the first sentences of body copy will help URBACT content be found by users looking for relevant materials.

But, don't overdo it on the keywords!

Loading up a headline with lots of keywords might make it attractive to Google but it's more important that it be clear and accurate to humans.

4.4. Most readers come in the "side door"

Most readers are likely to discover your story through a Google search, social media or email.

- Don't assume every reader knows what URBACT or its various lines of work are all about — offer enough context for someone encountering it for the first time.

- Give readers relevant content links.

- Including the option to subscribe to URBACT's email newsletter and/or social media feeds.

- Add the link in the copy after the word you would like to see linked.

- Hyperlink to acknowledge organisations and initiatives: "Fortaleza is tackling the issue with the help of Vital Strategies, a New York-based NGO, and financial support from Bloomberg Philanthropies, which is funding a five-year effort to prevent traffic fatalities called the Initiative for Global Road Safety."

- Hyperlink to a document: "Several of the city's projects are featured in the National Association of City Transportation Officials' Global Street Design Guide."

■ Hyperlink a source: "The global market for motorcycles was forecast to expand 7.2 percent this past year, according to market researcher Freedonia Group."

■ Hyperlink to URBACT networks and outputs: The URBACT ARRIVAL CITIES network https://urbact.eu/arrival-cities working on migration flows at the local level.

4.5. Photos matter

A compelling image is often what makes one story pop out. Especially on social media.

■ Don't waste hours writing the perfect story only to use a boring photo to illustrate it!

■ People make photos interesting and can help provide perspective.

■ "Before" and "after" photos work. Citiscope's most-read story ever, about a river cleanup in Manila, went viral on Facebook because it had shocking before-and- after photos

■ Avoid a wall of text - readers should never see only text on the screen!

■ Include photo placement with correct naming convention (below) in your document.   See formatting section.

■ Using a header image or catchy photograph is very helpful.

4.6. Where to find your free photographs?

- [Flickr creative commons search](#)

- [Creative commons search engine](#)

- [Wikimedia Commons](#)

- [Pixabay](#)

- [UN Photo Library](#) (note [terms of use](#))

- [UN-Habitat](#) and [UN-Habitat Flickr feed](#)

Remember to double check you have rights to use the images and always indicate credit.

4.7. Use your analytics

Google Analytics offer tons of useful information to guide your work. Pay close attention to what kinds of stories URBACT users are reading — and what they're not. This will help you commission relevant content which will get more traffic and more interest.

Look at the amount of time readers spent on the page — that's a measure for how long the content kept readers engaged. Also look at the pages per session for an indication of whether readers are finding other things on URBACT to read after they're done.

4.8. URBACT website or URBACT blog? What's the difference?

> **URBACT website** = the voice of URBACT

- its content comes out from the URBACT networks, cities and events.
- should be related to the work of URBACT

> **URBACT blog** = a source of inspiration and the voice for European (and beyond) cities and urban planner community. It tells stories from outside URBACT.

If you have any doubts, contact the URBACT Secretariat (as indicated at the end of this guide)

	URBACT WEBSITE	BLOG
Content	URBACT generated knowledge	External to URBACT: other cities, initiatives general policy debates
Wordcount	600 > 2 000	> 800
Formats	All formats - see dummies	All format with a preference for easy reads - see dummies

www.urbact.eu

5. TECHNICAL AND STYLE GUIDANCE

5.1. Spell in British English (rather than American English)

For example, use the -is- spelling when you have a word that can be written with -is-/-iz- spelling (i.e. capitalisation vs capitalization) as described by the Oxford Dictionary here.

Language Term Writing Attention needs to be paid to the terms of use and for there to be consistency.

URBACT should always be written in capital letters.

5.2. Network Names

When referring to URBACT networks make sure you respect their exact spelling and writing style and make reference to URBACT as follows:

ACTive NGOs	Com.unity.lab	RUMOURLESS CITIES
ALT/BAU	Come in!	Tech Revolution
BeePathNet	Innovato-R	The Playful Paradigm
BioCanteens	Making Spend Matter	Tropa Verde
BLUACT	ON BOARD	URBAN REGENERATION MIX
CARD4ALL	ONSTAGE	Volunteering Cities
C-CHANGE	Re-growCity	Welcoming International Talent
Civic eState	RU:RBAN	

www.urbact.eu

When referring to a network it should always be in the format:

URBACT [NAME] Network (e.g. URBACT REFILL Network)

5.3. Article title

Only the first letter of the title is in capital letter, unless it contains a name (person, network, organisation etc).

5.4. Title Positions

Mayor- When referring the mayor by name, mayor needs to be capitalised.

Mayor Bloomberg

When just simply referring to the mayor without naming him or her, there is no capitalisation: "The mayor was thoroughly involved in the URBACT Local Group."

When using other official job titles in reference to someone, please capitalise the first letters of the title.

Elaine Williams, Senior Housing Strategy Officer

5.5. Writing City, Country names

In article the first time the city is mentioned the two letter code of the country must be used next to it in parenthesis.

Example: Milan (IT) Paris (FR)

http://publications.europa.eu/code/pdf/370000en.htm

If the city name is written for the second time throughout the text, there is no need to add the country code if it has already been introduced.

www.urbact.eu

Short name (source language)	Short name (English)	Official name	Code ([1])	Former abbreviation ([1])
Belgique/België	Belgium	Kingdom of Belgium	BE	B
България (*)	Bulgaria	Republic of Bulgaria	BG	—
Česko	Czechia	Czech Republic	CZ	—
Danmark	Denmark	Kingdom of Denmark	DK	DK
Deutschland	Germany	Federal Republic of Germany	DE	D
Eesti	Estonia	Republic of Estonia	EE	—
Éire/Ireland	Ireland	Ireland	IE	IRL
Ελλάδα (*)	Greece	Hellenic Republic	EL	EL
España	Spain	Kingdom of Spain	ES	E
France	France	French Republic	FR	F
Hrvatska	Croatia	Republic of Croatia	HR	—
Italia	Italy	Italian Republic	IT	I
Κύπρος (*)	Cyprus	Republic of Cyprus	CY	—
Latvija	Latvia	Republic of Latvia	LV	—

www.urbact.eu

Lietuva	Lithuania	Republic of Lithuania	LT	—
Luxembourg	Luxembourg	Grand Duchy of Luxembourg	LU	L
Magyarország	Hungary	Hungary	HU	—
Malta	Malta	Republic of Malta	MT	—
Nederland	Netherlands	Kingdom of the Netherlands	NL	NL
Österreich	Austria	Republic of Austria	AT	A
Polska	Poland	Republic of Poland	PL	—
Portugal	Portugal	Portuguese Republic	PT	P
România	Romania	Romania	RO	—
Slovenija	Slovenia	Republic of Slovenia	SI	—
Slovensko	Slovakia	Slovak Republic	SK	—
Suomi/Finland	Finland	Republic of Finland	FI	FIN
Sverige	Sweden	Kingdom of Sweden	SE	S
United Kingdom	United Kingdom	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	UK	UK

(*)   Latin transliteration: Бългaрия = Bulgaria; Ελλάδα = Elláda; Κύπρος = Kýpros.

www.urbact.eu

NB:

(^{1}) The abbreviations to use are the ISO codes, except for Greece and the United Kingdom, for which EL and UK are recommended (instead of GR and GB). The former abbreviations were generally taken from the international code for automobiles and were used until the end of 2002.

Do not use 'Republic of Ireland' nor 'Irish Republic'.

Use 'the Netherlands' not Holland, which is only part of the Netherlands (the provinces of North and South Holland); a capital T is not necessary on 'the'. In tables 'Netherlands' will suffice.

Use 'United Kingdom' for the Member State, not 'Great Britain', which comprises England, Scotland and Wales; these three together with Northern Ireland are the constituent parts of the United Kingdom. The purely geographical term 'British Isles' includes Ireland and the Crown Dependencies (the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands which are not part of the United Kingdom).

5.6. Acronyms

The following list of acronyms is widely used in the URBACT Community:

APN Action Planning Network	**CLLD** Community Local Led Development	**EC** European Commission
ETC European Territorial Cooperation	**IN** Implementation Network	**MA** Managing Authority
NUP National URBACT Point	**OP** Operational Programme	**PE** Programme Expert
TN Transfer Network	**RFSC** Reference Framework for Sustainable Cities	**UDN** Urban Development Network
ERDF European Regional Development Fund	**ESF** European Social Fund	**IAP** Integrated Action Plan
LE Lead Expert	**LP** Lead Partner	**PP** Project Partner
ULG URBACT Local Group	**US** URBACT Secretariat	or **JTS** Joint Technical Secretariat

> Use the whole meaning/explanation rather than the acronym itself.

For other acronyms, spell it out the first time it is used, with the short version in brackets
Example: Massive open online course (MOOC).

If the abbreviation or acronym is universally well-known, there is no need to spell it out e.g. NATO, PDF

5.7. Citation

There should not be much citation usage but in case it is needed use Harvard Citation Style. A brief guide can be accessed here.

Citations should remain in the text into brackets.

5.8. Using Quotes

Be consistent. Use "double quotation marks" when directly quoting someone. Before the quote, there should be a comma.

For example, Frederique Calvanus recalls, "The consultation organised by the city of Veria to analyse inhabitants' satisfaction, or dissatisfaction, with their old buildings compared to others in modern builds was particularly inspiring."

Capitalisations of words when quoting:

Frederique Calvanus recalls, "The consultation organised by the city of Veria to analyse inhabitants' satisfaction, or dissatisfaction, with their old buildings compared to others in modern builds was particularly inspiring."

"For example," explains Elaine Williams, "past schemes under the Community Energy Savings Programme involved citizens once a project had already been decided, and citizens had little choice in what renovation work was to be undertaken."

Single quotes are used for emphasis and within a quote. "When I say 'immediately', I mean some time before August," said the manager.

5.9. Authors

Authors should be presented at the end of the article.

- with a picture
- their first names and surnames
- roles in URBACT/other organisations.
- links to their Twitter and LinkedIn accounts.

5.10. Authors

Please use Day Month Year. For example: "On 22 May 2014, the aliens landed in Berlin" Never precede the date with 'the'.

5.11. Numbers

Always use figures

- for statistics: 3 new officials were appointed in 2002, 6 in 2003 …
- for votes: 12 delegations were in favour, 7 against, and 6 abstained)
- for ranges denoted by a hyphen (see Ranges, 4.12-4.13)
- for serial numbers (Chapter 5, Article 9, Item 4) unless you are quoting a source that does otherwise (Part One of the EEC Treaty).

When writing number in sentences, 0-9 should be spelt out in words. Figures are used from 10 onwards.

For example: Five cities are involved in the network; the programme has helped over 500 cities

If a sentence includes a mixture of numbers above and below 10, use figures for easier comparison by the reader. For example: Network A has 10 partner cities, while network B has 5.

Percentage = 10%

Numbers are written = 10 000 (space to indicate thousands, dot before cents)

Euros = EUR 500 or EUR 500 000
But with millions, billions, trillions it is better to use EUR 55 million

Dollars = US$ 500

Use a 'protected space' [Shift + CTRL + Space in Word] so that dates or numbers are not cut between two lines.

www.urbact.eu

Times: in principle use the 24-hour clock, but 12-hour clock use is also acceptable, especially if addressing mainly a UK audience. Be consistent throughout the text – do not use both. The 12-hour clock has a full stop between hours and minutes, and uses am/pm to indicate morning or afternoon. The 24-hour clock uses a colon between hours and minutes, and omits am/pm.

For example:

- the event starts at 9am and ends at 3.30pm
- the event runs from 9:00 until 15:30

5.12. More information

For more information on editing guidelines please consult the *English Style Guide, A handbook for authors and translators in the European Commission, produced by the European Commission* (updated December 2016).

www.urbact.eu

6. HOW TO PUBLISH YOUR ARTICLE ON THE URBACT WEBSITE OR THE BLOG?

> 1. NUPs or representatives of an URBACT network (Communication Officer, Expert) can publish articles directly on the pages you are managing. Before you do so, make sure you have read the following sections related to formatting, final checklist.

> 2. NUPs (who wish to write in English), Programme Experts, or network representatives wanting to contribute to the general parts (thematic pages) of URBACT website or to the blog, need to submit articles to the URBACT Secretariat.

To accelerate the process of validation and publication, here is some advice to take into account:

Formatting:

- Name your file: Title of the article + name of the writer

- Include all hyperlinks after the words it is referring to, for instance: URBACT http://www.urbact.eu

- Include: relevant hyperlinks

- Include: relevant TAGS and TOPICS

- Include: list of twitter accounts to share with

- Include an introduction (short)

- Do not include academic references lists!
  URBACT WILL NOT include an academic reference list in the article

- If you do not already have a profile on the URBACT Website/URBACT Blog, please submit a picture of yourself and a short bio that can constitute your profile as contributor

- PHOTOS: always attach photos, logos, relevant material to the article.
  Do not include photos in a word document. Send them separately, good quality, if necessary via a free online software such as wetransfer.
  Photos named: Title of the photo, its position in the article (1,2,3,4 etc) and the name of the photographers (for the credit).

7. THE MUST DO CHECKLIST

Written in UK English (not US)	✓
URBACT commissioned article and validated content?	
Use and followed one of the templates? (content, structure, length)	
Respects URBACT writing guidelines?	
Hyperlinks added in correct places?	
Naming convention followed? Title of the article, name of the writer	
Author photo + bio + twitter @ etc?	—
Links to photos or photos attached? Location of each photo? 'Photo 1: title, name of photographer, if needed link to the source) And photo size – no heavy files!	
Useful TAGs list?	—
@twitter and linkedin accounts of people and organisations for the URBACT Secretariat to share the article	
Deleted all academic references? (added as hyperlinks)	—

www.urbact.eu

How to submit your article to?

> **NUP** (only for articles written in English)

The URBACT editorial line is carefully planned on a quarterly basis.

- For article ideas for up to three months: post your ideas on the relevant discussion board on Basecamp and notify Jenny Koutsomarkou (j.koutsomarkou@urbact.eu) and Segolene Pruvot (s.pruvot@urbact.eu). Segolene Pruvot will review all article ideas and give feedback.

- For finalised articles: post them on Basecamp on the relevant folder and notify Jenny Koutsomarkou and Segolene Pruvot on the 20th of the month. You should not submit a finalised article without pitching your idea first and discussing it with the Secretariat

> **Programme Experts** to Nuala Morgan (n.morgan@urbact.eu) and Ségolène Pruvot (s.pruvot@urbact.eu). The editorial line will be discussed during an online meeting every third Tuesday of each month. Updates and article ideas should be submitted by the 20th of each month. Deadline for article submissions is also on the 20th of each month.

> **Representatives of an URBACT Network (Lead Experts and Communication Officer)** should send their expression of interest or their ideas for an article to the Secretariat team (communication@urbact.eu) and Ségolène Pruvot (s.pruvot@urbact.eu). The Communication will reach you to discuss the feasibility and the opportunity of publishing something.

The editorial planning can be flexible and adjusted only in cases of unexpected events or circumstances, major changes and priorities in Europe and in the world.

www.urbact.eu

8. ARTICLE TEMPLATES

These are articles standard formats. Please choose your type of story and follow the template.

- 6 Article Types
- Different styles, lengths and purposes.

Mostly valid for publication on both website and blog.

www.urbact.eu

8.1. NEWS (up to 1 000 words)

> This article aims to share a piece of news asking the usual Who? What? Where? When? Why? and How? Questions to keep the reader up to date with our latest developments.

> For eg. for a new publication, for an event.
> Example: New URBACT book: 'Cities in Action - Stories of Change'

TITLE: Enhancing the vitality of small cities: "Let's make it a priority!"

By Name of writer, expert in xxx, at the university of xxx.
– One line – Name, job title or position.

Introduction (30 - 40words max)
Quick introduction laying the topic of the news item.

Body copy (300 – 600 words max)
Longer pieces to be cut into paragraphs with subheadings

Finish the article with a Call to action!

PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO...

Include all hyperlinks in (www.) the copy + attach photos + Check the MUST DO CHECKLIST

@ useful social media handles	@xx @xx @xxx
Keywords – see SEO. Search engine optimisation.	GEC, genderequalcities, bettercities, Umea, Swedish urban planning, European cities
#Hashtags	#swedishcities #sustainbaleplanning #etc

www.urbact.eu

8.2. LISTICLES (600 – 800 words)

> Listicles are made for the internet. The term refers to an "article made up of a list". They can be extremely informative and substantive. The format is popular with busy readers - it delivers a finite amount of information, in easily readable chunks.
> Use it if you have solutions and tips to share for instance

eg: 5 GenderEquality relevant blogs not to miss
OR 5 Cities where the grass really is greener

TITLE: 5 Things you need to know about Umeå

By Name of writer, expert in xxx, at the university of xxx.
– One line – Name, job title or position.

Introduction 30/40w max

Umeå is a city in eastern Sweden, known for its museums and cultural institutions. We, however, know it thanks to URBACT project Freight Trails and xxxx. About the initivative and who runs it.

5 Sections with sub headings (75-100w)

1. **Umeå is a cultural hotspot**
2. **Umeå - a hip university town**
3. **Umeå city council believes in GEC**

ETC...

No need for a conclusion.

PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO...

Include all hyperlinks in (www.) the copy + attach photos + Check the MUST DO CHECKLIST

@ useful social media handles	@xx @xx @xxx
Keywords – see SEO. Search engine optimisation.	Gec, genderequalcities, bettercities, Umea, Swedish urban planning, European cities
#Hashtags	#swedishcities #sustainbaleplanning #etc

www.urbact.eu

8.3. PORTRAITS (800-1 200 words)

INTERVIEWS

Includes Q&As, Roundtables, Meet the Faces of URBACT, Meet the policy makers, Local Heroes and 24 Hours with…

> Interviews give a face to the topic, they make it friendly and approachable
> They are easily read "Commuter Reads" and referred to by other actors on social media
> They will be shared, especially if the person interviewed is a reference in his/her domain.
> Some interviews can work as Q&As with one or several people (roundtable)

TITLE: 5 Quick questions for … Corina Crețu
By Name of writer, expert in xxx, at the university of xxx.
– One line – Name, job title or position.

Introduction (30-40w)
About subject/Bio
Corina Crețu is a Romanian politician and the incumbent European Commissioner for Regional Policy. Crețu is a member of the Romanian Social Democratic Party, and former Member of the European Parliament. Between June 2014 and October 2014, she served as a Vice-President of the European Parliament.

Up to 11 Questions (100-150w)

- **1. When did you first realise you'd make a career in politics ?**
- **2. How did you get involved with URBACT?**
- **3. How do you manage your work/life balance?**
- **4. How do you see European city planning evolving?**
- **5. What does a Gender Equal Europe mean to you?**

PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO...

Include all hyperlinks in (www.) the copy + attach photos + Check the MUST DO CHECKLIST

@ useful social media handles	@CorinaCretuEU @EU_Commission @xxx
Keywords – see SEO. Search engine optimisation.	EU Commissioner, genderequalcities, bettercities,
#Hashtags	

www.urbact.eu

24 HOURS WITH…

> Its purpose is to meet a face the reader can identify with and also share the human side of city practitioners, politicians or others.
> It is a short "human interest" based story, which readers can identify with. You can highlight the exceptional work of a mayor or an expert for instance.
> Structure will be dependent on the subjects' daily routine but should include a balance of 'work/life'.
> This is a "Commuter Read" and should be kept short and snappy.

TITLE: 24 HOURS WITH THE MAYOR OF GRIGNY
By Name of writer, expert in xxx, at the university of xxx.
– One line – Name, job title or position.

Introduction (30-40w)
About subject/Bio

Sections (75-100w)
6-7am –   **First thing in the morning - jog/breakfast/kids?**
7- 8am -   **When I arrive at the office my proprity is to...**
Midday -   **At lunchtime we ...**
2-4pm -   **Every afternoon ...**
7-8pm -   **The end of the day I like to...**

Notes:

Timings depending on schedules!
Please complete with a mix of work related info and personal anecdotes if possible

PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO...

Include all hyperlinks in (www.) the copy + attach photos + Check the MUST DO CHECKLIST

@ handles of concerned parties	@prio91350 @xx @xxx
Tags + Keywords – see SEO. Search engine optimisation.	Grigny, onstage, Music schools for social change musicalEuropean cities
Hashtags	#europeancities #musicforchange #onstage etc etc

8.4. CITIES STORIES

Includes:

Focus on a city (>1 000 words)
Comparison stories (>1 200 words)
Transfer stories (> 1 500 words)

> Introduce a practice, a policy, a solution of a city to other urban practitioners for them to feel inspired. Many URBACT stories are "solutions" stories, meaning case studies of innovative practices in one city that other cities can learn from.
> Solution stories focus on fixes — and understanding what works, doesn't work and how things can be improved.
> The stories can also refer to challenges and to the ways cities work together.

For example – Focus on a city
This format should use examples from the URBACT website archives, and present new developments, ultimately providing 'profiles' of how cities have already become leaders in a specific aspect of sustainable urban development (Copenhagen and cycling; Barcelona and waterfront development are two good examples)

TITLE: How Ghent became a pioneer of refugee accommodation
By Name of writer, expert in xxx, at the university of xxx.
One line – Name, job title or position.

Introduction (200-300 words)
Thematic context, in this case regarding difficulties and discourse around refugees and migration in Europe and Ghent as a leader

Body (500/700 words)
The story of *how* the city found a solution to the 'problem', and why they stand out from other cases. This should be based on an interview with a key protagonist and include a mix of direct quotations and narrative.

Conclusion (200 words)
Advice to other cities, based on the experience of developing these methods. Context of results and attempts to replicate them (e.g. in an URBACT transfer network or good practice).

PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO...

Include all hyperlinks in (www.) the copy + attach photos + Check the MUST DO CHECKLIST

@ useful social media handles	@ghentinternatio (official account of the city) @Civic_eState (URBACT Network in which Ghent takes part) @ of people quoted and involved
Keywords – see SEO. Search engine optimisation.	Ghent, City Story
#Hashtags	#Ghent #University

Transfer Story (1 200 words)

> Demonstrate the URBACT method 'in action' based on interviews with practitioners
> Focus on one of the cities as they attempt to implement a best practice / IAP
> Should emphasize the difficulties and opportunities of moving policies and practices between local and national contexts.
> Should be 'energised' rather than 'passive', making use of verbs that capture innovative processes. These should be exciting to read, practical, and need not be 'finalised.' Present tense is desirable where possible.

TITLE: How Perugia is reinventing itself as a centre for eco-tourism
By Name of writer, expert in xxx, at the university of xxx.
One line – Name, job title or position.
Introduction (100 words)

Description of the city problem
(e.g. in above case: how many visitors per year, wasted funds, how is it failing to capitalise on cultural resources)

Eg: Despite its desirable location in central Italy, the capital of Umbria has struggled to capitalize on its cultural heritage. Today the municipality is working to re-brand their city based on an URBACT good practice from Alba Iulia (RO).

Each section with its subheading

Description of best practice (200-300 words)

Analysis of someone doing it well, e.g. the good practice

(how Alba Iulia found a solution to this)

Challenges in 'transferring' (400 words)

Interviews and pictures of 'progress' based around question: 'how is implementation going?'

(Interviews with the urban practitioners in Perugia, about precisely what they are learning from Romania, and how it is working)

Support from URBACT (200 words)

One or two examples of how URBACT has facilitated in helping the 'transfer' go to plan. (Challenges in adapting to context and how URBACT method is providing support and troubleshooting).

Conclusion (150 words) -

Description of success and hope for it

Integrating the discussion into the wider projects of change for the city, beyond URBACT. (How do the city see the transfer network activities within the larger activities of change at a city-level?)

PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO...

Include all hyperlinks in (www.) the copy + attach photos + Check the MUST DO CHECKLIST

@ useful social media handles	@Perugia
Keywords – see SEO. Search engine optimisation.	Transfer, Building capacity
#Hashtags	#ecoturism

8.5. IN-DEPTH REPORTAGE (2 000 words) (Exceptionally only)

> For exceptional case studies only.
> To consolidate the APN legacy stories - presenting them to a broader audience with a less explicit focus on URBACT methodology using journalistic prose.
> Takes a broad look at a city's approach to a particular problem, defining how URBACT and other initiatives have helped to transform a given urban environment in recent years.
> Unlike the other formats, the target audience is beyond the audience of city practitioners and will be developed in tandem with external bodies (editors, in mainstream media outlets etc).
> Where possible this format will make use of 'on the ground' interviews, and could be supplemented with high quality photojournalism or illustrations.

TITLE:
By Name of writer, expert in xxx, at the university of xxx.
One line – Name, job title or position.
Introduction – (400 words)
The city's problems, in historical context
When did the search for a solution begin? (400 words)
Long-term history of trying to solve the problem in a given city
How other initiatives spearheaded change (400 words)
Consideration of how other non URBACT initiatives helped address the problem
New solutions and URBACT (400 words)
How URBACT facilitated solutions, as a changing point

Successes and challenges (400 words)
Next steps for the city. Plus, what can the story can tell us about sustainable urban mobility more generally?
Note: unlike a 'Focus on a city' story, roughly 3/4 protagonists are required for these works of reportage:

- 1. One major interviewee: an expert, or, say, a high-profile politician, who can be quoted and interviewed for the history, cited throughout. Their quotes can provide a 'top and tail' to the article.
- 2. 'Voxpops' from Activists / civil society representatives / private sector entrepreneurs
- 3. One or two members of an URBACT Local Group

PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO...
Include all hyperlinks in (www.) the copy + attach photos + Check the MUST DO CHECKLIST

@ useful social media handles	
Keywords - – see SEO. Search engine optimisation.	
#Hashtags	

8.6. THEORY LONG FORM ARTICLES (+2 000 words) (Exceptionally only)

> For topics of exceptional relevance to Urban European Development issues or hot academic issues

> Related to the work of some URBACT Networks

> Delivered by URBACT Programme Experts after commission only

TITLE:
By Name of writer, expert in xxx, at the university of xxx.
One line – Name, job title or position.

Introduction – (400 words)
The topic's definition and current debate

The academic debate? (400 words)
What is the history of the debate and where it is placed now.

A new insight into the topic (400 words)
What the author's new input on the topic is

Example from cities or initiatives – one or two (400 words)
How cities / initiatives developed solutions that illustrate the new approach to the urban development issue

Successes and challenges (400 words)
Next steps. Plus, what can the discussion/ debate can tell us about sustainable urban mobility more generally?

PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO...

Include all hyperlinks in (www.) the copy + attach photos + Check the MUST DO CHECKLIST

@ useful social media handles	
Keywords - – see SEO. Search engine optimisation.	
#Hashtags	

www.urbact.eu

KEY TIPS: 5 ESSENTIAL INTERVIEW TIPS

1. Choose the right person

A person who is positioned to speak with authority on the subject. Mayors make good interviewees, but so does anyone leading an innovative urban project with lessons to share.

2. Focus on good content

The interviewee has to share meaningful insights. Remember, some politicians especially are good at speaking without actually saying anything…

3. Meet in person

Headed to a conference or meeting? Your audience probably does not want to read a long account of who said what. Instead, synthesize your top "takeaways". *Example from Devex: 4 growth trends in impact investing*

4. Forget e- mail!

Interviewees are more dynamic when speaking off the cuff (rather than writing considered responses). You can always edit what the person says to make it read clearly — just acknowledge that the interview was edited.

5. Be coherent and clear

Interview must be coherent and follow a clear narrative arc. It helps to write a short introduction to the topic and the person you interviewed. Remember to structure the story around your questions and the person's answers. — Be careful to never add words the person did not say.

www.urbact.eu

KEY TIPS: 14 TOP TIPS FOR YOUR CITY STORIES

1. *Keep in mind integrated urban development*
   One of URBACT's main goals is to promote integrated urban development — not just isolated policies, but initiatives that connect with broader goals to improve a city.

2. *Ask yourself key questions*

   ■ "Is the city's approach integrated?" – For details see *Integrated Urban Development* and *From non-integrated to Integrated urban development: an illustrated story*

   ■ "Will this provide multiple benefits for the local community?"

   ■ "If not, what are the missing elements?"

   ■ "What can be improved?"

   An URBACT story should touch on these integrated aspects, but it should not let those connections overwhelm the core of the innovation.

3. *Use Quotes*
   Quotes can help the flow of a story – and lighten the copy.
   For example, a transit official describing the benefits a new tram line provides in a previously underserved area.

4. *Use solutionsjournalism.org*
   Take a look at their toolkit and database of sample stories.

5. *Address collaboration*
   Address how participatory a project was. Collaboration between city leaders and different local stakeholders (to co-produce or follow- up the implementation of an integrated strategy or action plan) is another key principle in URBACT's work. It can also imply the involvement of supra-local institutions (Ministries, Regions, National Associations etc.). Check the URBACT Local Groups latest steps, decisions, actions and expected results.

www.urbact.eu

6. *Go local*

URBACT Local Group's bottom-up approach involving citizens, NGOs and local stakeholders working with local authorities is still new for many municipalities. It is an example of city leadership and social innovation that can serve as a model. These stakeholders provide a ready source of people to interview to get different perspectives. They can also provide balanced critiques of the initiative. For example, a neighbourhood leader may have wanted a tram line to make slightly different stops, even if he or she supports the new line overall.

7. *Attend meetings to liven up the copy*

URBACT Local Group meetings are ideal to get quotes from multiple key sources.

8. *'Humanise' your story*

Find a protagonist – someone the reader can relate to. If a mid-level civil servant was the real brains behind an initiative, don't be afraid to give credit where credit is due.

9. *Write about the impact on people.*

Whether it's on a social or economic or emotional level. Think beyond the policy.

10. *Include the challenges and how they were overcome*

Cities are very complex, and making positive change in them is hard. Yet that's exactly the work URBACT is engaged in. Your audience will identify with this struggle. So when writing about integrated urban development, be sure to say what some of the challenges were — and how they were overcome.

11. *Look for lessons learned*

URBACT is about city-to-city learning. Always include what lessons a city has learned. What didn't work as planned? What were the success factors? What worked better than expected? What was surprising? What would be done differently next time? Any recommendations?

12. *Remember, what's not working is also important*

"Solutions" stories aren't simply about touting success. They're also about understanding what didn't work and why. Readers deserve a realistic assessment of the policy, programme or approach. It's an important part of how cities learn from each other.

www.urbact.eu

13. *Include evidence*

Readers may not believe a "success story" if there isn't any proof. If your story is arguing that a city has found an effective strategy to, for example, encourage homeowners to make energy-efficiency improvements, back it up with evidence.

> **Anecdotal evidence** uses a story, rather than hard data.
> When telling the story of how a homeowner was inspired by the city's energy-efficiency strategy to add insulation to his or her house, it doesn't necessarily prove the strategy is successful, but it shows that it worked in this case.

> **Data** uses hard numbers to demonstrate larger trends.
> You might cite statistics from the city. It's important that you only cite data you believe to be credible. Whenever possible, use data from independent sources that don't have a stake in the project being viewed as a success. If the project is brand new, and there is no data available yet, it's OK to say that it's too early to know whether it will work or not. This is likely, because URBACT cities work within a network for 2.5 years, and only at the end of that cycle do they have an action plan ready, proven examples of pilot projects of implementation or transfer of integrated strategies/actions.

In the current post-Brexit political climate of Euroscepticism, evidence may also be an effective tool for pointing out the importance of collaboration within the EU and the efficacy of EU funds and programmes. Without being too explicit, simply providing evidence of a success story that is supported by EU collaboration will speak for itself.

Evidence Address Book:

- UN-Habitat's Global Urban Observatory

- Dataforcities.org (World Council on City Data — ISO 37120)

- The Economist Intelligence Unit: Hot Spots 2025

- World Bank Urban Development Data Indicators

- Understanding Global City Rankings (Chicago Council on Global Affairs)

- EUROSTAT (indicators relating to quality of life in EU cities)
- Global Human Settlement Layer (tool for assessing human presence on the planet)

- OECD Regional Statistics and Indicators (database covering 2 000 regions and 281 metropolitan areas in the 34 OECD countries, which include 25 European countries)

In addition, the European Commission's DG Regional and Urban Policy often publishes studies and reports on the State of Play of European Cities at http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/information

14. Don't forget the pitfalls

Beware of these traps:

- Being the "cheerleader"
  Writing about solutions still demands a critical eye. Readers deserve the most realistic and honest assessment.

- Trying to say too much
  More is not always more. Being concise is often more efficient to get your story across.

- A one-time, one-place story
  If circumstances are so unique to a specific context that they can't be replicated elsewhere, it's not much of a solution. If a wealthy philanthropist and prominent local citizen agrees to pay for a fancy pedestrian bridge designed by a 'starchitect' because he or she wants to leave a civic legacy, that's not a financing source most cities have readily at their disposal.

www.urbact.eu

www.urbact.eu