

Social innovation in cities

URBACT II



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This publication is part of a bigger capitalisation initiative set by the URBACT programme for 2014–2015 with the objective to present to Europe’s cities existing urban knowledge and good practices about:

-  **New urban economies**
-  **Jobs for young people in cities**
-  **Social innovation in cities**
-  **Sustainable regeneration in urban areas**

These topics have been explored by four URBACT working groups (workstreams), composed of multidisciplinary stakeholders across Europe such as urban practitioners and experts from URBACT, representatives from European universities, European programmes and international organisations working on these fields.

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WHAT IS THIS PUBLICATION ABOUT?

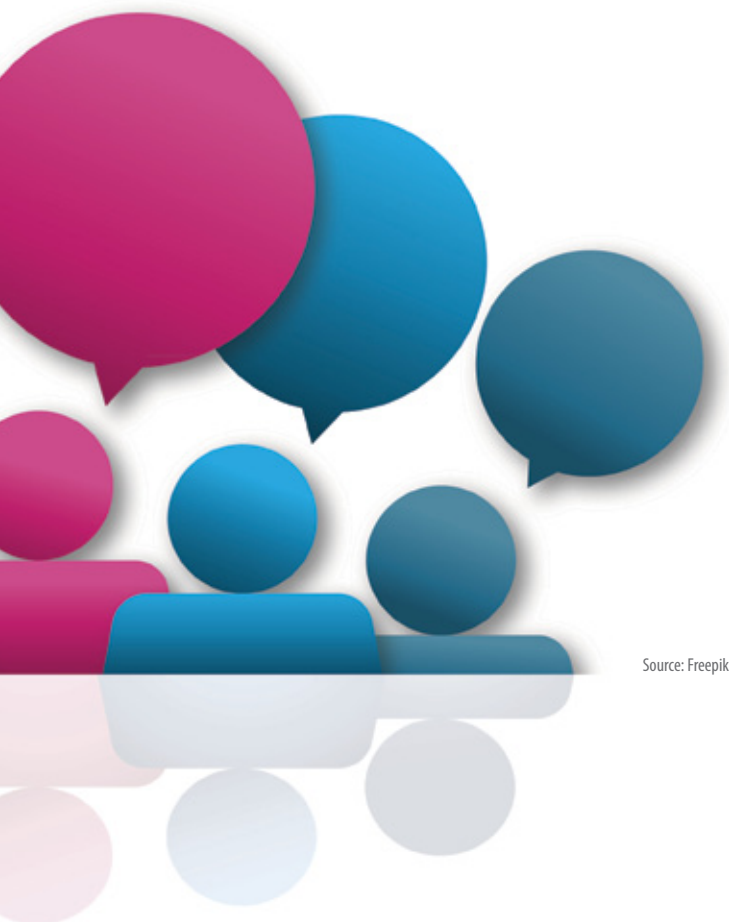
City administrations are facing a whole range of challenges on the social, environmental and economic fronts. New competences are being transferred from the national or regional levels while the budgets available to tackle them are shrinking. In this increasingly difficult context, social innovation is a new asset. Citizens are taking promising initiatives. They are inventing new and more sustainable solutions to solve their day-to-day problems. They are engaging in the lives of their neighbourhoods and regenerating the social fabric around them. They are taking part in the design and delivery of public services. In doing so, they are taking care of common resources and meeting many of the concerns that city administrations have.

This publication looks at social innovation from the point of view of cities. **Social innovation is intended here to mean innovative solutions, new forms of organisation and new interactions to tackle social issues.** In particular, it focuses on innovative solutions in terms of the governance of cities: new forms of collaboration between the city administration, citizens and local stakeholders which can generate more sustainable, resilient and open systems at city level.

The first article sets the scene: what does social innovation mean? **What is the potential for cities?** How is social innovation reflected in the URBACT capitalisation process and in the EU so far?

It is easier to understand social innovation by looking at examples rather than by reading a theoretical definition. This is the reason why we start with two in-depth investigations presenting the practices of two cities: Amersfoort, a medium-sized city in the Netherlands, is **designing a collaborative city administration**, while Gdańsk in Poland is taking **initial steps towards sharing responsibility** with its citizens. A comparative mapping of initial and breakthrough governance practices to facilitate social innovation shows the **commonalities and differences** between the two cities.





Source: Freepik

A series of five articles then focuses on key questions emerging from the in-depth investigations in Amersfoort and Gdańsk and from many other innovative practices identified in European cities, in particular those involved in URBACT thematic networks:

- **What is changing in city administrations to facilitate collaboration with citizens?** Listening better to all voices to better spot social innovation and then play a brokerage role between stakeholders to implement these innovations.
- How are citizens helping to build **collaborative public services**? **What are the potential and limits** of their involvement?
- How can cities **create the right environment for social innovation** to develop? What combination of tools and agencies, offline and online, can catalyse citizens' energies and contributions?
- How can cities **create space for experimentation** and facilitate the maturation, deployment and scaling up of social innovation?
- How can cities **use their purchasing power to facilitate social innovation**, orient public procurement and use public money to kick-start new initiatives?

A final **synthesis section** pulls together the lessons learned. It formulates policy recommendations and warnings, and wraps them up into **10 actions for cities to start with social innovation**.

The authors of this publication on social innovation hope that you enjoy reading it as much as we enjoyed meeting so many dynamic cities and enthusiastic citizens while preparing it!

François Jégou

*Director of the Strategic Design Scenarios
and Lead Expert of the URBACT Sustainable Food
for Urban Communities network*



SETTING THE SCENE: THE POTENTIAL OF SOCIAL INNOVATION FOR CITIES

✍ By Marcelline Bonneau*

Demographic decline, threats to economic development and competitiveness, growing social polarisation, climate change and the depletion of natural resources are among the most striking of challenges that cities are facing today. At the same time, cities' finances have also been affected by the crisis, and may trigger more drastic changes. This situation is often cited as a perfect storm of rising needs and declining resources.

The economic crisis has not only intensified many urban problems, but has also exposed the limits of the policies as formulated and implemented so far. In order to preserve the European model of polycentric, balanced, socially inclusive and culturally sensitive urban development, the European Commission has been promoting an **integrated, cross-sectoral and territorial approach** (European Commission, DG Regional Policy, 2011). Cities can achieve this only by adopting new models for the design and delivery of solutions to city problems: they cannot work in institutional silos anymore, nor can they remain isolated from their local context. They need to increase co-operation both within their organisations and also with citizens and other stakeholders. Social innovation can lend both tools and models for this.

* Marcelline Bonneau is an in-house consultant at Strategic Design Scenarios and co-ordinator of the URBACT workstream 'Social innovation in cities'



Source: Freepik

SOLVING CITY PROBLEMS WITH NEW APPROACHES

At grassroots level, citizens are empowering and developing new creative communities which are playing an increasingly active role in public and social life (Meroni, 2007). They have contributed to the invention of new solutions to fulfil some of their needs. These solutions have been turned into new models to create value. These movements are using co-operative processes, co-production and co-creation, involving a variety of unusual stakeholders – who were often not previously consulted – as well as new tools such as IT and online resources.

Following this trend, some **cities have taken forward new approaches to city governance in order to develop more efficient ways of identifying issues and solutions. They seek to facilitate these social innovation dynamics, to collaborate better with citizens – the end-users of their services – and to co-produce public services with them.** These initiatives are often the expression of a new city leadership where city leaders play a role in driving and facilitating change as part of a new governance paradigm.



SOCIAL INNOVATION AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIES

In order to promote and benefit from social innovation, cities need to change their governance systems and open the process to all actors: from the administration to citizens including NGOs and other stakeholders. These changes in city governance are themselves a form of social innovation. The innovation resides in the fact that governance is not seen as an isolated process, separate from reality and citizens, but seeks to experiment with new working methods within the administration together with stakeholders and citizens. It places humans at the heart of a governance model which is deliberately more holistic, and has the potential to enrich citizens' role in society (BEPA, 2011).

As such, social innovation can provide fresh solutions to the budgetary, human and legal issues city administrations are increasingly facing. It can play a crucial role in identifying solutions for social issues that are not being met by traditional market actors (BEPA, 2011, p.66). Social innovation can act for the enhancement of social cohesion and for new and more sustainable ways of living, for all groups of the population including the young (see the interview with Alison Partridge in this publication).

Such an approach has the potential to reduce costs (by engaging and empowering all actors from administration to citizens), to solve problems more efficiently (by adapting to citizens' needs), and to improve knowledge and integration in society. Social innovation is a key approach that should be taken when addressing structural issues about the way funds can be raised and allocated, at both state and city levels (Young Foundation and Nesta, 2010). Indeed, according to the *Breakthrough Cities* report, it is cities' responsibility to be involved in social innovation and to get city administrations and stakeholders engaged in creating a sense of place and mutual *responsibility* in communities and neighbourhoods, so that they can together identify creative solutions to city problems (Creative Cities, 2009).

SOCIAL INNOVATION WIDELY PROMOTED IN THE EU

The potential of social innovation is particularly high in light of the objectives of cohesion policy. The *City of Tomorrow* report (European Commission, DG Regional Policy, 2011) stressed that cities should be inspired by the following recommendations:

- **the adoption of a holistic approach**
- **long-term strategic planning**
- **foresight and vision-building**
- **the involvement of community**
- **collective mobilisation around long-term objectives**
- **inter-city partnerships and co-operation**

At EU level, the focus on social innovation has been increasing in recent years. The *Guide to Social Innovation* and its role in cohesion policy (European

Commission, 2013a) provides concrete examples, key tools and features for cities to develop their own approaches for unleashing unexploited opportunities and realising economic as well as societal benefits. Networks such as those established under the Social Innovation Europe Initiative¹ or the Social Business Initiative (European Commission, 2014) seek to give more visibility to

Social innovation can act for the enhancement of social cohesion and for new and more sustainable ways of living, for all groups of the population including the young.

existing initiatives and to exchange experiences. Indeed, they disseminate knowledge through online platforms and various events with a focus on social enterprises and support to job creation, while contributing to the Europe 2020 objectives.

Social innovation has also been increasingly used to exchange, co-operate and co-produce strategies between stakeholders in the methodology of strategies such as the *European Qualifications Framework*², and in their implementation in the *ET 2020* strategic framework for European co-operation in education and training (European Council, 2002).

1 Social Innovation Europe: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/socialinnovationeurope/>

2 European Qualifications Framework: <https://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/>



EU institutions have promoted social innovation as a way to identify new ways to support and increase economic growth and to increase benefits for society at large, particularly in the Europe 2020 *Innovation Union* Flagship Initiative (European Commission, 2010) and the *Horizon 2020* European research programme. This approach aims to generate “in-depth and shared understandings of the complex and interrelated socio-economic challenges that the European Union and its 28 Member States face now and as they move towards 2020” (European Commission, 2013b, p. 41).

The EU level has acknowledged the potential of social innovation in the development of public policies in different fields, and it is included in a range of strategies such as the 2008 *Renewed Social Agenda* (European Commission, 2008b), the *Integrated Lisbon Guidelines for Growth and Jobs (2005–2008)* (European Commission, 2005), and the *Commission Recommendation of 3 October, 2008 on the active inclusion of people excluded from the labour market* (European Commission, 2008b).

European Territorial Co-operation programmes can also support social innovation. For instance, the **URBACT programme**, funded by the European Regional Development Fund and the Member and Partner States of the European Union, **is key in promoting and using social innovation both as a horizontal theme and as a method**. It builds the competencies of urban practitioners in collaboration with their citizens. It plays a key support role in this by highlighting effective practices and supporting their transfer. The model focuses on co-production and integrated urban solutions. This is made possible through transnational activities and meetings between European cities, provision of toolkits and capacity-building activities such as summer universities for local support groups and training for elected representatives (see interview with Raffaele

Barbato in this publication). Another key element of the URBACT programme is its capitalisation process, through which examples from URBACT and beyond are analysed to provide cities with key thematic insights into strategic issues. This publication is part of this capitalisation exercise on ‘*Social innovation in cities*’.

RESEARCHING SOCIAL INNOVATION IN EUROPEAN CITIES

Examples of innovation within the public sector are booming. For example, the Nesta report identified key practices for teams and funds dedicated to identifying creative solutions to the most pressing problems (Nesta, 2014). The previous URBACT workstream on *Supporting urban youth through social innovation* (Adams and Arnkil, 2013) concluded that the role of city leadership, systems and infrastructures (so-called ‘social innovation platforms’ and ‘ecosystems’) were key to facilitating social innovation and especially to developing new service models which involve citizens. The report highlighted the fact that cities would then become catalysts and innovation brokers.

This new step of the URBACT capitalisation process enlarges the focus to social innovation in cities in general. It has gone one step further in concretely identifying the role that cities have played and can play in Europe to promote and diffuse social innovation, the way it has affected their governance models and the added value it has generated for society. Four research questions were defined, which structured the research and analysis:

- 1 What are the practices, drivers and roles played by cities in promoting social innovation?
- 2 What are the main obstacles and barriers for cities to promote and make the most of social innovation?
- 3 What steps have been undertaken to overcome those obstacles and barriers?
- 4 How can cities replicate and scale up social innovation? ●

MORE INFORMATION

State of the Art on social innovation in cities:

<http://urbact.eu/capitalisation-and-dissemination>



Source: Freepik



SOCIAL INNOVATION THROUGH URBACT



Interview with [Raffaele Barbato](#)
Senior Networking Officer at the URBACT Secretariat

 Interviewed by [Marcelline Bonneau](#)

*In-house consultant at Strategic Design Scenarios
and co-ordinator of the URBACT workstream 'Social innovation in cities'*

Could you describe how URBACT promotes openness in city governance?

The main strategic objective of the URBACT programme is to promote an integrated approach to sustainable urban development. The concepts of innovation and openness are at the heart of this approach, developed and consolidated over the last 30 years with the contribution of the EU, and national, regional and local authorities. The integrated approach (and thus innovation and openness) requires cities to rethink their work at different levels of the policy-making process.

First of all, given the complexity and interconnectedness of urban challenges, cities need to develop strategies and action plans that are integrated horizontally. This means designing a holistic approach that considers the different dimensions of the same problem (economic, social, environmental, physical) and takes into account all possible (positive or negative) connections

and externalities. For a city this normally implies radically changing the way of working in order to facilitate co-operation and coordination among different departments and structures within the local authority. Breaking silos within the local authorities is a key condition for unlocking the potential for co-operation and innovation. Local Action Plans designed in URBACT build on the close co-operation of all departments in order to develop solutions that will address local challenges at 360°.

“
The main strategic objective of the URBACT programme is to promote an integrated approach to sustainable urban development. The concepts of innovation and openness are at the heart of this approach.
”

Second, very often, competencies and resources to develop effective solutions to urban challenges are scattered among different institutional levels. Cities need to focus these competencies and resources on an integrated local strategy by establishing new functional (and open)

mechanisms to coordinate the different institutional levels. Cities involved in URBACT networks are asked to work closely with the different institutional levels concerned while defining their Local Action Plans.



Third, a genuine integrated approach to sustainable urban development has to build on a real participatory process at local level, with key local stakeholders involved in the co-design of effective urban policies. Co-producing local policies in an open and participatory way can significantly increase the capacity of cities to develop better and more innovative solutions which benefit from the diffuse knowledge and expertise existing in the territory, and it can also reduce the risks of conflicts and resistance to the policies and actions proposed.

“
Co-producing local policies in an open and participatory way can significantly increase the capacity of cities to develop better and more innovative solutions.
”

participating in the transnational meetings (visiting other cities, discovering and understanding different experiences, creating connections with other stakeholders in the partner cities). But overall the contribution of the LSGs is essential at local level. Here, local stakeholders will, on one hand, help the local authorities in adapting and transferring ideas and practices already tested in other partner

cities. On the other hand, they will bring their local knowledge and expertise to a real participatory process of co-production of the Local Action Plan.

By asking each participating city to set up a Local Support Group in order to co-produce a Local Action Plan, URBACT strongly promotes an open and participatory approach. The experience of more than 500 Local Support Groups active in URBACT II shows that the degree of participation and openness in co-designing integrated urban policies varies depending on factors such as institutional and administrative culture, policy area addressed and local leadership. Nevertheless, regardless of the specific local context, it is clear that effective participatory approach requires targeted actions to build the capacity of civil servants and local stakeholders to produce innovative solutions to local challenges together.

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Acknowledging the difficulties and obstacles related to a genuine participatory policy-making process at local level, in recent years URBACT has developed several capacity-building activities for civil servants, local politicians and key local stakeholders.
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Acknowledging the difficulties and obstacles related to a genuine participatory policy-making process at local level, in recent years URBACT has developed several capacity-building activities for civil servants, local politicians and key local stakeholders. The capacity-building activities developed under URBACT II (summer universities, national training schemes, training for elected representatives) aimed at providing local stakeholders with methods and tools to improve their collective ability to design integrated and sustainable urban policies.

What are the main features of URBACT's support for cities' co-operation with citizens?

The Local Support Groups (LSGs) are the main tools introduced by URBACT to foster co-operation between local authorities and key local stakeholders – including citizens.

Members of LSGs have a key role in each city involved in the URBACT networks. First of all, they participate in the transnational exchange and learning activities by contributing to the production of knowledge (identifying and sharing local experiences) and

Where is URBACT III heading?

URBACT III will continue to work with European cities in an action-oriented way to promote an integrated approach to sustainable urban development. During 2014-2020, URBACT will support cities to increase their capacity not only to design sustainable urban policies but also to implement them, while ensuring an integrated and participatory approach. Participation will thus remain central in the methodology URBACT proposes to the cities, and this is why the programme will continue to invest in capacity-building activities for local stakeholders. ●



WHAT HAS SOCIAL INNOVATION GOT TO DO WITH JOB CREATION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE?



Interview with [Alison Partridge](#)
Co-ordinator of the URBACT workstream
on 'Job generation for jobless generation'
and Lead Expert of the URBACT ESIMeC network

 Interviewed by [François Jégou](#)

*Director of the Strategic Design Scenarios and Lead Expert of
the URBACT Sustainable Food for Urban Communities network*

URBACT's 2014/15 workstream on youth employment has focused on the core issue of what cities can do to grow jobs for young people. Within this it has zoomed in on how they can better understand the youth employment challenge and how they can more effectively engage employers. The central finding is that, in order to address the youth employment challenge, cities need much more focus on the economy. In many cities there are quite simply not enough jobs to go around – or at least not the right type of jobs.

How does this youth employment work link to the social innovation theme?

One of our findings is that cities need new solutions to their challenges and that, actually, young people can be at the heart of these solutions. They bring a fresh, often creative and innovative approach and have different and new skills and talents. So, cities could and should be more open to ideas from their young people. This in turn could help them to co-create new solutions and at the same time generate work opportunities.

Linked to this, cities need to 'lead by example' in the way they do their business, by becoming more open (e.g. with data), more innovative and more entrepreneurial: a place where young people want to live and work.

It is clear that social innovation can lead to new solutions for daily living, which may in turn stimulate the creation of new services and new job opportunities. Social innovation is also generating a 'self-service' society with multiple forms of



collaborative consumption where people themselves produce more of the goods and services they need. At first sight, this increase of self-production may reduce the potential for employment and the number of jobs available in the city. But we need to recognise that the world of work is changing: the notion of a career divided into a 'paid job' which generates financial income and a 'personal/project job' which generates self-production and self-service is becoming more and more common. There is an article on this notion of hybridisation by Robert Arnkil in the 'Job generation for a jobless generation, URBACT II Capitalisation, April 2015' publication.



Source: Freepik

What is the main potential of social innovation for the future of youth employment?

Our overriding conclusion is that cities need to 'youth proof' their employment and economic development policies and practices.

Proofing is a process through which the needs of a group (in this case young people) are **routinely and objectively considered** as an explicit part of the policy process. This involves incorporating considerations about young people and jobs into all relevant policies, programmes and decisions in the city. So, cities need to check that all the conditions for growing jobs for youth are present. As part of this they can create platforms and spaces and places to facilitate innovation in general, and social innovation in particular. These new facilitation tools should be naturally conducive to chance encounters – encounters that may lead to new ideas, collaborations and even lead to new businesses being set up. Social innovation is clearly at the heart of the solutions. ●

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MORE INFORMATION

Job generation for a jobless generation, URBACT II capitalisation, April 2015:
<http://urbact.eu/capitalisation-and-dissemination>



TWO EXAMPLES OF EUROPEAN CITIES EXPERIMENTING WITH SOCIAL INNOVATION

WHY AMERSFOORT AND GDAŃSK?

Collaborating with citizens and taking on board the potential benefits of social innovation is an emerging challenge for European cities. Amersfoort and Gdańsk have been deliberately chosen to show two contrasting cases: an advanced one which is experimenting with leading-edge innovations and a developing one which is starting engagement with social innovation and citizens.

Amersfoort offers an example of a progressive design process of a collaborative city administration. This design process is based on a distributed approach of innovative practices and experimentations taking place at all levels of the municipal administration.

But starting to reposition a city administration and taking action to initiate collaboration with citizens is a progressive process with a starting point, first steps, accessible initiatives, and less risky experiments to bring home the first results and raise trust among stakeholders. Gdańsk shows these initial steps towards responsibility sharing.

The two cases also represent two different cultures of governance, which have grown up amid different historical backgrounds and citizenship cultures: a more bottom-up and participative one in Western Europe (the Netherlands) contrasting with a more top-down command-and-control one in Eastern Europe (Poland).



Source: Freepik



AMERSFOORT: DESIGNING A COLLABORATIVE CITY ADMINISTRATION

 By François Jégou*

How can a city engage with social innovation to address increasing constraints and budget cuts? In 2014, Amersfoort started the Year of Change, a complete change process of its administrative practices which is working towards shared responsibility and collective leadership, a shift from command and control to a brokering role and a user-driven approach, a collaborative city administration and a responsible process of 'letting go' to citizens.

The top-down procurement logic of the established public sector and the welfare state is being challenged by acute public sector budget shortages in many parts of Europe. City administrations suspect that social innovations emerging from citizens' movements, bottom-up initiatives and grassroots projects may be a strong asset in the current situation. However, they still seem locked into top-down administrative practices and unable to engage efficiently with citizens.

The case of Amersfoort presents a remarkable reaction against this blockage. City leaders have decided to take social innovation seriously as an opportunity. They have started a complete process of experimentation and change of their administrations' practices in order to build more

collaboration with citizens and deliver better-designed and more cost-efficient public services.

PUBLIC ACTION IN DIFFICULTY

Fleur Imming, one of city's five aldermen (or Vice Mayors) says: "Society is changing fast and the city government should change to reconnect with it."

In Amersfoort the reasons for launching a major change in the city's administrative practices were multiple and developed progressively in the 2010s.

The city was experiencing increasing constraints: The Netherlands has transferred more administrative competences from the national level to cities at the same time as reducing their budgets. These budget shortages arrived after a long period of relative prosperity and are paralysing traditional top down modes of public action. The city leaders acknowledged that the municipality could no longer provide the level of services seen in the past. Annual surveys conducted by the city administration showed that citizens were becoming more and more dissatisfied with its performance. Past decades of rather good economic conditions had generated an all-encompassing welfare state with too many rules and policies, which were slowing down innovation initiatives. Faced with the degradation of the social situation more citizens were getting involved in bottom-up mutual help

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initiatives and were reclaiming the right to act in their city. Increasing unemployment meant that more people were disempowered and wanted to do something useful with their time. The spread of information technologies was enormously increasing the population's capacity to self-organise. Against this growing citizen empowerment, the city administration was looking slow, behind the times and inefficient.

The spread of information technologies was enormously increasing the population's capacity to self-organise. Against this growing citizen empowerment, the city administration was looking slow, behind the times and inefficient.

What is different in the way citizens manage the project? The citizens' project group was left 'open' with some participants leaving and joining during the process. All draft documents were published on the project website in complete transparency and contrary to usual administrative practice. The core group felt empowered, although, at times, stressed by the assignment and the responsibility put

A NEW MODEL OF COLLABORATION WITH CITIZENS

Beyond this disempowered city administration, citizen-driven initiatives were blooming. Amersfoort's leaders started to see this social empowerment as a new asset, and envisaged the possibility of re-engaging the administration in delivering public services in collaboration with citizens.

Let's take a closer look at two 'flagship initiatives' in order to better understand how they have inspired a new model of collaboration between the city administration and the population.

Citizen-led urban development

"We, as citizens, got the assignment from the administration. But we did not do it their way. We did it our way," says Lia Bouma, one of the key citizens engaged in the Elisabeth project.

The old Elisabeth hospital is scheduled for demolition in the coming year. After a long debate in the city, the council decided to redevelop the site as a green area. Local residents mobilised and started an energetic discussion on the design of this new park, so the city administration decided to step back and experiment by putting the project in citizens' hands. A citizens' project group was formed and received an official assignment with a dedicated budget, which handed them the responsibility of organising themselves and coming up with a plan to develop the new green area and maintain it over the next 10 years. The process started in April 2013 and the plan was delivered before the elections that autumn.

on their shoulders. Altogether, the citizen project group put in 1,400 hours of work (excluding the architect's time), which added up to a significant investment of voluntary effort. It performed well and developed a complete project plan for the park. General Director of Amersfoort municipality Nico Kamphorst acknowledges: *"The process was quicker, less expensive and achieved a wider consultation than when normally done by the municipality."*



The plan of the Elisabeth Park is one of the inspiring flagship projects, self-developed by the citizens.
Source: Strategic Design Scenarios

Social empowerment for sustainable food

The second initiative, based on a series of different bottom-up actions, events, projects etc. focussing on regional sustainable food, also inspired a new collaboration between the city administration and citizens. A new street market in 2011 for local food products was one of the first in this series of initiatives towards sustainable food. After the success of this initiative, the citizens involved in the market formed a group together with other food activists and bid for the Dutch *Capital of Taste* award. The process required enormous effort from the citizens' project group in putting the bid together, seeking funding and organising 80 events throughout the



The sustainable food movement shows another example of grassroots initiatives supporting the engagement of the city in this field. Source: Sofie op de Wallen (left), Cor Holtackers (right)

year – all with the limited budget raised among private and public sponsors and voluntary effort. This effort paid off when in 2012 Amersfoort was selected as the Capital of Taste. In the same year Amersfoort also applied to take part in the URBACT Sustainable Food in Urban Communities network.

This series of citizen-driven initiatives also showed the city administration new ways in which it could act. It took up new tools and practices: match-making between actors started with a pecha kucha night, and the proof of concept for the seasonal market was achieved thanks to the Inspiration Week in 2011, a hands-on collective makers' event. However, this collaboration was only possible because some of the citizens leading the projects already had contacts within the city administration. One of them, Cor Holtackers, says: "The administration looks like a wall. Most people don't know which door they should knock at." The city administration assumed a new position of 'backing up' social

The city administration assumed a new position of 'backing up' social innovation: it leaves the floor to social innovators, doesn't monopolise the projects and limits itself to removing barriers.

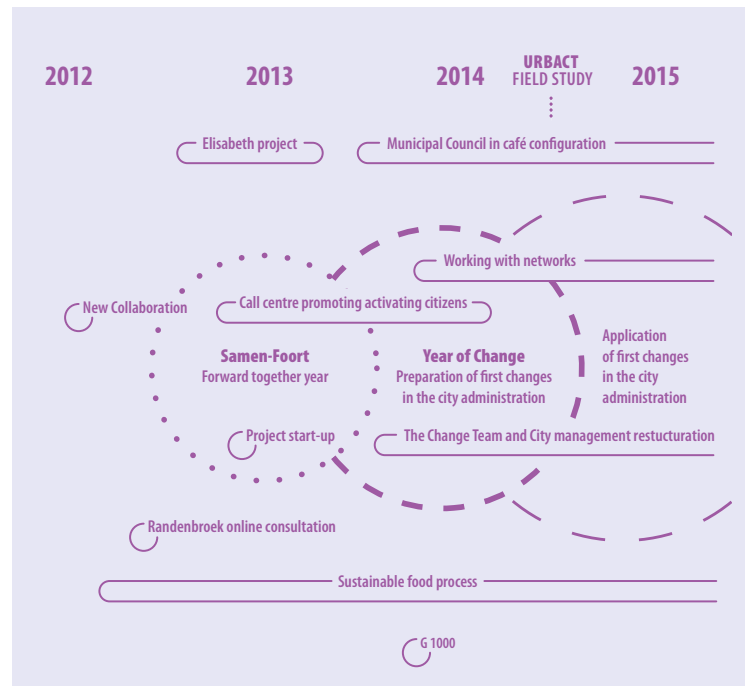
innovation: it leaves the floor to social innovators, doesn't monopolise the projects and limits itself to removing barriers – or at least avoiding creating new obstacles. Participation in an URBACT network provided a leveraging effect

and structures for informal grassroots movements to engage in the city in food strategy development and action planning process.

THE YEAR OF CHANGE

Inspired by popular empowerment and engagement in unusual citizen-driven projects, Amersfoort city leaders saw an opportunity to develop a new model of collaboration with the population. In 2013 they promoted Samen-Foort, ('Forward Together'), a year of reflexion with multiple experiments in participation and bottom-up pilot projects including collective innovation forums, exchange initiatives between citizens and the city administration, new participative processes, etc.

The success of all these initiatives and the growing recognition of the interest that all stakeholders in the city showed in them pushed Amersfoort's city leaders to declare 2014 as the Year of Change. The Year of Change is a year of collective rethinking and preparation of the reorganisation of the city administration's practices and management structure, which is being implemented progressively from 2015 onwards in order to facilitate this new model of collaboration between the city's population and its administration.



The diagram above shows the organisation over time of the different elements we refer to in this case study. It shows different experiments, projects, practices, etc., outside and inside the city administration that constitute an organic and diffuse change process which is moving towards the construction of a more collaborative city administration.



In particular it shows:

- **events, experiments, initiatives** (e.g. the New Collaboration conference, the G1000, Project Start-up) showing the growing collaborative culture in Amersfoort;
- **citizen-driven projects** (e.g. the Elisabeth project, the Sustainable Food process) inspiring new forms of collaboration between the population and the city administration;
- **formal transformations** (e.g. the Municipal Council in café configuration, the city management restructuring) implementing new governance practices.

The originality of this change process is that it is not a planned and articulated one. It is more distributed and systemic: it should be compared to a process of acupuncture where a series of new practices are emerging progressively in the city and in the administration. These new practices interact together and progressively produce a systemic change in the city.

The city authority created a Change Team, which consisted of five people: the Advisors in Communication and Human Resources, the Head of the Social Development Department and the Finance Controller, all assisting the Town Clerk and the General Director with internal change, reorganisation and the related internal communications. For them the main goals of the change were shifting from a 'power role' to one of a 'learning administration'; fostering multidisciplinary and collaboration between the different departments; promoting transparency in public action; being less expert and more able to connect; making interdependent and integrated policies; fostering responsibility beyond silos; and learning how to learn from failures.



The Change Team in Amersfoort. Source: Municipality of Amersfoort

Build trust and let-go

The two flagship initiatives presented above (Elisabeth park and the Sustainable food process) showed that citizens can manage complex projects by themselves. *"In the administration, we often tend to overact,"* says Eric van Duijn, the Head of Advisers in the Department of Urban Maintenance. *"Sometimes it's better to listen and do nothing. But as a civil servant, it's difficult to refrain from taking over."* The city administration should be able to turn away from its former model of command and control. For Herman Wiersema, Adviser on Strategic Communication: *"We should stop designing plans and documents. We should make a new policy only when people ask for it."* Public action should be more based on trust. General Director Nico Kamphorst advises: *"Give a mandate to citizens and civil servants and let them get on with it."* Rather than being prescriptive, the city administration should listen and behave as a facilitator. Mayor Lucas Bolsius declares: *"Rules are, by definition, obsolete in a rapid changing society. The difficulty is to moderate this big social conversation."*



Civil servants are encouraged to work more on the field and get in contact with the citizens. Source: City of Amersfoort (left), Cor Holtackers (right)

Reconnect administration with the city

The city administration should open itself up, and civil servants should get out of their offices and play a more active role in the life of the city. In his New Year's speech at the start of the *Year of Change*, General Director Nico Kamphorst challenged all city administration employees to become 'free-range civil servants'. Like free-range chickens, they should move around freely, decide where they go, gather information here and there and bring back useful knowledge to the city administration. They should spend more time in the field, interacting with the citizens, instead of sitting behind their desks. This new proactive posture is reflected in



the key qualities expected from civil servants in the Amersfoort administration's new mission statement: **curiosity, being close and accountability.**

Enhance collaboration with elected members

Within the new model of co-operation with the population, the city council is also experimenting with new settings for its meetings. Usually, in formal council meetings, citizens can only make short statements, and very few of them dare to contribute. In order to be better informed and to connect with citizens, the council is organising since 2014 a new City Café, in which councillors meet citizens for half a day sessions to talk informally and without time restrictions. For Jos van Winkel, Head of the Strategy and Governance Department: *“There is an evolution in the role of elected representatives from decision-makers to ensuring fair participation.”*



The City Council experienced a new informal setting for its meeting: a City Café to facilitate contact and exchanges with citizens. Source: City of Amersfoort

CHALLENGES FOR THE ADMINISTRATION'S NEW POSTURE

The change of posture of the city administration in Amersfoort is challenging and prone to pitfalls. For Carla van Dorp, Head of the *Together Sustainable* team and of the Centre for Nature and Environmental Education: *“Letting go doesn't mean turning away from the problem or denying it. It means listening and exploring together.”*

Better define the new mode of collaboration

The first challenge for the city administration is to find the right balance between too much control and disengagement. The *New Collaboration*, a large public conference, was organised by citizens in 2013 to discuss the democratic system and explore how to organise these new modes of collaboration between citizens and the city administration. Council members and civil servants took part in these citizens' groups, which formulated recommendations to the board of Mayor and aldermen. Bertien Houwing, Alderman for Governmental Development, Regional Collaboration, Education and Diversity, is working to get a consensus between citizens, city administration, council and board in order to write a new policy on how the city administration should facilitate citizens' initiatives.



The New Collaboration, a large stakeholder conference organised by citizens, who invited the city administration and elected representative to discuss and construct new modes of collaboration with citizens. Source: City of Amersfoort

Keep participation fair and balanced

For Jos van Winkel, *“the challenges are not to overload citizens and to guarantee that all voices are heard.”* Citizens do not all participate, and this may induce a democratic bias. Inspired by the G1000 experience in Brussels in 2011, Amersfoort started in 2014 a similar process aimed at discussing the city's future. The G1000 is a process aimed at achieving more representative participation: the city chose a panel of 1,000 citizens randomly and invited them to a deliberative event. Around 600 people (including civil servants and elected representatives in their status of citizens) got together, discussed perspectives for Amersfoort, and selected and developed 10 project plans out of more than 100 ideas. Beyond these outputs, during the interview sessions the G1000 process was routinely identified as a promising way to make silent voices audible and to balance the inequalities that are created



when it is always the same 'usual suspects' who take part in deliberative and participative activities.



Amersfoort experience a G1000 process to inviting citizen randomly to a collaborative conference in order to get a more representative mix of participants. Source: Harm van Dijk, G1000 Amersfoort

Scale up the new collaborative model

Nico Kamphorst believes that: *“Every citizen should be a civil servant part of the time, doing something for the city and for the public good.”*

Two citizens, Lia Bouma for the Elisabeth project and Cor Holtackers for the Sustainable Food process, played key roles that went far beyond the usual involvement of citizens. They catalysed the creation of project support groups, motivated other less involved citizens, and ensured the continuity of the process, overcoming difficulties when they arose. To do this successfully, they needed a set of key assets and skills: professional capacities both in project management and in the sector of the project; a personal interest in the place or the topic; a good knowledge of city administration and connections with key people there; personal social and communication skills; and personal interest in experimenting with an alternative citizen-based project development process.

They are what can be called 'lead citizens', who initiated and organised the two flagship projects. But when the city administration asked them if they wanted to lead another similar project, they both declined. They had put in a lot of time and effort without any reward beyond the pleasure of completing the project and the social recognition they gained from other participants. It is therefore easy to understand why they refused to run more projects. Yet, this questions the idea of replicating and scaling up public action such as these flagship projects which depend heavily on citizen participation. To address this issue, the city administration started a joint capacity-building programme in which citizens, civil

servants and elected members are learning together about integrated problem-solving, working with networks, collaboration and fluid communication.

Build shared responsibility

The change process was launched during the period of the field visit for this in-depth case study, so no robust analysis or evidence of results can yet be put forward. When asked about the monitoring and evaluation foreseen for this important change process, Town Clerk Herke Elbers clearly says there is none at that moment: *“We are experimenting and we are looking for circumstantial evidence along the way.”* This position is certainly debatable. On the one hand, it is surely risky to change administrative methods and spend public money in a period of budgetary restrictions without establishing a robust policy assessment process. On the other hand, the process of change is a reaction against over-assessment within the previous period of working to New Public Management principles. The position expressed above by the Town Clerk seems clearly to be an attempt to try another path, based on openness, gradual improvement and shared responsibility among all city leaders and civil servants. Mayor Lucas Bolsius seems even more radical: *“If we want responsibility at all levels of the administration, we don't need to set up another control process. We want people to think and assess each different situation.”*

LESSONS LEARNT FOR CITY ADMINISTRATIONS

The Netherlands is known as a country in which citizen participation is well-embedded in the culture of public and private organisations. The level of engagement of the population in community action is higher than in many other countries. Amersfoort is also a medium-sized city with a slightly younger, better-educated and richer population than the national average – all of which are factors known to favour citizen participation. Even without evidence of good results yet, the smooth development of the change so far is in part due to this favourable context. It is also due to a collective and innovative change process from which a series of lessons can be drawn which are useful for other cities.



The key messages emerging from this Amersfoort experience can be summarised as follows:

'Letting go' responsibly

One of the assets of public administration is to ensure continuity and stability in society despite fluctuations in the socio-economical context. Behind the scenes, inertia often inhibits the capacity for adaptation and innovation. Changing city administration from command and control to a brokerage role is a matter of the city leaders letting go, trusting the citizens, reducing administration and rules, transferring responsibility to stakeholder groups and letting them take action. It requires leaders to really try, to take risks, to refrain from monopolising problems, and to experiment with innovative solutions and methods within a delineated risk-frame.

A collective leadership

The Year of Change is a process formalised by the leadership of the city administration, but the change dynamic is shared and organic across all the administration and the city. It was set in motion more than one year beforehand, with a mesh of bottom-up and top-down initiatives coming from inside and outside the administration which progressively established a collectively agreed positive mindset on the need for change. Fluid communication across administrative silos and also between citizens, politicians and civil servants results in a high level of co-responsibility and a form of collective leadership in the city.

A broker role

Facing more constraints and a lower budget, the city administration shifted from command and control to a role of facilitation between local stakeholders. City leaders and the entire city administration have improved their listening capacity. Advisory groups are systematically organised. The city administration sits with citizens as equal participants and refrains from acting before all stakeholder voices have been heard. The city leaders agreed a new role for their administration which is to behave as a broker, ensuring that all parties are around the table, encouraging them to take part and sharing with them the burdens of public action.

A modest ambition

The city administration is showing a form of pragmatic modesty. It prefers to start by picking the low-hanging fruit. Then it builds on its initial successes to try more difficult steps but always keeps the level of ambition high. It recognises that it faces difficulties, delay and mistakes but still aims to achieve the best results. The public administration doesn't feel weaker because it acknowledges its problems. On the contrary, its ambition seems empowered and at the same time realistic. A fresh feeling of liberation from the mistakes of the past seems to encourage civil servants to go forward.

Intense and fluid story-telling

Amersfoort's administration is showing a structural capability to generate simple and explicit communication. The internal and external dissemination of the change process does not come from an extra layer designed by the communication department but seems to expand naturally. An effort at good story-telling ensures that information is shared in a friendly and easily-accessible format with all the stakeholders in the city. It reports successes and failures in a lively way, maintains coherence and rebuilds a strong identity for the city administration.

A user-driven approach

The city administration initially took a step back when faced with financial constraints and the national transfer of legal responsibilities. Stimulated by a series of citizen-driven projects, city leaders committed their administration to increased collaboration with the population in a somewhat opportunistic way, benefiting from citizens' participation to deliver public services at lower cost. This strategy, though based on economic motives, in fact engaged the administration in a user-driven approach. Both internally and externally the change process is systematically based on stakeholder advisory groups, exchange with the population, experimenting with new ways of collaborating with citizens, and taking risks by giving them assignments. Thus, the city administration is reconnecting with citizens and restarting from users' needs. It therefore finds itself in a better position to come up with more appropriate administrative mechanisms and design more user-friendly and cost-efficient public services. ●



GDAŃSK: INITIAL STEPS TOWARDS RESPONSIBILITY SHARING

 By Marcelline Bonneau*

In the words of Andrzej Bojanowski, Gdańsk's Vice Mayor for economic policy, many Eastern European countries have caught up with Western economic growth. But now that they have reached a standard of living that might be considered as 'acceptable', citizens have seen the limits of the materialistic values they were pursuing. In Gdańsk, one of the priorities expressed by citizens – and taken on board by the administration – is to go back to the immaterial values (happiness, quality of life, time well spent, spiritual connections, cultural development etc.), that were once – before people rejected them as part of the old system – the only values available.

As Mr Bojanowski puts it: “Previously, these [immaterial values] were the only thing we had. We rejected those values to follow the path of Western capitalism. However, now, in Poland, as in the rest of Europe, we have realised that happiness does not rest on the ownership of objects. Instead, we want to invest our energies in activities, meeting and exchanging with other people – so we are now going back to those old values.”

Gdańsk is at once an ancient and a new city, having lost 95% of its population during World War II. This means that the current population is only the second or third generation to live in the city, which raises important issues around perceptions and feelings of belonging. Unusually for a European city, this creates an opportunity to reshape the city's destiny, and today the municipality acknowledges the potential for citizens to play a role in its governance. As Magdalena Skiba, who is in charge of co-operation with NGOs, says “*citizens have quite some energy which makes us react.*”

As in other parts of Europe, Polish society is changing: citizens feel they have not been listened to enough. At the same time, new economic and social models have emerged. The increasing complexity of modern life, the rapidity that is possible through the use of information technologies, and the acknowledgment of interrelations between societal issues, have led to the recognition that new and serious urban problems have emerged.

The city of Gdańsk – with its 462,000 inhabitants spread over 262 km² – has taken some initial steps to change its governance culture. The municipality has not designed a strategy to innovate for the well-being of its citizens, but instead is taking individual steps to familiarise itself with its citizens at the same time as citizens become familiar with it. Social innovation approaches

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are being used within and outside the administration to make city governance more participative. Gdańsk is also taking tentative steps to promote grassroots innovation which could in turn empower citizens.

ENVISIONING THE NEED FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION

Like in many other European cities, the city administration has traditionally operated in a very hierarchical way. The same applied to relationships between the municipality and citizens. This resulted in the junior levels of the administration, and citizens too, being passive cogs in the wheel: they expected their superiors to take decisions for them and did not expect to be consulted or involved in shaping these decisions. As in many other cities and countries, this also led to public mistrust of the municipality. In parallel, the governance of the city was seen as limited to a problem-solving mechanism.

The city of Gdańsk has slowly acknowledged the need to change this mindset and ignite a new vision for city life. This vision has been shaped by the city's Mayor, Paweł Adamowicz: in office for 17 years and re-elected in November 2014, he has observed society changing over the years and incrementally identified the need to find a better way to understand and address citizens' needs, by engaging with them more effectively. He has been a strong advocate of adapting the administration's working processes. As such, he has re-envisioned the responsibilities of each actor in city governance, to promote more integrated approaches. This represents a deep **paradigmatic change** in Gdańsk's governance.

Little by little, this change was embedded in the city's policies and made real through a series of activities. In order to support his vision, he appointed experienced practitioners to key positions in the administration. He stressed the need for a diversity of profiles within the senior team to enrich the evolution of a new mindset.

One such person was Ewa Kamińska, current Vice Mayor for social policy, who has experience in clinical psychology and NGOs. In 2011, she

led the work of the Club of Gdańsk, an informal think-tank which brought together around 15 civil servants and NGO representatives to experiment with a bottom-up process to exchange ideas, brainstorm and identify priority issues for the city.

The club produced a set of common values to underpin future city governance: **trust, participation, honesty, responsibility, being closer to the citizen, individual and institutional openness, harmonisation, social cohesion and long-term perspectives**. Moreover, the club stressed that the city management team should take a positive approach. As an example, it was decided that the administration should not be dealing with 'social problems' anymore, but with 'social development'.

The outcomes of the club's meetings were used in the design of programmes and strategies such as *Gdańsk, My City*, a programme on citizenship and social policy. The most successful use of the consultations has been in the design of the city strategy, work on the social economy, and the integration of the social sphere into the organisational structure of the administration. The whole process of this Club of Gdańsk was an innovation in itself: for the first time, administration employees and NGOs gathered to discuss fundamental values, in an open and transparent way, with an equal voice

for each participant and in a real framework of co-creation. The work was made possible thanks to moderation by an external adviser on participatory design and processes, who had gained experience in Western Europe and adapted it to local circumstances. In particular, the club concluded that the administration should bear the responsibility for setting the direction. However, it should move away from the

traditional hierarchical and vertical structure to a more holistic approach, and should share tasks and responsibilities horizontally *in* the city and *for* the city.

Such an approach puts citizens at the heart of city policies, yet not only as targets, but rather as actors, as co-creators of their environment. This means that not only does the city seek to empower citizens in a new role, and to enhance and deepen partnerships with NGOs, but also to reposition the administration. It remains the organiser of city life, but no longer works in isolation:

Like in many other European cities, the city administration has traditionally operated in a very hierarchical way. The same applied to relationships between the municipality and citizens.



instead, it seeks to achieve wider societal goals. More importantly, it aims to improve citizens' happiness, through learning, keeping an open mind, adopting a positive attitude and – crucially – taking a holistic approach. As Magdalena Skiba puts it: *“The structures are changing: we have a spirit of openness and are able to assess what there is outside, take it on board and implement it.”*

PILOTING WORK ACROSS SILOS

One of the most important conclusions of the Club of Gdańsk was that there was a need to work outside of the traditional administrative silos and search for synergies of expertise, experience and skills among different sectors. Municipalities have long considered that citizens' lives have to be governed sector by sector. Each department was confined to working in its own silo, which isolated each sector from the others. However, municipalities have now reached the limits of their traditional bureaucratic and top-down governance model: their expertise is disconnected from the reality on the ground and the internal structure and governance model prevents them from taking a holistic approach to problem-solving. Gdańsk's first step was therefore to be consistent internally with the approach it was promoting. As Mayor Paweł Adamowicz underlines: *“in order to innovate, a city should start by innovating in its own administration.”* For example, over the years and through the work of the Club of Gdansk, it had become clear that the issues tackled by the education and the social departments – which together account for more than half of the municipal budget – were closely interlinked, yet lacked coordination.

For instance, the municipality observed that issues related to children's learning difficulties (the responsibility of the education department) were often linked to difficulties within their families (the

responsibility of the social development department). Therefore, in order to address citizens' needs through a holistic approach but also to rationalise internal resources, the **departments of education and social development were merged** in spring 2014. For the first time, the decision to merge city administration departments had come from the suggestions and work of civil servants, organised internally (in the Club of Gdansk). As a result of the merger, problem-solving has become more consistent, and the administration now has a better understanding of the issues. The reorganisation led to internal readjustment in terms of management and the daily work of civil servants: however, the next structures and communication channels enabled ongoing exchange and creation of synergies. This reform is widely perceived as piloting a new way of dealing with issues inside the administration: depending on its success, it could be applied to other sectors.

One of the most important conclusions of the Club of Gdańsk was that there was a need to work outside of the traditional administrative silos and search for synergies of expertise, experience and skills among different sectors.

In parallel, the municipality has extended its co-operation and partnership with NGOs. Although this may be common in other parts of Europe, NGOs are not as active in Poland as they are in Western Europe, and their role in city governance is still rather limited. In Gdańsk though, work with NGOs has been under way for years. The fact that the city was the

cradle of the country's first free trade-union movement led by Solidarność in 1980 has played a part in this.¹

The city authority played a crucial role in pushing the development of national legislation on NGOs. The contribution of Gdańsk to two URBACT networks, My Generation and My Generation at Work², has catalysed the partnership with NGOs while at the same time creating structures for its development. In the administrative reorganisation of spring 2014, a specific unit was set up to deal with partnerships with NGOs. These are now involved in the design of city strategies, consulted about process and they now take part in working groups. The main working

¹ The first independent labour union in a Soviet bloc country emerged in Gdańsk. On 14 August 1980, a strike of 17,000 shipbuilders at the Lenin Shipyards, led by Lech Wałęsa, triggered a broad, non-violent, anti-communist movement which eventually contributed to the collapse of the socialist regime.

² <http://urbact.eu/mygeneration-at-work>



groups are dedicated to social issues such as social problem-solving, disability, homelessness, senior citizens, civil society and also sports and culture, which have councils including NGOs representatives. All these groups have both advisory and monitoring roles. NGOs are regularly consulted on wider issues such as the design of the Gdańsk 2030 strategy. About 300 organisations out of a total 1,813 registered in Gdańsk are involved in this social development every year.

Both sides have learnt to work together: the administration now has direct access to top-level expertise on the situation on the ground, and NGOs are more familiar with the way the administration functions. As Marianna Sitek-Wróblewska from the Gdańsk Foundation for Social Innovation (GFSI) says: *“Partnering with the administration has changed our point of view.”*

TOWARDS CITIZENS' EMPOWERMENT

The administration's structural reorganisation and its closer co-operation with NGOs have enabled it to reconsider how to involve citizens in its governance. Community self-organisation had long been suppressed in Poland, since the socialist regime, which held power between 1944 and 1989 when Poland was a Soviet satellite banned most forms of organisation. Consequently, citizens were not used to being active in their city. The notion of citizen participation is not the norm.

The municipality, together with NGOs, has taken over the role of teaching and supporting innovation. In particular it has supported the provision of **platforms for co-creation**. As Ewa Kamińska says: *“conditions should be created so that citizens can take shared decisions.”* Thus, Neighbourhood Houses have been set up on the basis of British and Irish experiences as incubators of citizen-driven initiatives. These community meeting places enable the inhabitants themselves to propose and develop their own ideas, get to know each other and take the initiative to promote neighbourhood life.

The city also promotes **culture** as a means to empower citizens, and in 2011 it established the

City Culture Institute. While this is a municipal institution, it operates separately and employs 15 people who are highly experienced in working on the ground. The institute's work is a starting point in creating a link between citizens and their city, on the basis of cultural projects.

Consultation processes have also been a means to involve citizens in city governance. Through the citizens' budget in 2013 and 2014, residents have been able to choose which city projects should take priority for funding. Citizens not only have the right to express themselves but are given support to take part in this process.

The enduring mistrust that citizens feel towards the municipality³ needs to be overcome by creating **visible concrete outcomes**, as Aleksandra Szymańska, director of the Institute for City Culture, says: *“We need to show people that something can come out of their actions.”* The improvement of Targ Węglowy (Coal Market), led by the Institute of City Culture, is such a concrete achievement which took place as a result of a survey and consultation of citizens which showed their wish for a community meeting point in the city centre, where they could relax and socialise. This project **raised the awareness** of citizens about the way the municipality can listen to them and implement their projects.



The improved Coal Market: from conception to realisation.

Source: Materiały IKM

The most advanced step in empowering citizens was to let them become the experts, and to listen to their **experience from the ground**. Traditionally, like other cities, the municipality was using in-house expertise on citizens' wishes to address citizens'

³ A large part of Polish society was mistrustful of the socialist government, which it had not chosen and which had very strong communist features. This mistrust applied to the national government as well as more locally, at city level.



needs, and to design and implement strategies and policies. This isolated the municipality from reality, yet, as Piotr Kowalczyk, Director of the Department of Social Development, says: “*We should not be replacing citizens, we should meet their expectations.*” The city accordingly adopted a ‘**letting them decide**’ approach, notably through the design of the new city strategy, Gdańsk 2030 Plus. This new participatory process, which was moderated by an external consultant, for the first time gave citizens *carte blanche* to design the city they wanted: citizens were invited to take part in an online survey, in workshops, and children could compete on drawing the future city they wanted. Citizens’ inputs were later analysed and formed into an official strategy document.



Gdańsk 2030 Plus Strategy.
Source: Żaneta Kucharska and Jacek Zablotny, UMG

The civil servants involved were surprised by how successful the process was in collecting information and raising interest amongst citizens. However, as the process went on, and especially after all the successful inputs they received from citizens, they acknowledged that it required not only a longer timeframe but also a positive attitude from officials. To make this new approach work, they had to be motivated, flexible, open and willing to work at evenings and week-ends. However, they agreed that it was really worthwhile, thanks to the burst of ideas and energy that it released. More than that, they found it did not require additional skills: they had the impression they had ‘done their job’.

The city strategy was a result of the shared values which were expressed by citizens and were then put forward as priorities about how strategic planning should take place. So-called ‘clouds of ideas’ were

extracted from the consultation, and grouped into five priority areas: **co-work, education, inhabitants, openness and mobility**. These values now guide the development of action plans and form the basis of the city’s relationship with its inhabitants. The city aims to increase the participative element of co-constructing the city and its future.

WHAT CAN CITIES LEARN FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF GDAŃSK?

Changing mindsets and attitudes requires municipalities to adapt their working methods. In Gdańsk, the city authority acknowledged the need to integrate **skills** coming from outside the boundaries of the administration: those of NGOs with grassroots experience as well those of external consultants who could facilitate participatory activities from a position of neutrality. Gaining citizens’ trust and involving citizens are the other crucial ingredients, the authority recognises.

The municipality of Gdańsk has also increased its **visibility, communication and transparency**. Indeed, during the participatory processes of the Gdańsk 2030 Plus strategy, one of the people involved in its implementation, Żaneta Kucharska, noted that “*the most important part of the process has been the meetings where we got to know the citizens and the citizens got to know us.*” The development of Facebook pages for the city and its directors has made the administration more accessible and it appears more human.

Developing such an approach was possible because it happened at the right moment: “*We are ready, we are now learning and listening,*” says Paweł Adamowicz. This goes hand in hand with the need to re-envisage the **timeframe**, which is necessary because introducing the new process takes time. This requires



Gdańsk 2030 Plus Strategy.
Source: Żaneta Kucharska and Jacek Zablotny, UMG



Source: Freepik

an **adapted form of planning and organisation**, and also a **long-term perspective** aiming at deep cultural change and the long-lasting benefits it confers.

Funding was never a brake on the changes occurring in the city: the streamlining of some work as well as the new prioritisation of issues enabled it to stay within the current budget. According to Andrzej Bojanowski, in due time, the city will settle at a new Pareto equilibrium with 80% of resources dedicated to the discussion of values and the identification, trial and validation of alternatives – and only 20% to technocratic activities.

More importantly, according to Mr Bojanowski, it is crucial to integrate the new city governance into a wider change of attitude, without setting finite limits: *“It should always be a process: we should chase the rabbit, knowing we will never catch it.”* As such, the city needs to be in a constant **learning process**, improving its resilience while constantly seeking solutions to improve citizens’ social well-being: *“We should leave aside individual objectives and move towards common social ones,”* he adds.

GDAŃSK: A MODEL FOR STEPPING UP INNOVATION?

In Gdańsk, innovation is being used to address the needs of citizens through a reallocation of responsibilities among all stakeholders. The priorities have been shifted, and the traditional governance paradigm is under reconsideration.

This might not seem highly innovative in a wider EU context. As Magdalena Skiba admits *“It is maybe innovative for us but not for others.”* Gdańsk is however in the vanguard compared to other Polish cities and most Eastern European cities. Through its political and commercial history (as a Hanseatic city and then a free city at the beginning of the 19th century and between the two World Wars), Gdańsk has inherited a culture of **openness**. It is now using this cultural heritage to drive a change of mindsets. Nevertheless, the structure of the whole process remains strongly top-down,

and the role of the municipality in leading the transition is crucial. **Individual leaders** have proven capable of taking risks. According to Mayor Paweł Adamowicz: *“There are risks everywhere in politics, but if you have faith, you should go against the wind.”* ●

“
*There are risks
everywhere in politics,
but if you have faith,
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against the wind.*”

Paweł Adamowicz



MAPPING COMMONALITIES AND DIFFERENCES

 By François Jégou*

The examples of Amersfoort and Gdańsk are contrasting by their history, culture, the way they promote and benefit from social innovation. However, we can identify more commonalities than one would have expected.

-  Realising that city issues are increasingly dire and that tackling them demands an integrated approach, both horizontally and vertically.
-  The use of informal communication and social media which go beyond the official communication mechanisms of the municipality.
-  Changing posture from doing for citizens to doing with them, at the same time moving from a management to a coordination role.
-  Being conscious of the need for a strong change of paradigm, which may elicit strong opposition and which needs to be fought for.
-  Using the opportunity URBACT presents to exchange with other cities as a lever to convince people that if change is possible elsewhere, it is also possible here.
-  A strong impulse from the municipal administration to change from a dominant posture to a more nuanced partnership with citizens and to share responsibility.
-  City leaders who discover more efficient participative governance because they can no longer afford the command and control attitude that worked in the past.
-  The necessary humility to start small, at points where citizens have the energy and opportunity to achieve quick positive results, which can then be built on.
-  Having faith in citizens' power of initiative and letting them be an integral part of the implementation of city policies.
-  Applying to the administration the changes the city would like to see in society as whole: co-working, cross-silos co-operation, increased trust and communication.
-  The key role of civil servants as connectors within the city, who demonstrate empathy and the capacity to understand all the other stakeholders.
-  Keeping ambition high, taking difficult contexts and budget austerity into account, but not giving up.
-  Creating shared collaborative platforms to bring civil servants, citizens and other stakeholders together in a facilitated process. ●

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WHAT IS CHANGING IN CITY ADMINISTRATIONS TO FACILITATE COLLABORATION WITH CITIZENS?

 By François Jégou*

Cities have to face more constraints with fewer means – and in this context of reduced capacity for action, social innovation is an emerging asset. Traditional top-down methods of public administration are undergoing changes so that cities can better collaborate with citizens and benefit from the general trend of the sharing economy and collaborative consumption.

These changes in the positioning of city administrations are likely to result in improved public services. However, investing in social innovation may seem like a distraction: a way to hide budget cuts and disengagement from public service delivery. On the contrary, for many cities it has proven to be an opportunity to leave more space for participative approaches, which result in public services, which are better aligned with citizens' requirements and therefore represent increased quality and efficiency.

CITIES LEARN TO COLLABORATE

Improving collaboration with citizens requires city administrations to improve their capacity to collaborate starting with internal collaboration. In Gdańsk, the administration realised that civil servants would benefit from better communication and synergies on problem-solving on some transversal issues, such as education and social development. This is why it merged the two departments dealing with these issues. As a result, problems are solved in a more holistic manner through daily exchanges and co-working procedures.

City administrations are learning how to work across silos. Departments are talking to each other. At the same time, civil servants are increasingly involved in the strategic design of public policies, instead of leaving it to top managers. Internally, they are reshuffling hierarchies and getting the most out of each individual. At the same time, they are starting to co-operate with citizens, who have valuable experience and knowledge. In Malmö, the administration brought together municipality leaders and politicians into learning seminars to familiarise them with user-centred approaches and improve the definition of strategies for healthcare and elderly care.

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Participation and collaboration with citizens are reducing public spending and at the same time maintaining the quality of public services. **Bilbao City Council** has designed a strategy based on economic austerity for its policy management, enabling it to respond to the commitments demanded by citizens, through on-going monitoring of the actions developed with as much transparency as possible, fostering citizen participation and seeking 'zero' public borrowing (EPSA, 2013). As a result, the role of the city administration is evolving towards less top-down management and more humble coordination.

Participation and collaboration with citizens are reducing public spending and at the same time maintaining the quality of public services.

CITIES LEARN TO LISTEN

Playing a facilitating role implies that cities must first increase their listening capabilities far beyond the kind of sociological investigations they usually do: the entire city administration should be in listening mode. Seoul's Mayor, Park Won Soon, provides a powerful image of a 'listening policy': the city has invented a new type of street furniture: huge 'Ear Drums' sited in public places through which citizens can voice their suggestions and literally talk to the municipal administration.



One of Seoul's public Ear Drum.

Source: Ji-Suk Lim, Seoul Communication Bureau

Amersfoort gives a good picture of all the things a city can do to deploy its antennae both offline and online and listen to citizens – from encouraging civil servants to leave their offices and go out into the field to hosting an independent citizen's blog on the official city website. Civil servants are encouraged to take part in multi-stakeholder meetings as 'equal

citizens'. This Dutch city administration views its role today with more modesty than it did 10 years ago: the municipality is listening to the different parties likely to be involved, and enabling them to take action. Its new mission statement, presented by the Change Team, is to facilitate: *"For the political board, we help the people and partners in Amersfoort to seize opportunities and solve problems. We know what is happening in the city."*

In Amersfoort, listening is becoming more and more deeply embedded in the administrative process. For instance a standard 'project start-up' process is compulsory before starting any kind of project in which the municipality is involved. The approach is simple but systematic: at least 10–12 stakeholders, both internal staff and external partners, meet for half a day, share their knowledge and different points of view, and reach a common understanding prior to starting any action.

The listening process is not only one-way but is evolving towards forms of dialogue. Amersfoort's internal call centre receives around 16,000 calls per year, most of which are questions or complaints. Citizens rarely call to express their satisfaction, but around 1% of the calls are suggestions. This has led the municipality to the idea of encouraging mutual engagement by going beyond passive listening: *"We have changed the answer we give to citizens,"* says Willem van der Stelt from the Department of Urban Maintenance, *"from 'We'll fix it in a minute!' into 'What would you do about it?'"*. The city is thus promoting an active attitude among citizens.



Amersfoort's poster encouraging citizens to actively report to the municipality's call centre. Source: Strategic Design Scenarios



CITIES AS BROKERS

Beyond systematic listening, certain cities are taking on a new role as matchmakers between local stakeholders. In 2006, *Sustainable Victoria*, Melbourne's city development agency, started the Sustainable Victoria Round Tables, *pecha kucha*-like evenings with a series of very short presentations followed by drinks. Local stakeholders who wanted to contribute to the city's sustainable transformation process were invited to present themselves in less than three minutes. The aim of *Sustainable Victoria* was that every stakeholder involved in sustainability in Melbourne should meet one another at least once.



Sustainable Victoria's Round Tables. Source: Strategic Design Scenarios

In Liège, the matchmaking started outside the municipality. *La Ceinture Aliment-Terre Liégeoise*¹, a project supported by not-for-profit organisations and launched in 2014, brought together more than 400 local stakeholders involved in sustainable food. The success of this stakeholder movement engaged the municipality in the topic despite cities having no (or very little) official competence in food.



Liège's Ceinture Aliment-Terre Liégeoise stakeholder forum.
Source: Maud Danane

In Bristol, where work on food is more developed, the stakeholders and the municipality implemented matchmaking by creating a new policy institution. Inspired by cities in the USA and Canada, the Bristol Food Policy Council was launched in March 2011. It works as an independent advisory body to the City Council and its aim is to bring together stakeholders from diverse food-related sectors including representatives from local government and civil servants.

In Amersfoort, the municipality goes somewhat beyond the role of go-between or facilitator and sees itself as a broker between local stakeholders. 'Broker' is a business term, literally an individual or party that arranges transactions between a buyer and a seller. **Considering a city administration as a broker is a strong statement: it turns upside down the classic model where public authorities act mainly through procurement as buyers in the existing economy to stimulate emergence of new business.** In 2007 and 2008, Amersfoort organised large stakeholder conferences called 'Stad zoekt Boer' (City seeks Farmer) to kick-off matchmaking between farmers near Amersfoort and initiatives on sustainable food within the city. This process has resulted in around 140 matches, ranging from initial contacts to the launch of collaboration projects on sustainable food supply, health, education, recreation and business.



Amersfoort's 'City seeks Farmer' matchmaking event.
Source: City of Amersfoort

CAPITALISING ON SUCCESS AND FAILURE

On top of improving the dialogue with the different stakeholders in the city, municipalities are also improving their capitalisation procedures in order to profit from their successes and failures

1 Ceinture Aliment-Terre Liégeoise : <http://www.catl.be/>



through a process of continuous improvement. The bottleneck is generally to be found not in the assessment of public policies, which is well rooted in the habits of municipal administration, but in the dissemination of the experience gained from the assessment. The duty of discretion amongst civil servants, amnesia resulting from political change and territorial marketing competition between cities are some of the barriers to the dissemination of lessons. When a policy assessment report is kept confidential and ends up locked in a drawer, valuable experience is lost: good practices are not made available to neighbouring departments, mistakes are likely to be repeated by other municipalities, public effort and money are wasted.

Some cities are experimenting with new solutions to unlock these limitations in the dissemination of public experience. Civil servants generally have no mandate to report to anyone other than their hierarchical superiors. Many cities are active in social media but they generally carefully control what is published in their name. The fear of criticism for wasting public money induces a general feebleness of the administration in sharing anything but bland polished successes. But things are changing: in Gdańsk some civil servants are publishing independently on Facebook. In Amersfoort, the city's official website includes *Bewoners033*², a citizens' blog uncensored by the administration, posted on the very centre of the homepage as a catching-eye section. The very URBACT capitalisation



Amersfoort citizens' blog *Bewoners033* on the city's official website.
Source: City of Amersfoort

process, of which this research on '*Social innovation in cities*' is part, is therefore of major importance in pushing cities to share their experiences within thematic networks and to disclose their outcomes, including both successes and failures.

If good practices are not made available to neighbouring departments, mistakes are likely to be repeated by other municipalities, public effort and money are wasted.

Formats for dissemination are also of major importance in reaching stakeholders beyond colleagues from the same administrative silo. Amersfoort's municipality advocates using less administrative jargon, good accessible language and informal story-telling as a more efficient way to pass on experience than administrative notes and reports. During the preparation of its *Year of Change*, informal breakfast meetings were held every week

between departments, at which civil servants could simply tell the story of their experiences over a coffee.

Another format, the *Speed Presentation Evenings*, based on a '3 slides – 3 minutes' format similar to the Sustainable Victoria Round Table process described previously, has been established as a standard tool within all the 10 cities in the URBACT *Sustainable Food in Urban communities* network. These presentations provide rapid insights into local and foreign experiences, give an incentive for informal direct exchanges, and are progressively turning into a shared library of inspiring cases recorded as short video clips. Open story-telling, documented with photos



Sustainable Food in Urban Communities Speed Presentation Evenings.
Source: Strategic Design Scenarios

² Amersfoort's official website: <http://bewoners033.nl/>



and videos and given easy online access, is crucial to triggering inspiration and exchanges between cities.

LETTING GO AND EFFICIENCY

Coming back to the question we raised at the beginning of this article, faced with a more difficult context and reduced means, the city administrations we observed through the lens of social innovation are starting to change their posture. On the one hand, they listen to other players, they leave more space for initiatives and they strengthen the feedback of experiences. They let go more than they used to do, and they shift from the command and control posture to a more participative governance style. They share their responsibilities, tasks and ways of addressing them in partnership with citizens and other stakeholders of the city. So doing they can benefit from citizens' engagement and participation, and share the burden and the delivery costs of public services. On the other hand, there is a risk of cynicism from city administration leaders and bland

Open story-telling, documented with photos and videos and easy online access, is crucial to triggering inspiration and exchanges between cities.

A new and more shared governance of cities is emerging. City leaders and citizens are exploring together new forms of 'active welfare', in which citizens and public administration co-produce more efficient 'collaborative public services', which are not only better adapted to citizens' needs but also cheaper to deliver.

disengagement: citizens are able to play a relatively small role in the delivery of certain public services and they will never be a substitute for public administrations.

A new style of city leadership is emerging. By letting citizens take the initiative, city administrations can reconnect with them. They

learn to collaborate better with the population, to adopt user-centred approaches, and thus to improve the efficiency of the public services they deliver. A new and more shared governance of cities is emerging. City leaders and citizens are exploring together new forms of 'active welfare', in which citizens and public administration co-produce more

efficient 'collaborative public services', which are not only better adapted to citizens' needs but also cheaper to deliver. In order to happen this requires a creative and responsible city leadership: creative to imagine new forms of collaboration in which citizens have acceptable tasks to do, and responsible to ensure the equity of these new forms of collaboration, the quality of the resulting public services and equal access for all citizens. ●



BUILDING COLLABORATIVE PUBLIC SERVICES

✍ By François Jégou*



Source: Freepik

Grassroots initiatives and citizens' movements are blooming in cities everywhere. For instance, the cities in the URBACT Sustainable Food in Urban Communities network¹ are witnessing a proliferation of community gardens, allotments, community supported agriculture schemes and collective cooking events. The so-called food activists are generating a rich range of social innovations which are pushing cities to engage in sustainable food issues.



Herligheten, Oslo: allotment gardens on the waterfront development area. Source: Kristin von Hirsch (left), Bjørvika Utvikling AS/Vibeke Hermanrud (right).

Beyond food, people are co-producing the solutions they would like to benefit from in all dimensions of their daily life. **Starting from social innovations, neighbourhood populations are inventing what are called 'collaborative services'** (Jégou and Manzini, 2008): services that are only possible thanks to the contribution of the population using these services. These collaborative services, such as food buying groups, car-pooling schemes, holiday house swaps and mutual help initiatives may develop into successful businesses based on sharing goods or knowledge, or giving mutual help (see interview with Willem van Winden in this publication). This article takes a closer look at how the same mechanism of collaboration with citizens is also full of potential for rethinking the delivery of public services, resulting in the coproduction of 'collaborative public services'.

GIVING SPACE TO SOCIAL INNOVATION AND COLLABORATION WITH CITIZENS

Creating collaborative public services means that city administrations must first create space for social innovation and citizen collaboration to develop. They should learn to step back and leave the initiative to the citizens – a rather unprecedented attitude for them! As Amersfoort's administration is showing in the case study of this publication, they need to both

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¹ URBACT sustainable food in urban communities network: <http://urbact.eu/sustainable-food>



facilitate and moderate social innovation in order to benefit from the dynamic and ensure the regular and balanced collaboration of their populations.

But leaving space for citizens' initiatives is not always an easy task for a city administration: grassroots involvement is fragile and may suffer if too much emphasis is placed on it. "When we support social innovations in the city, we also place a burden on them," says Jacques Dubois, Head of Cape Town's Sustainability Department². "The project gets some subsidies, prints the city logo on its communication materials and then people expect it to deliver a regular service or to enlarge its scope." City administrations should then aim at leaving a measured space: enough for social innovation to develop but not too much to avoid overloading it with too many expectations.

SUPPORTING COLLABORATION BETWEEN CITIZENS AND CIVIL SERVANTS

Collaborative public services require support of the capacity to collaborate from both civil servants' and citizens' sides.

For civil servants and heads of department, capacity-building increases the ability to collaborate with citizens. Amersfoort municipality has started a capacity-building programme, which includes such crucial elements as: global problem-solving, feeling responsible for the whole, being able to think from another person's perspective, giving feedback, working with networks, collaboration, becoming a 'learning organisation', and being open about failures and doubts. Some of the training seminars include citizens and elected representatives in order to raise their capacity to liaise in their respective arenas and enable them to collaborate with each other.

For civil servants and heads of department, capacity-building increases the ability to collaborate with citizens.

From the citizens' side, it is possible to learn from 'lead citizens' such as those observed in Amersfoort and to transfer some of their capacities to other citizens. In particular the emerging field of design for social innovation works at adapting user-centred tools and approaches commonly used to design with users products and services better adapted to their needs. The DESIS network (see Box 1) involves design students and schools worldwide in collaborating with citizens to develop social innovations and sustainable ways of living. DESIS Labs build on user-centred and community-centred design methodologies and derive best practices from 'lead citizens'. They co-create and experiment with them solution-kits and toolboxes including all the necessary information, tools, tips and advice to help enthusiastic citizens to take action in their neighbourhoods as 'lead citizens' would do. These kits and toolboxes include methods of liaising with other citizens so as to catalyse their participation. They adapt the professional methods and tools of project management to make them usable by laymen, and shorten the time-consuming process of social engagement. They provide knowledge on city administration and modes of improving collaboration with civil servants, and

facilitate the development of collaborative public services (Manzini and Staszowski, 2013).

Citizens developing grassroots initiatives always tend to be the same 'usual suspects' who are involved in multiple projects. They are asked by the municipality to take part in stakeholder support groups

and are caught in virtuous but exhausting circles of participation. To prevent this participation fatigue, the Brussels administration supports *Coordinateurs de Quartier Durable* (Sustainable Neighbourhood co-ordinators) and Amersfoort municipality coordinates part-time *Green Brokers*. Both examples are attempts to value 'lead citizens' or citizens taking the lead of initiatives in their neighbourhoods and make their engagement in the delivery of collaborative public services more sustainable.

² Interview in Johannesburg during the ARSCP-5 4–6 June 2008 for the preparation of the Creative Communities for Sustainable Lifestyles Africa



Brussels: Capital region supporting neighbourhood co-ordinators to encourage and stimulate participation. Source: LiseFendo – Cité Forest Vert

BALANCING CONTRIBUTIONS BETWEEN CITIZENS AND MUNICIPALITIES

For good and bad reasons, creative communities of citizens are becoming more active (Manzini, Jégou and Penin, 2007 and 2009): empowerment towards new and more sustainable ways of living in cities, regenerating the social fabric in urban areas, socialising and taking action together in the neighbourhood, and recovering a role in society in periods of unemployment are powerful trends. At the same time, the economic crisis, growing poverty, public budget shortages and disengagement from local services have left people with the need to find solutions by themselves.

Thus, engaging citizens more actively in producing collaborative public services is not only possible, but is expected by citizens themselves, for the reasons listed above. But reducing the cost of services by increasing user participation is a generalised strategy throughout the service economy: citizens are encouraged to assemble furniture, install domestic appliances, update mobile phones, book holidays and download payrolls. And citizen's willingness to take part in collaborative public services delivery is likely to slow down if too many burdens are heaped onto their shoulders.

A balance has to be struck between the involvement of citizens and the benefit they may get from being involved. The example of the **Mülheimer Fahrrad Gruppe (MFG)**, a bicycle association based in the Mülheim district of **Cologne**, is a particularly good case to show what balanced collaborative public

services should look like. Believing that the bicycle is the ideal urban vehicle for short distances, the association wants to win greater acceptance from both the city administration and car drivers, and improved safety and comfort for cyclists. In particular, MFG's members collect reports of damaged bike paths, abandoned bikes, etc., send them to the city administration and post the problem on an online forum. The City of Cologne, which is responsible for maintaining the paths and removing abandoned bikes, has improved its efficiency by using MFG's reports to monitor and optimise street maintenance and safety, especially in an outlying area like Mülheim (Meroni, 2007).



Mülheimer Fahrrad Gruppe sending reports to street maintenance public services. Source: School of Design, University of Applied Sciences, Cologne

The MFG association and the municipality of Cologne have spontaneously invented a new model of collaboration between cyclists and the city's public services: by inspecting cycle paths and signalling problems, cyclists make street maintenance

more efficient at the cost of relatively little effort. In return, the public services can save time and money identifying problems and can focus their repair and maintenance action where it benefits cyclists.

The MFG example shows a balanced deal between citizens and administration, a win-win model the design of collaborative

public services should aim at: the engagement of citizens is light, there is less risk of disengagement and participation fatigue, public service delivery has been improved, costs for the city have decreased – all of that on top of promoting a more sustainable way of living and regenerating a positive relationship between the citizens and the municipality.

Engaging citizens more actively in producing collaborative public services is not only possible, but is expected by citizens themselves.



ENSURING DISTRIBUTION AND EQUITY OF COLLABORATIVE PUBLIC SERVICES

Engaging citizen collaboration in the delivery of public services requires city leaders and their administrations to change their posture by moving from the role of leader to that of partner. This change of posture should not be seen as a way to hide cuts in public budgets or to outsource service delivery 'for free'. On the contrary, a fair mode of mutual engagement and benefit is an incredible opportunity to develop more efficient collaborative public services, which are not only less demanding in terms of finance and effort from the city administration, but also match citizens' expectations more effectively.

Engaging citizen collaboration in the delivery of public services requires city leaders and their administrations to change their posture by moving from the role of leader to that of partner.

At the same time, cities should ensure that engagement in social innovation is well distributed among the population. It is not realistic to think that the whole population of any given city will take part in delivering collaborative public services, because of cultural barriers, economic and time constraints, or personal choice. Engaged citizens do not represent all parts of the population and this might lead to a democratic bias. City leaders should therefore

ensure sufficient equity by enlarging participation through random invitations, lottery-based participation, or promoting a culture of participation among the population. ●

BOX 1. CITIES ENGAGING WITH DESIGN SCHOOLS AND SOCIAL INNOVATION

 **By Anna Meroni**

*DESIS³/Department of Design,
Politecnico di Milano*

Some cities found design schools to be useful partners to collaborate with on social innovation. In **Milan**, the Feeding Milan project rethought the city food system thanks to the collaboration of Slow Food with the Politecnico di Milano and the Università degli Studi di Scienze Gastronomiche. In **New York City**, Health Care and Social Services are being redesigned with the involvement of design students of the Parsons New School for Design. The **London Borough of Camden** is working with the University of the Arts London (Central Saint Martins) to make the city

greener. The design school of **Tongji University** is carrying out a project to create new virtuous connections between the city of Shanghai and the agricultural island of Chongming across the Yangtze estuary. These activities are all part of the DESIS association, an international network of design schools working with Design for Social Innovation and Sustainability. DESIS Labs in more than 40 major design schools all over the world are working as laboratories for social change. They bring to the cities, in which they are based, their capacity to investigate issues and problems in the territory, to explore out-of-the-box solutions, and to apply user-centred approaches to rethinking public services, benchmarking international cases, intercepting social innovators and building bridges with public policies. In return, such hands-on pedagogy cultivates professionals who are active in social innovation in cities and eventually more aware citizens.

³ DESIS network: <http://www.desis-network.org/>



NEW VALUE CREATION MODELS INFLUENCING A PARADIGMATIC CHANGE IN CITY GOVERNANCE



Interview with [Willem van Winden](#)
Co-ordinator of the URBACT workstream
'New urban economies'

 Interviewed by [Marcelline Bonneau](#)

*In-house consultant at Strategic Design Scenarios
and co-ordinator of the URBACT workstream
'Social innovation in cities'*

URBACT's 2014/15 workstream on 'New urban economies' is about the way cities can change their economies to bring about a more sustainable future.

What parallels can you see between your work on 'New urban economies' and ours on 'Social innovation in cities'?

One very strong similar approach is the way the role of citizens is changing. In our work, we have used the concept of the quadruple helix to frame and explain the way citizens are involved in the development of a new product. In particular, they take part in living labs where they test and contribute to the improvement of products while at the same time using them. As such, the approach is very strongly user-centred. In Eindhoven for example, a new piece of medical equipment was developed by a hospital and a technical structure. Patients used it, while feeling they were part of something wider. This reminds me of the public labs you mention in your workstream, except that in our case it refers to an economic role whereas in yours it is for city governance.



How have citizens been involved in the new value creation models you have observed?

We have observed that in some instances, citizens actually become producers themselves, whether they produce their own energy through solar panels on the roofs of their houses, or grow and sell food. This is quite a new situation for cities. In some cases, this is quite a disruption and brings in legal tensions such as in the controversy around Uber. In other instances, cities see it as an innovation potential. Since legislation is usually laid down at national level, cities usually have little influence on it. However, they are learning how to circumvent legal issues and create other frameworks for promoting innovation.

For example, we have seen cities inviting companies to develop innovative systems on the basis of voluntary work. This was the case of IT applications, through the hackathon in Dublin and Cluj-Napoca in Romania. This is a new economic model in which individuals or companies work for free for their city, strongly motivated by their ambitions and ideas. ●

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We have observed that in some instances, citizens actually become producers themselves, whether they produce their own energy through solar panels on the roofs of their houses, or grow and sell food. This is quite a new situation for cities.

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MORE INFORMATION

New urban economies, URBACT II capitalisation, April 2015:

<http://urbact.eu/capitalisation-and-dissemination>



Source: Freepik



SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOODS AS ENABLERS OF SOCIAL INNOVATION



Interview with [Darinka Czischke](#)
Assistant professor, Delft University of Technology
and co-ordinator of the URBACT workstream
'Sustainable regeneration in urban areas'

 Interviewed by François Jégou

*Director of the Strategic Design Scenarios and Lead Expert
of the URBACT Sustainable Food for Urban Communities network*

How can social innovation movements and creative communities be a powerful engine for sustainable urban regeneration?

Engaged and creative communities are crucial assets for sustainable urban regeneration. In fact, very often you see that collective action by local communities has been at the basis of key environmental improvement actions, or at least, of stopping actions that are environmentally harmful. A case in point is the Wilhelmsburg area in **Hamburg**, one of the case studies of our URBACT workstream 'Sustainable regeneration in urban areas'. This area had many environmental problems, including being prone to severe flooding and the location of industries alongside housing. At the beginning of the 2000s, a strong citizen movement was triggered by plans to build a motorway through the area, which would have had a major impact on the quality of the local environment. As a result of this movement, the citizens' group wrote a manifesto and a 'White Book' containing a number of proposals

for improving their area, to be taken into account by the local administration. In addition, they launched an open forum to discuss these issues with a variety of stakeholders, the 'Wilhelmsburg Future Conference'. This engagement and the creativity displayed by citizens was one key driver of Wilhelmsburg being chosen as the location of the Internationale Bauausstellung (IBA) Hamburg. The overall objective of the IBA Hamburg was to trigger off, within the fixed time period of seven years (2007–2013), the comprehensive transformation of the deprived neighbourhood of Wilhelmsburg into 'the city of tomorrow'. The IBA Hamburg was about to plan and implement new, innovative and transferable concepts and projects as well as governance approaches (see more information in the publication

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Engaged and creative communities are crucial assets for sustainable urban regeneration.
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'Sustainable regeneration in urban areas', URBACT II capitalisation, April 2015'. It should be noted, however, that the long-term involvement of citizens after milestones such as these is far from ensured. This is a big task for city administrations.

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Sustainable urban regeneration seeks to integrate different dimensions into physical interventions in local areas. Hence, social and cultural aspects such as creating well-designed and appropriately located public spaces play a key role in enabling social encounters and interactions at local level.

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Source: Freepik

In return, how could sustainable urban regeneration provide an environment that facilitates social innovation dynamics?

Sustainable urban regeneration seeks to integrate different dimensions into physical interventions in local areas. Hence, social and cultural aspects, such as creating well-designed and appropriately located public spaces, play a key role in enabling social encounters and interactions at local level. In addition, as part of residential regeneration and industrial conversions, often we see the provision of community infrastructure such as spaces for local people with common interests to meet. Youngsters, elderly people, self-employed people working from home, women looking to start a small business close to their children... all these needs should be fostered by regeneration practices which think of physical change as part of dynamic lifestyles and life choices of the local populations. Another very important aspect is health and safety. Regeneration efforts today should aim towards the highest standards in terms of the environmental quality of construction materials and processes.

Could we conclude that sustainable neighbourhoods could be understood as facilitating platforms for social innovation?

Absolutely! Truly sustainable regeneration should involve holistic thinking from the start and focus on the needs and potential contributions of local residents and users. This is the only way in which we can ensure the long-term value of investments in regeneration and avoid the obsolescence and decay of these areas at times of economic downturn. ●

MORE INFORMATION

Sustainable regeneration in urban areas, URBACT II capitalisation, April 2015:
<http://urbact.eu/capitalisation-and-dissemination>



CREATING THE RIGHT ENVIRONMENT FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION IN CITIES

 By Fabio Sgaragli*

The correlation between the existence in a city of a vibrant social innovation community and the positive impact on its social and economic development is clearly demonstrated by evidence. Nowadays, cities all across Europe are working to engage their citizens in bottom-up innovation processes in order to foster new ideas, generate commitment and spark a new set of initiatives on the ground.

In this article we shall explore what city administrations are doing in order to create the right environment to ignite and manage those social innovation processes. They are doing a lot, especially building on what is already there.

First of all, it is important for city leaders to know what is already happening on the ground: mapping actors and existing initiatives will help identify where the appetite and energy for change are. It will also help to understand what some of the real needs of citizens are, as it is at the local community level that problems are clearly manifested (and faced) by citizens themselves. This is what the city of Milan has done with the *My Neighbourhood* project¹, an EU-funded initiative involving another three partner cities (Birmingham, Lisbon and Aalborg) which aimed to engage the local community of a deprived area of the city, Quarto

Oggiaro, in co-designing new services to help improve the quality of life in the area. The project aimed at developing an online platform to activate hidden or latent resources in the neighbourhood and will end in June 2015. The first step of this project has been a mapping of what was already there, conducted through a mix of tools such as desk research, targeted surveys, and small events bringing together individuals and organisations working on the ground. Mapping has been important as it allowed the local administration to connect to a range of existing initiatives and organisations and to engage them in the process.

It is important for city leaders to know what is already happening on the ground: mapping both actors and existing initiatives will help identify where the appetite and energy for change are.

Once the engagement has been created, it has been very important to adopt the following simple set of criteria in order not to disperse or waste the initial momentum and start building a community:

- 1 **Communication has been kept flowing** – it is important once a communication channel has been opened to keep the communication going. It was as simple as keeping the group informed about progress in the local administration's thinking as regards the city's development, or asking them for feedback on policy proposals.

* Fabio Sgaragli is the Head of Learning and Innovation at Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini

1 My Neighbourhood: My Neighbourhood | My City: http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/apps/projects/factsheet/



- 2 **The momentum has been maintained** – once the communication flow was established and stabilised, it has also been important to make things happen and engage the group in action that can range from simply organising small networking events around specific topics, all the way to planning and implementing shared interventions addressing pressing local challenges.
- 3 **The promises made were kept** – the most important criterion for success in building a community is, and has always been, creating a high level of trust in and with the community.

To date, the My Neighbourhood project has produced a few interesting results. Quarto food Club, a product-service system (PSS) that combines the need for affordable and enjoyable food access for elderly people with the opportunity for young people to do practical training. The service is based on the agreement between the Professional School of Hotel Management, the Local Associations and the Municipality of Milan. Quarto Gardening is a PSS that combines the need for affordable gardening services with the opportunity for young people to do practical training.

In concrete terms, in agreement with the municipality, students of the Agricultural School take care of the green public areas.

This is also what the Employment-Environment Alliance² has done in Brussels. This is an initiative of the government of the Brussels-Capital region that involves two regional ministries, respectively of Economic Affairs and Environment, in coordinating their actions and creating synergies so as to develop jobs connected to environmental priorities. The initiative proposed a new dynamic form of governance along the lines explored so far. It aimed to mobilise and coordinate public, private and voluntary actors around four urban environmental priorities: sustainable buildings, access to clean water, resources and waste, and sustainable food. Through a series of meetings, stakeholders generated ideas on new sustainable economic activities within the region. A clustering process then encouraged them to join forces to implement the most promising ideas. The two ministries provide grants to start

up the initiatives. The project was innovative because it was not only a classic consultation and participation process, but involved stakeholders from complementary sectors, although not consulted jointly before, to achieve a truly collective work towards shared objectives, namely the development of economic sectors related to the environment and the creation of quality jobs for the region. So far, the process has produced the following results: research projects have been funded (on societal analysis and market opportunities for each of the axis), action plans have been drafted, determining the strategy for the future in each area of potential economic development, and a few projects on job-creation have been funded following the priorities set for each area.



Meetings of Employment-Environment Alliance stakeholders – Sustainable Food axis. Source: Evelyne Huytebroeck

The two examples above help us understand that **the new logic of social innovation is to go beyond the 'classic stakeholder approach', moving from consultation towards building a shared community of intent and action where the local administrations can play the crucial role of 'hosting' and animation.** In this new logic, great results have been achieved by mobilising the energy of the community towards common objectives, creating the conditions for local administrations to do more with less. This has been conceptualised as *infrastructuring* (Hart, S. and London 2005) (see Box 1).

Many cities are also **providing social innovation communities with infrastructures** to connect, share projects and generate new ideas. Examples are abundant, as physical hubs, online portals and festivals or events spring up all across Europe, in cities large and small.

² Employment-environment Alliance: <http://www.aee-rbc.be/>



For example, in 2012 the municipality of Gödöllő in Hungary provided a space for local NGOs (in the form of a detached house with a garden) to encourage them to co-operate with each other. The administration provided the initial funding and covers the rent of the building, but leaves it up to the NGOs to use and maintain it as they find appropriate. The terms of this occupation and use are set out in a contract, which limits the activities to non-profit ones.

Having this space has encouraged the NGOs to collaborate, and some of them operating in different fields have started to work together. NGOs are also using the space to generate new innovative projects. For example, some of them have organised used

clothes and book swaps between citizens and training courses on a variety of topics, such as gardening³.



Civil house provided by the Gödöllő city administration.

Source: Green Dependent Association

BOX 1: INFRASTRUCTURING

By Per-Anders Hillgren

*Forum for Social Innovation Sweden,
Malmö University*

Although the notion of innovation infrastructure is often seen as physical spaces or networked digital technologies, it has through the concept of infrastructuring gained a new meaning within research on participatory design, especially in connection with social innovation. Besides looking at the material aspects of innovation infrastructure, this approach also tries to create an understanding of existing and potential social relations in a neighbourhood by mapping both actors and existing initiatives that can become potential resources for innovation (see the example from My Neighbourhood in this article). The reason for this is that infrastructuring tries to avoid a focus on innovation as a delimited and disconnected entity. Instead, it pays attention to the entire infrastructure that makes an innovation successful (or not). This includes how an innovation can be interwoven with diverse contexts, processes and people. To achieve a real impact all of this needs to be carefully crafted together. The concept has challenged the traditional (shorter) design project format and is based on building

long-term working relations between disparate groups in society and encouraging mutual learning between these groups. It emphasises the importance of allowing a plurality of voices, a flexible allotment of resources and time and how experimentation and innovation can emerge from the continuous matchmaking of diverse groups, their needs and competences. 'Infrastructuring' emphasises the innovation infrastructure as a set of continuous and ongoing relational processes rather than as a fixed technical system.

On a practical level the processes typically start by connecting to diverse grassroots organisations in a neighbourhood and creating an understanding of their ongoing everyday activities and how these could potentially support social innovation. The next step is to consider connections to other initiatives in the city by identifying common issues and joint experiments. Through these experiments social capital and learning between disparate groups will increase. Although the method of infrastructuring has been mainly used by researchers, so far some cities have already used it without conceptualising it and others have a lot to learn from it, especially as a framework that can guide social innovation processes (DiSalvo, C., Clement, A. and Pipek, V., 2012 and Hillgren, P.-A., Seravalli, A. and Emilson, A., 2011).

³ Civic House in Gödöllő: <https://hu-hu.facebook.com/Civil.Kozossegi.Haz.Godollo>



When managed and animated, infrastructures of this kind have really promoted interaction between actors which would not be co-operating otherwise, and fostered interaction with citizens. Creating such infrastructures is relatively easy, as cities nowadays can rely on a pool of unused public buildings, and technology for online portals has become very affordable. The success and sustainability of any such infrastructure, though, relies both on the ability to animate it and the level of ownership by the host organisations and the citizens engaging with it. In this regard, once the infrastructure has been created, local administrations have pulled back and let the community take the ownership.

In creating the right environment for social innovation, the dissemination of ideas and practices has been a key factor in inspiring citizens, igniting processes, generating new ideas and scaling up successful solutions.

Lastly, in creating the right environment for social innovation, the dissemination of ideas and practices has been a key factor in inspiring citizens, igniting processes, generating new ideas and scaling up successful solutions. What is important to understand is that when it comes to processes that are participatory in nature, such as social innovation, both volumes and commitment have been necessary conditions for

success. Volumes are needed as the greater the number of people involved, the higher the chance of generating good solutions, political endorsement and sustainable conditions for any idea to become reality. Commitment is also needed, as a small fraction of the people involved has formed the core of a vibrant local community of change agents. ●



Source: Freepik



CREATING SPACE FOR EXPERIMENTATION

 By Eddy Adams*

THE TROUBLE WITH EXPERIMENTATION

Cities are in a tight spot. There is a demand for innovation and an appetite for fresh approaches to the design and delivery of public services. But no one wants to see public money wasted, particularly when finances are constrained. Yet, innovation requires experimentation, which means taking risks and learning from failure. It also means having the opportunity to test products and services in a safe space and on a modest scale, which most would agree is a cost-effective and rational approach.

So, how are cities operating in this contradictory environment and what can we learn from their experiences? In this article we'll be looking at the value of experimentation and the importance of taking risks. Our focus will also encompass learning from failure and the steps cities are taking to shift cultural attitudes within the public sector towards innovative behaviours. In doing so we will refer to the central questions of leadership and systems.

WHAT DRIVES EXPERIMENTATION IN CITIES?

More European cities seem to be embracing experimentation than before. The drivers for this include the redundancy of the *status quo* for existing services, in the light of financial cuts and rising demand. Citizens with higher consumer expectations, used to technology-driven 24/7 services, are also a factor here. As a consequence, municipalities are having to change their behaviour, as we discuss throughout this publication.

Of course, the public sector has always had the right to experiment. For example, in France, this is enshrined by statute in a law passed in 2003, allowing public authorities to test new approaches (Vie Publique, 2013). **This 'right to experimentation by local authorities' is symbolic, as it asserts the important principle that public resources can be invested in experimentation, with the aim of achieving public savings in the longer term.**

Yet curiously, this French law has been little used. So, within the URBACT workstream 'Social innovation in cities' we have been interested in exploring where the drive for experimentation in cities is coming from. And our evidence suggests that the green light can come from a wide variety of sources. For example, sometimes it derives from the top of a city administration, and in both of the workstream case studies in this publication,

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the important role of civic leaders is clear. In Gdańsk, the demand for experimentation and fresh ideas came from a Mayor, Paweł Adamowicz, who had already been in post for 17 years. As we show (see the case study in this publication), in that city, the desire to open up the administration, bring in fresh blood and look for new ways to collaborate with citizens, was driven from the highest level. Identifying shared spaces in which to engage and experiment was an integral aspect of this shift in relationships.

This top-down model is perhaps most closely associated with the Social Innovation Mayor, Seoul's Park Won Soon. As in Poland, democracy is relatively new to South Korea so perhaps we see this approach in societies where political legacy continues to affect civic participation levels.

High-level commitment to experimentation is also seen in the other case study city, Amersfoort. But in the Netherlands, with historically high levels of civic engagement and a reputation for social innovation, the situation is one where the city leaders and citizens have met in the middle. In other cities with highly-educated populations, such as York, discussed below, we also see this phenomenon where the drive to stimulate experimentation is a two-way street.

Sometimes, the initiative comes from below, or from within public administrations. An interesting example of this is in Turin, Italy, where two local authority employees kick-started a public sector innovation process that has now been adopted by the administration. The **Innova:To** pilot was a competition which invited the city's 10,000 public employees to come up with ideas for service reform and improvement. The competition had a particular emphasis on reducing waste and saving energy, linked to the city's Smart Green City status. After securing sponsorship support from a number of key commercial players, the two employees persuaded

the city authority to run the pilot, with impressive results. Staff submitted 117 proposals, from which 15 feasible winning entries were selected. These are now in the process of being tested and prototyped¹.

WHERE ARE THE SPACES FOR CITIES TO EXPERIMENT?

Creating the right conditions for experimentation includes providing space for the design, prototyping and evaluation of new products and services. Cities have different ways of doing this. For the next stage of Innova:To, proposers of the winning ideas will be working with colleagues to test out their suggestions for real. In some cases, this will involve inter-departmental collaboration, so it makes a contribution to the important process of breaking down silos.

The Genius York model offers a platform for the community to collaborate on tackling shared challenges issued by the city². These have included ways to improve health and care services as well as a challenge to improve support for those with dementia. The model has a virtual on-line presence, complemented by a series of events – workshops and hackathons – which bring relevant stakeholders together.

Creating the right conditions for experimentation includes providing space for the design, prototyping and evaluation of new products and services. Cities have different ways of doing this.



Innovate York Synergy Surgery, Day 1–9 July 2014. Source: Brendan Tannam, Genius project

1 Innova:To: <http://www.torinosmartcity.it/progetto-innova-to-premiazione-dei-migliori-progetti/>; <http://www.blog.urbact.eu/2014/05/10000-employees-10000-potential-innovators/>; <http://www.blog.urbact.eu/2014/12/smart-city-turins-platform-for-employee-driven-innovation/>

2 Genius project: <http://geniusyork.com/>



Each Genius challenge produces a shortlist of winning entries, which are financed to the prototype stage by the city's Development and Innovation Fund (DIF).

Importantly, this offers a safe space to design and test new products and services on a modest scale, before evaluating their potential for wider implementation.

Genius York evolved from the Nesta Connected Councils initiative³, and is now being transferred through URBACT to other cities⁴. It provides important lessons about creating the right conditions for experimentation. This mix of physical and virtual space to promote experimentation is growing fast across cities in Europe, particularly through the use of social media. Our case study refers to the way that city leaders in Gdańsk are using Facebook to build relationships and mobilise citizens. We also see, in cities like Trieste, a similar approach to York's where a collaborative model between the city authority, a foundation and higher education providers is using social media to stimulate experimentation in relation to vacant city spaces⁵.

Yet, despite the growing importance of the virtual environment, there is clearly still an important role for physical spaces, particularly those which provide a safe shared space for mixed stakeholder groups. Across Europe, social innovation labs are widely recognised as an effective example of such spaces, both physical and virtual (see interview with Stéphane Vincent in this publication).

At a macro level it is interesting to note that cities often cite this as an important benefit of URBACT – having a green light to experiment, play and share ideas – which in the current economic climate can be hard to find in cities.

This mix of physical and virtual space to promote experimentation is growing fast across cities in Europe, particularly through the use of social media.

HOW ARE CITIES BUILDING EXPERIMENTATION CAPACITY AND CULTURE?

Civil servants can learn a great deal by working alongside organisations like Kennisland, as well as with citizen groups and designers, as we discuss in previous article on building collaborative public services. Yet, as we see elsewhere in this publication, this kind of collaboration requires a set of attitudes that not all public employees are comfortable with. **Successful collaboration of this type requires civil servants to come with an open mind, to be prepared to learn and not to assume that they have all the answers.** This is a more fluid and flexible set of relationships than the old contractor-supplier model, and it is not one that all civil servants easily adapt to.

New collaborative model, where each player brings his or her own distinct set of skills and knowledge, is the way forward. Within it, public servants, professional experts, NGOs, private enterprises and citizens may all have a key role to play. However, the role of brokering these complex working relationships and tapping talents at the right time is key. This, as we have seen from Amersfoort, is a key function of the 21st Century Civil Servant. ●



Source: Freepik

³ Nesta Creative Councils: <http://www.nesta.org.uk/project/creative-councils>

⁴ Genius Open: <http://urbact.eu/genius-open>

⁵ Pso-Trieste: <http://www.pso-trieste.eu/#/home>



FRIENDLY HACKING OF THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION



Interview with **Stéphane Vincent**
Director, La 27e Région, France

 Interviewed by **François Jégou**

*Director of the Strategic Design Scenarios
and Lead Expert of the URBACT Sustainable Food
for Urban Communities network*

La 27e Région¹ is a not-for-profit association which plays the role of a 'do-tank' for the 26 French regional governments. Its goal is to empower civil servants and elected officials with social innovation and design mind-sets, and ultimately to help them create social design teams and innovation labs inside their own administrations.

What are public innovation labs?

Most failures in public policies happen when these policies are disconnected from reality. As a reaction, public innovation labs play the role of a neutral place in the middle of the organisation, a space with tools and protocols that enable co-operation, systemic approaches, disruptive ideas, rapid prototyping, trial-and-error with users and beneficiaries. In recent years, many cities and local authorities all over the world have created such labs, like *New Urban Mechanics* in Boston, *Innovate SF* in San Francisco, the Danish government's *MindLab* or the *Laboratorio Para la Ciudad* of the City of Mexico. Practically, public innovation labs use methods inspired by social sciences or creative disciplines such as design.

“
*Most failures
in public policies happen
when these policies
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As a reaction,
public innovation labs play
the role of a neutral place.*
”

¹ <http://blog.la27eregion.fr/>



Source: Freepik

Why do these city administrations implement these new forms of innovation units?

Because administrations rarely change on their own. In 2011, La 27e Région, working on public innovation at various administrative levels in France, launched a programme called *La Transfo* whose ultimate goal was to help a group of local authorities to create their own public innovation lab. But we did not start by overselling the concept of lab; instead, we moved forward step by step, proving the concept progressively, because we know how reluctant administrations are when it comes to creating real, radical, systemic change from inside. Nor does this kind of change occur from outside, e.g. from consultancy or academic research. Actually, public innovation labs take the best from inside and outside: by trying to find an intermediate position, they combine a strong loyalty to the administration with the capacity to challenge its deepest routines.

What can cities expect from them?

They bring reflexivity into the system. For instance, the innovation lab run by the local authority of Val d'Oise (Cergy, France) worked on the administrative process in facilities assessing levels of disabilities defining financial supports given to disabled people.

Indeed, these facilities had so far failed, despite many attempts, to improve their processes by traditional means. By co-designing alternative visions *with* and not only *for* the users – both civil servants and beneficiaries – the lab provoked a constructive conversation and created new opportunities for improvement. The added value of labs is that they can bring meaning, impact, democracy, and also, but not only, savings in public spending.

How do you set up a public innovation lab?

The most experienced public innovation labs have been created step-by-step rather than overnight; they also took care to empower people with tools and methodology, and did not just do things for them. When the MindLab (the Danish government lab based in Copenhagen) started around 2001 its innovation activities improving administrative processes and service delivery of the

Ministry of Finance, its creators took care to involve civil servants and users in the process and even to give them basic skills in ethnography and design methodology. They thus convinced them that innovation was not just a new buzzword brought in by a happy few, but a set of concepts and tools that could enrich their daily work. ●

“
The added value of labs is that they can bring meaning, impact, democracy, and also, but not only, savings in public spending.
 ”



CITIES USING THEIR PURCHASING POWER TO FACILITATE SOCIAL INNOVATION

 By Marcelline Bonneau*

Some cities are developing new approaches to ensure that resources are available to experiment with new solutions to their problems. They are using their buying power to orientate, speed up, amplify and sometimes systematise the development of these social innovations. The experiments show that social innovation is not only for wealthy communities, which can free up the necessary time, financial resources, human resources and interest, but is accessible to all cities that want to take risks and experiment.

SEED MONEY TO KICK-START INITIATIVES



Decision by citizens in the Participatory Budgeting process in Seoul City.
Source: Participatory Budget and Seoul Metropolitan Government

New policy instruments are emerging to respond to citizens' willingness to take part in governance, and participative budgeting is one of them. In Seoul, 21 billion Korean Wons (about €16.5 million), which represents 2.3% of the yearly budget of the city, is allocated by citizens. A three-step process starts and ends with citizens: in a recent exercise citizens generated more than 1,500 ideas, a 250-strong Civil Budget Committee selected 560 of them, and finally citizens retained 352 proposals for implementation. In Gdańsk, a Participative Citizen Budget process allows citizens to express their views on proposals in person or online, and to allocate priorities to different projects. It is seen as part of strengthening the feeling of identity and belonging to the city.

* Marcelline Bonneau is an in-house consultant at Strategic Design Scenarios and co-ordinator of the URBACT workstream 'Social innovation in cities'



In some instances, the city administration has used its own resources to **kick-start grassroots initiatives. Through an initial investment with which it responded to citizens' needs, it has further encouraged citizens to take actions, implementing solutions for their local needs.** This has for example been the case in the 19th district of **Budapest** in Hungary, where the administration supported the setting up of community gardens as a base for outdoor activities, community building and food provision. The administration made the initial investment to create the allotments and has since supported ongoing technical expenses. Some private companies also contributed to the purchase of the equipment and watering system. In addition to its financial support, the administration took part in some of the activities organised on the spot. It let the management of the garden to the City Garden Association (*Városi Tanya Egyesület*). The success of the garden led to the creation of other gardens¹ and has had a significant impact on social cohesion through the empowerment of citizens – both adults and children – who have benefited from the garden and the networks created. By sharing responsibilities, the city administration has greatly reduced the costs and time it needed to invest in the project.



Garden opening ceremony, Budapest
Source: Első Kis-Pesti Kert, Városi Kertek Egyesület

A similar approach was taken by **Bristol City Council** with regard to the Severn Project², where a social enterprise has been helping socially excluded people to reintegrate into society. The municipality has supported the project by making land available at a very low rent and facilitating its development informally through contacts with other public agencies and community

projects. In turn, the project has involved people in producing high-quality food on its urban farm. The participants are trained in food production and are then offered a plot to grow food themselves. This food is then sold by the Severn Project and profits are shared amongst the participants.

In both cases – the community garden in Budapest and the social enterprise in Bristol – public seed money has been necessary to kick-start the project. They have then been transferred to their participants so that they can work towards financial autonomy.

ORIENTING PUBLIC PROCUREMENT TO SUPPORT SOCIAL INNOVATION

Public procurement is a difficult sector for innovation: first of all, it is subject to strict European legislation, which limits the room for thinking out of the box. Secondly, public procurement is often bound to short-term thinking, budget issues, predefined lists of needs which are not user-centred, and administrative thinking rather than a purpose-led approach. However, in some instances, cities have used public procurement policies to stimulate social innovation and to encourage 'unusual suspects', such as SMEs, NGOs or groups of citizens, to access calls for tenders and projects.

In some instances, the traditional procurement process has been opened up and moved away from a purely monetary approach (getting the cheapest service) to focus increasingly on quality criteria (purchasing innovative products and services) (Adams 2014). This has been the focus of a Danish pilot project, *Innovation on the shopping list*³, coordinated by MindLab and the Business Innovation Fund. Based on the experience of civil servants, it is presenting the long-term benefits of using public procurement differently in order to reorient the way municipalities and regions purchase services in the welfare sector. It has developed a practical tool to enable cities to envisage how they could transform their public procurement procedures.

Another form of procurement, which goes one step further and has enabled cities to use their buying power

1 First little garden (community gardens in Budapest): http://elsokispestikert.hu/e_kertek.html

2 Severn project: <http://www.thesevernproject.org/>

3 Innovation on the shopping list: <http://mind-lab.dk/case/innovation-paa-indkoebslisten/>



to develop social innovation, is commissioning services. These are new approaches to encourage contestability, competition and collaboration between public, private and non-government service providers. They create an increasingly mixed public service market.

These services are based on traditional contracting arrangements such as outsourcing, private financing and privatisation, but rely upon a wide range of service delivery and business models where governments and citizens can influence the way services are delivered in order to achieve better outcomes.

Commissioning fosters new relations between city administrations and stakeholders in varying the type of service providers within an institution, opening up city governance and problem-solving issues, as well as in adjusting and adapting the services to all levels of governance.

Commissioning fosters new relations between city administrations and stakeholders in varying the type of service providers within an institution, opening up city governance and problem-solving issues, as well as in adjusting and adapting the services to all levels of governance. The transformations they can bring in to cities are quite profound (Ernst and Young, 2014).

OTHER FORMS OF FINANCING AND STIMULATING SOCIAL INNOVATION IN CITIES

Another way of making the best out of procurement is to organise external creative competitions to generate innovative solutions to city problems, at the same time as promoting collectives of citizens or small enterprises, whose innovative solutions are still often not considered⁴. This can take the form of prizes, as proposed by the BCN Open Challenge in **Barcelona** (Spain)⁵. The BCN Open Challenge attempts to guarantee space for small companies to innovate in the city. As an international call, it seeks to procure innovative and sustainable solutions to transform both public services and places in Barcelona, focusing on six social issues⁶. It is organised by Barcelona City Council together with a supporting company, Citymart. The prize of the BCN Open Challenge is a direct commitment to contract the six winning solutions. Through this competition, the City of Barcelona aims to make the process of procurement decisions more cost-efficient and transparent, and to allow small entrepreneurs to be part of this process and to implement their innovative solutions.

The room for manoeuvre within the use of public procurement is highly constrained in legal terms. In order to try out and benefit from new approaches to stimulate social innovation, cities should also look for complementary funding opportunities. Other

Table 1. Traditional and new city governance models

TRADITIONAL CITY GOVERNANCE MODEL	NEW CITY GOVERNANCE MODEL
Government choice Doer In silos Contract managers Programme managers Control	User choice and control Enabler Collaborative Relationship managers Outcome managers Influence

Source: Ernst and Young, 2014

4 BCN Open Challenge: <http://bcnopenchallenge.org/a-model-partnership-new-version/>

5 BCN Open Challenge: <http://bcnopenchallenge.org/>

6 Reducing bicycle theft, empowering support systems to reduce social isolation, monitoring pedestrian flows, digitising museum and archive collections, automatically detecting and reporting damaged road surfaces, and empowering local retail through technology.



innovative forms of funding which can support social innovation in cities in addition to the city administration's own resources include (TEPSIE, 2014):

- 💡 **Social investment funds**, where investments are made by a collective of investors, instead of individuals. They can therefore invest small amounts of individual capital and contribute to larger projects, especially social enterprises. They employ investment instruments such as equity or quasi-equity in order to take an active role in the companies they invest in, and to support the investees in achieving financial viability and generating both a financial return and a social impact.
- 💡 **Loans**, where one entity lends money to another on the basis of a signed agreement, providing autonomy and flexibility to the organisation using it.
- 💡 **Venture philanthropy**, which is a business-oriented model for the promotion of social causes through grants, donations or low-cost capital together with investment capital for the support of building or scaling up of a business. The major advantages of this technique are the fact that it can generate capital at a low cost and it is flexible and open with many instruments which can be used.
- 💡 **Crowdfunding**, an online public call for investment, available for all projects and open to all individuals and companies, with no minimum contribution or bureaucratic procedures. In crowdfunding, projects need to be innovative to trigger the interest of contributors. Also, if they manage to convince the contributing crowd, this justifies their claim to be socially innovative.

Cities therefore have many ways of using their buying power and identifying new funding opportunities to support social innovation. Adopting such an approach

is an innovation in itself. It is for each city to identify the existing potential and define new economic models.

EU FUNDING FOR THE PROMOTION OF SOCIAL INNOVATION IN CITIES

The European Commission provides funding opportunities for projects seeking to develop social innovation as a methodology in policy fields such as social policy (PROGRESS programme⁷), *Strategic Guidelines and Regulations on Cohesion Policy for the programming period 2007–2013* (European Council, 2006) and Article 16 of the *Structural Funds Regulation, Country Specific Recommendations*, including the use of the European Social Fund⁸), employment policy (the programme for Employment and Social Innovation – EaSI⁹), agricultural policy (the EAFRD and LEADER for rural development programmes and measures as well as local innovative governance approaches) and regional policy (RegioStars awards by DG Regional and Urban Policy).

Finally, URBACT is also providing funding for transnational networks of city partners working jointly on single thematic issues (see the article ‘Setting the scene’ in this publication). By asking each participating city to set up a Local Support Group in order to coproduce a Local Action Plan, URBACT strongly promotes an open and participatory approach. The experience of more than 500 Local Support Groups active in URBACT II shows that the degree of participation and openness in co-designing integrated urban policies varies depending on factors such as institutional and administrative culture, policy area addressed and local leadership (see Raffaele Barbato’s interview). The city of Gdańsk, for example, stressed the way in which its participation in the *My Generation*¹⁰ and *My Generation at Work*¹¹ networks contributed to triggering co-operation with NGOs and took them from getting to know each other to co-working on specific policies. ●

7 PROGRESS programme: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=327>

8 Country specific recommendations: <http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/>

9 EaSI programme: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1081>

10 URBACT My Generation: <http://www.urbact.eu/my-generation>

11 URBACT My Generation at Work: <http://urbact.eu/mygeneration-at-work>

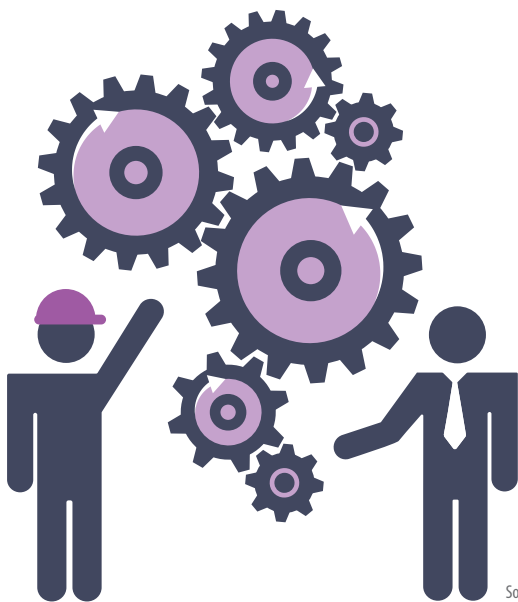


THE POLICY RESPONSE: PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER

 By Marcelline Bonneau*

HOW CAN CITIES PUT THEIR POTENTIAL INTO PRACTICE?

Cities need to adopt new approaches to the problems they face nowadays. Social innovation is one of the key processes which can make a difference, and it is increasingly being used in this regard (Young Foundation and Nesta, 2010; Creative Cities, 2009; Nesta, 2014). This publication introduces social innovation to European cities who want to go in this direction, whether they have already taken initial steps or not. It provides concrete examples of the way this can be done, and the results which can be achieved.



Source: Freepik

Social innovation represents an opportunity which inevitably leads to a transformation of city governance, and the introduction of a new governing paradigm. It also means that cities have to take the risk of experimenting with new approaches and solutions to city problems and of exploring the potential of citizens' engagement in public services, as they move towards a user-centred approach.

The 10-point action plan (see Box 1) can help cities to develop an approach to social innovation, whether they are more or less advanced in the process. These ten actions are addressed at all officials in city administrations, from the top to more junior levels, as people at all levels can play a role.

Social innovation represents an opportunity which inevitably leads to a transformation of city governance, and the introduction of a new governing paradigm.

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BOX 1. 10 STEPS TOWARDS SOCIAL INNOVATION IN CITIES

 **By Anne de Feitjer**

City of Amersfoort

- 1 **Behave like a leader** The energy for change in a city can be present in a charismatic city Mayor or other city leader, in a manager/strategist in the city administration, in front-line civil servants or in a group of active citizens. Innovative disruption can start at any level. You should be this energetic person and be ready to lead the change, to set the example, to start internal changes in city governance, and then expand it to other actors. Be ready to take risks. Be a leader in encouraging some of the shifts in governance, transform the city administration, and engage with citizens and stakeholders.
- 2 **Start where the energy is** Start to distinguish who is enthusiastic about a new way of looking at city governance, in the administration and beyond, amongst stakeholders and citizens. Talk to them about their dreams, their work, the way they usually deal with issues. Trust them and let them use their motivation to play a role in city governance.
- 3 **Pick the low hanging fruit** Organise an experiment or an innovation lab on a subject without much political or other tension. Choose a subject or an area in which quick results can be achieved. For example, it might be easier to start working on micro-scale projects in education, rather than large-scale policies on urban economic structures.
- 4 **Co-produce beyond bottom-up or top-down** Go beyond the distinction between initiatives coming up from the bottom – grassroots initiatives – or down from the top – traditional city governance – and find an area in the middle, where citizens are involved in the collaborative design of public services, and where there is ongoing communication and exchange.
- 5 **If necessary, experiment below the radar** Be an initiator of innovative change at your own level. Start micro initiatives such as exchanges and communication, investigate needs and interests. Dare to start without having the commitment of all managers, city leaders, etc. Once you can show promising results from the experiment, it is often easier to gain trust and persuade them to get involved in new experiments addressing more difficult problems and trying more risky solutions.
- 6 **Use dialogue to mainstreaming the idea of social innovation** Create specific spaces for people to exchange: these can be both physical (conference rooms or cafes) or online (dedicated platforms). Organise *pecha kucha* evenings, city cafés or other innovative meetings and stimulate people to discuss the idea of social innovation. Show good practices, cases and ideas rather than focusing on abstract definitions. Give evidence of what social innovation can do. Use the power of story-telling. Leave aside administration jargon and the technical language of civil servants, in order to ensure practical, understandable communication that is tailored to all stakeholders. Ask people to share their ideas of what social innovation is.
- 7 **Connect all parties in the city and adopt a user-centred approach** Before launching new projects, map existing actors and initiatives, then dare to invite all of them, coming from different backgrounds and with different interests, to the start of an experiment. These may include elected members, active citizens, entrepreneurs, civil servants, large and small organisations, commercial firms, NGOs, etc. Enhance the connectivity between the parties. Support all sorts of platforms to connect parties at city level: online, physical and mixed. Connect the municipal administration with the outside and create alliances with stakeholders and citizens. Step away from traditional desk research and office-based decision-making. Listen to citizens. Treat them equally as local stakeholders. Let civil servants participate as equal participants in local networks and bottom-up initiatives.



BOX 1. (CONT'D) 10 STEPS TOWARDS SOCIAL INNOVATION IN CITIES

- 8 Play a brokerage role** Put effort into bringing together all parties involved, facilitating dialogue and helping them to find each other. Then let them work together at their ideas. Don't take over or pull the work towards yourself! Just keep in contact and monitor. In short, move away from management and towards a more coordinating and bringing together role.
- 9 Promote capacity-building** Empower civil servants, stakeholders and citizens who are ready for change. Provide them with tools so that they can act, so that they can learn and develop a culture. Train people in advisory, process guiding and networking competences. Experiment with mixed training groups involving citizens, civil servants and elected members. Promote networks by working together across sectors and departments. Participate in EU programmes such as URBACT in order to benefit from dedicated training and also to experiment with innovative methods.
- 10 Use new forms of funding** Consult citizens in the best use of public budgets, for example through participatory budgets. Promote social innovation in developing calls for projects and ad hoc funding. Outsource some city governance activities through innovative forms of procurement which enable creativity and thinking out of the box (competitions, prizes etc.). Promote social participation in the funding of projects via crowdfunding, loans and venture philanthropy by social investment funds.

CITIES' ADAPTIVE CAPACITY

This URBACT workstream on social innovation in cities identified a number of inspiring examples in which cities have moved from a locked-in situation towards a new approach to city governance. In each of these examples, we could identify **strong leadership coming from the city: it is a prerequisite for the emergence and diffusion of social innovation**. At the same time, only a fluid system of stakeholders, interacting constantly on the basis of shared interests, and evolving in parallel with emerging issues, can provide a frame for such changes in city governance.

However, for many cities, social innovation is still an obscure approach, and its potential is blocked by a lack of long-term vision and a fear of taking risks. **Capacity-building is key in providing all stakeholders with the right skills and with the confidence that, adequately equipped, they can be actors of change**. As such, they open themselves to new methods of city governance.

At the same time, social innovation should not be perceived as a 'silver bullet' which will magically solve all city problems. Civic leaders should not take over citizens' initiatives and claim them as their own ideas – rather, they should take the innovators and their ideas on board. It does not matter so much what is labelled as 'social innovation' or not. What matters is that cities envisage new ways of proceeding, that administrations move away from governance in silos, and that citizens are not only involved in the activities of the city but are also empowered by them. Each city should experiment by itself with the approach and system that suits it best. As

What matters is that cities envisage new ways of proceeding, that administrations move away from governance in silos, and that citizens are not only involved in the activities of the city but are also empowered by them.

Nico Kamphorst, General Director of Amersfoort municipality, acknowledges, the potential to change working procedures within the city administration is high: *"The process was quicker, less expensive and achieved a wider consultation than when normally done by the municipality."* This way of proceeding will bring greater cohesion and unity within the city and build a deeply integrated ecosystem. ●



THE URBACT WORKSTREAM

‘SOCIAL INNOVATION IN CITIES’:

HOW DID WE GET HERE

Within the framework of its capitalisation activities for 2014–2015, the URBACT II programme has set up four working groups (workstreams) on ‘New urban economies’, ‘Job generation for a jobless generation’, ‘Social innovation in cities’, and ‘Sustainable regeneration of urban areas’ to give answers on what can cities do about specific urban challenges.

The research and analysis for our workstream started in May 2014 and ended in February 2015. It was a rich and dynamic process, supported by a transnational team in close co-operation with the URBACT Secretariat. The methodology was complex with complementary tools and approaches, and we have had and will have the opportunity to disseminate our outputs quite widely.

Most importantly we applied social innovation principles to our work through a methodology inspired by a contributory and distributed process:

- A coordination combining the relative autonomy of each member with document sharing, ongoing communication and peer review.
- A bottom-up research process with consultation of a wide range of witnesses, both doers and thinkers:
 - An online consultation of Appointed Witnesses, in June and July 2014.
 - Five online chat sessions: in September and October 2014, around 30 experts gathered to exchange the experiences they had undergone or observed in the promotion of social innovation in cities following our research questions.

- A combination of evidence-gathering processes: literature review, online chat sessions, meetings, peer reviews, on-going communication:
 - Two physical and one online meeting (‘Workstream Exchanges’) with Core Group members, on 3 July 2014, 29 August 2014 and 28 October 2014.
 - Two case study visits to Amersfoort and Gdańsk with subsequent reports, in Amersfoort in the Netherlands, on 24–26 November, and Gdańsk in Poland on 1–3 October 2014.
- The wide and interactive dissemination of results:
 - A *Tribune* article¹ and a State of the Art report².
 - A living exhibition at the URBACT Sharing event on 8 October 2014³.
 - The presentation of our first results at the URBACT InfoDays in Paris on 16 December 2014.
 - A workshop at the 4th Informed Cities Forum in Rotterdam organised on 26 and 27 March 2015 by ICLEI, together with the city of Rotterdam and DRIFT⁴.
 - A workshop at the first URBACT City Festival in Riga on 6–8 May 2014⁵.

1 <http://urbact.eu/files/tribune-2014>

2 State of the Art on social innovation in cities: <http://urbact.eu/capitalisation-and-dissemination>

3 <http://www.sustainable-everyday-project.net/urbact-socialinnovationincities/>

4 <http://informed-cities.iclei-europe.org/index.php?id=8524>

5 <http://cityfestival.urbact.eu/>



Our team was composed of a Workstream Coordination Unit, Core Group members, and Appointed Witnesses. We also worked closely with the URBACT secretariat and the URBACT Thematic Pole Manager, Eddy Adams.

The **Workstream Coordination Unit** coordinated the activities and outputs, engaged with the **Core Group members**, conducted research and analysis, produced the outputs and were responsible for the overall quality of the project. It was composed of:

- François Jégou (Director)
- Marcelline Bonneau (Co-ordinator)
- Virginia Tassinari (Expert)

Our six **Core Group members** supported evidence-gathering through their expertise and networks, organised, moderated and summarised one chat session each, took part in the meetings, ensured a constant peer-review process and contributed to all the deliverables. They were:

Anne de Feijter, Municipality of Amersfoort, member of the URBACT *Sustainable Food in Cities* network
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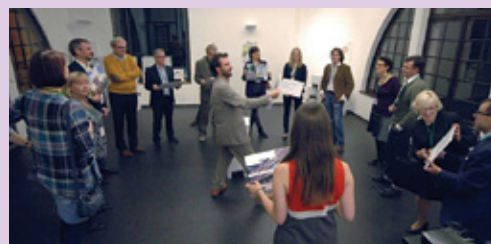
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LIVING EXHIBITION

A **living exhibition** is a participatory approach to presenting the outcome of a research study, or here a visit to a city. We summarise on flipcharts statements from people encountered during our visit, illustrated by pictures of key projects. We then present each of the charts to the audience. There are then two rules: the participants are asked not to wait until the end of a point/case presentation to discuss it with their neighbours, and when they have finished examining each chart, they are asked not to leave it on the floor but to pass it to

someone else, and to explain it to them. We see this experience as a process of social innovation which builds on the human factor, self-organisation, empowerment, trust and mutual help. Thus, we seek to enable practitioners and experts to experience the way we can enable social innovation – or in our case create a ‘living ears-to-mouth exhibition’ with all participants.



Source: Strategic Design Scenarios

The **Appointed Witnesses** were experts and practitioners we consulted throughout the project for their experience and practical inputs during our meetings, online consultations and online chat sessions. The following experts and practitioners were contacted through the team's networks:

- Filippo Addarii, Young Foundation
- Nicola Bacon, Social Life
- Raffaele Barbato, URBACT Secretariat
- Fabrizio Barbiero, Municipality of Turin (in charge of Torino Social Innovation)
- Fernando Barreiro Cavestany, Lead Expert of the URBACT *USER* network
- Matteo Bina, Social Incubation Process at FabriQ
- Róbert Bíró, Pogány-Havas Microregion
- Lia Bouma, citizen of the City of Amersfoort
- Emma Clarence, independent
- Miguel Correia de Brito, City of Lisbon, partner in the URBACT *USER* network
- Fiorenza Deriu, Lead Expert of the URBACT *Healthy Ageing* network
- Gorka Espiau, Innovation of Cities and Regions, Young Foundation
- Claudio Farina, Impact Hub Trieste
- Matthew Gott, Lead Expert of the URBACT *Genius: Open* network
- Mayor Furio Honsell, City of Udine, Lead Partner of the URBACT *Healthy Ageing* network



- Magnus Johansson, Urban Studies Department, Malmö University
- So Jung Rim, SIX, Social Life
- George Keranis, External Consultant
- Ezio Manzini, DESIS
- Marta Marcuzzi, ICLEI
- Steve Mariott, City of Bristol, partner in the URBACT *Sustainable Food in Cities* network
- Anna Meroni, DESIS/Department of Design, Politecnico di Milano
- Judit Molnár, Ecotrend Association, ÉlőSzövet Alapítvány (Living Web Foundation)
- Fabrizio Montanari, Creative Industries and Territorial Development, University of Modena and Reggio Emilia
- Robin Murray, industrial and environmental economist
- Stefania Pascut, City of Udine, partner in the URBACT *Healthy Ageing* network
- Daniela Patti, City of Rome, partner in the URBACT *TUTUR* network
- Levente Polyak, City of Rome, partner in the URBACT *TUTUR* network
- Louise Pulford, SIX
- Mireia Sanabria, Lead Expert of the URBACT *4D Cities* network
- Rachel Schon, TEPSIE
- Chris Sigaloff, Kennisland
- Bjarne Stenquist, R&D and social sustainability unit, City Office, Malmö
- Eivind Sto, SIFO
- Martin Synkule, European Development Agency
- Ágnes Szabó, Első Kis-Pesti Kert, Budapest
- Csaba Szabó, Gödöllő NGO Roundtable, Szent István University
- Thijs van Exel, Kennisland
- Stéphane Vincent, La 27e Région
- Tracey Wheatley, Transition Wekerle

All information about this workstream can be found on the URBACT website⁶.



Workstream team during the last workstream meeting on 28 October 2014. Source: Strategic Design Scenarios

⁶ <http://urbact.eu/capitalisation-and-dissemination>
Further information can also be found at: <http://www.sustainable-everyday-project.net/urbact-socialinnovationincities>



We would like to thank all the people who were involved throughout the workstream journey and made our research possible:

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- Anne de Feijter and Piotr Wolkowski who organised our case study visits and all the people who welcomed us and showed us the innovation of their cities, in Amersfoort and Gdansk.
- Our colleagues from the other workstreams, Willem, Luis, Alison and Darinka, with whom we shared a challenging experience.
- Virginia who supported us throughout the research.
- Our Thematic Pole Manager, Eddy Adams, always smiley and a good intellectual cheer up.
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- Our interns for the logistical support Alice, Thibaut and Emma.

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<http://resilia-solutions.eu/>



WHERE TO FIND OUT MORE

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- URBACT cities facing the crisis: impact and responses, Nov2010: <http://urbact.eu/urbact-cities-facing-crisis-final-publication-now-available>



DELIVERABLES FROM THE WORKSTREAM

<http://urbact.eu/capitalisation-and-dissemination>

EUROPEAN INITIATIVES AND PROGRAMMES

Country specific recommendations: <http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/>

EaSI programme: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1081>

European Qualifications Framework: <https://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/>

PROGRESS programme: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=327>

Social Innovation Europe: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/socialinnovationeurope/en>

URBACT NETWORKS

GeniUS:Open: <http://urbact.eu/genius-open>

Sustainable food in urban communities: <http://urbact.eu/sustainable-food>

My Generation at Work: <http://urbact.eu/mygeneration-at-work>

My Generation: <http://www.urbact.eu/my-generation>

USER: <http://www.urbact.eu/user>

OTHER PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

Amsteldorp Lab: <https://www.kl.nl/projecten/amsteldorp/>

BCN Open Challenge: <http://bcnopenchallenge.org/>

Ceinture Aliment-Terre Liégeoise: <http://www.catl.be/>

Civic House in Gödöllő: <https://hu-hu.facebook.com/Civil.Kozossegi.Haz.Godollo>

DESI network: <http://www.desis-network.org/>

Employment-Environment Alliance: <http://www.aee-rbc.be/>

First little garden (community gardens in Budapest): http://elsokispestikert.hu/e_kertek.html

French law on experimentation by local authorities: <http://www.vie-publique.fr/decouverte-institutions/institutions/collectivites-territoriales/competences-collectivites-territoriales/quoi-consiste-experimentation-legislative.html>

Innova:To: <http://www.torinosmartcity.it/progetto-innova-to-premiazione-dei-migliori-progetti/>
<http://www.blog.urbact.eu/2014/05/10000-employees-10000-potential-innovators/>
<http://www.blog.urbact.eu/2014/12/smart-city-turins-platform-for-employee-driven-innovation/>

Innovation on the shopping list: <http://mind-lab.dk/case/innovation-paa-indkoeblisten/>

La 27e region: <http://blog.la27eregion.fr/>

My Neighbourhood: My Neighbourhood | My City: http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/apps/projects/factsheet/index.cfm?project_ref=325227

Nesta Creative Councils: <http://www.nesta.org.uk/project/creative-councils>

Pso-Trieste: <http://www.pso-trieste.eu/#/home>

Severn project: <http://www.thesevernproject.org/>

Spaghetti Open Data: <http://www.spaghettiopendata.org/>

→ URBACT II PROJECTS

PROJECTS	ISSUES ADDRESSED	LEAD PARTNERS
1ST CALL PROJECTS (2008–2011)		
Active A.G.E.	Strategies for cities with an ageing population	Rome – IT
Building Healthy Communities*	Developing indicators and criteria for a healthy sustainable urban development	Torino – IT
CityRegion.Net	Urban sprawl and development of hinterlands	Graz – AT
CoNet	Approaches to strengthening social cohesion in neighbourhoods	Berlin – DE
Creative Clusters	Creative clusters in low density urban areas	Obidos – PT
CTUR	Cruise Traffic and Urban Regeneration of port areas	Naples – IT
EGTC	Sustainable development of cross-border agglomerations	Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière – FR
FIN-URB-ACT	Small and medium enterprises and local economic development	Aachen– DE
HerO*	Cultural heritage and urban development	Regensburg – DE
HOPUS	Design coding for sustainable housing	University La Sapienza, Roma – IT
JESSICA 4 Cities	JESSICA and Urban Development Funds	Regional government of Tuscany – IT
Joining Forces	Strategy and governance at city-region scale	Lille Metropole – FR
LC-FACIL	Implementing integrated sustainable urban development according to the Leipzig Charter	Leipzig – DE
LUMASEC	Sustainable land use management	University of Karlsruhe – DE
MILE*	Managing migration and integration at local level	Venice – IT
My Generation	Promoting the positive potential of young people in cities	Rotterdam – NL
NeT-TOPIC	City model for intermediate/peripheral metropolitan cities	L'Hospitalet de Llobregat – ES
Nodus	Spatial planning and urban regeneration	The generalitat of Catalonia – ES
OPENCities*	Opening cities to build-up, attract and retain international human capital	Belfast – UK
REDIS	Science districts and urban development	Magdeburg – DE
RegGov*	Integrated policies and financial planning for sustainable regeneration of deprived areas	Duisburg – DE
REPAIR	Regeneration of abandoned military sites	Medway – UK
RUnUP	Strengthening potential of urban poles with triple helix partnerships	Gateshead – UK
SUITE	Sustainable housing provision	Santiago de Compostela – ES
UNIC*	Promoting innovation in the ceramics sector	Limoges – FR
URBAMECO*	Integrated sustainable regeneration of deprived urban areas	Grand Lyon – FR
Urban N.O.S.E.	Urban incubators for social enterprises	Gela – IT
WEED	Promoting entrepreneurship for women	Celje – SI
2ND CALL PROJECTS (2009–2012)		
Active Travel Network	Promoting walking and cycling in small and medium-sized cities	Weiz – AT
CASH*	Sustainable and affordable energy efficient housing	Echirolles– FR
ESIMeC	Economic strategies and innovation in medium-sized cities	Basingstoke and Deane – UK
EVUE	Electric Vehicles in Urban Europe	Westminster – UK
LINKS	Improving the attractiveness and quality of life in old historical centres	Bayonne – FR
OP-ACT	Strategic positioning of small and medium-sized cities facing demographic changes	Leoben – AT
Roma-Net*	Integration of the Roma population in European cities	Budapest – HU
SURE	Socio-economic methods for urban rehabilitation in deprived urban areas	Eger – HU
TOGETHER	Developing co-responsibility for social inclusion and well-being of residents in European cities	Mulhouse – FR
3RD CALL PROJECTS (2012–2015)		
4D Cities	Promoting innovation in the health sector	Igualada – ES
CityLogo	Innovative city brand management	Utrecht – NL
Creative SpIN	Cultural and Creative Industries	Birmingham – UK
CSI Europe	Role of financial instruments (Jessica Urban Development Fund) in efficient planning	Manchester – UK
ENTER.HUB	Railway hubs/multimodal interfaces of regional relevance in medium sized cities	Reggio Emilia – IT
EUniverCities	Partnerships between cities and universities for urban development	Delft – NL
Jobtown	Local partnerships for youth employment opportunities	Cesena – IT
My Generation at Work	Youth employment with focus on enterprising skills and attitudes	Rotterdam – NL
PREVENT	Involving parents in the prevention of early school leaving	Nantes – FR
RE-Block	Renewing high-rise blocks for cohesive and green neighbourhoods	Budapest XVIII District – HU
Sustainable Food in Urban Communities	Developing low-carbon and resource-efficient urban food systems	Brussels Capital – BE
URBACT Markets	Local markets as drivers for local economic development	Barcelona – ES
USEACT	Re-utilizing existing locations to avoid land consumption	Naples – IT
USER	Involving users and inhabitants in urban sustainable planning	Agglomeration Grenoble Alpes Metropole – FR
WOOD FOOTPRINT	Local economic development through the (re)use of brownfield and buildings of the wood furniture sector	Paços de Ferreira – PT
PILOT PROJECTS (2013–2015)		
Diet for a Green Planet	Cooperation to align eating habits for an ecologically sustainable development	Södertälje – SE
ESIMeC II	Economic strategies and innovation in medium sized cities	Basingstoke and Deane – UK
EVUE II	Electric Vehicles in Urban Europe	Westminster – UK
Gastronomic Cities	Promoting gastronomy as a key urban development	Burgos – ES
Genius: Open	Creating innovative solutions to city challenges via an on-line collaborative platform	York – UK
Healthy Ageing	Cities' action for an active and healthy ageing	Udine – IT
PlaceMaking 4 Cities	Useful public spaces instead of nice public spaces	Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council – IE
Roma-Net II	Integration of Roma populations	Budapest – HU
TUTUR	Temporary use as a tool for urban regeneration	Rome – IT

*Fast Track Label

URBACT is a European exchange and learning programme promoting integrated sustainable urban development.

It enables cities to work together to develop solutions to major urban challenges, re-affirming the key role they play in facing increasingly complex societal changes. URBACT helps cities 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 II comprises 550 different sized cities and their Local Support Groups, 61 projects, 29 countries, and 7,000 active local stakeholders. URBACT is jointly financed by the ERDF and the Member States.

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