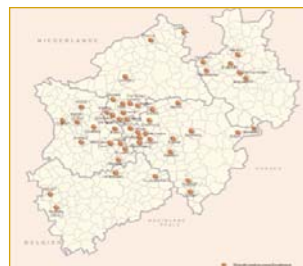


RegGov Fast Track Network

Regional Governance of Sustainable
Integrated Neighbourhood Development



January 2010



Thematic Cluster I:

New Forms of Regional Co-operation
in Integrated Neighbourhood Regeneration

Seminar I | Halandri | 25 & 26 June 2009 | Seminar Report

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0. Preface

All European cities face problems with social polarisation and the concentration of social, environmental and economic problems in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The new Member States of the EU are certainly facing even more severe special challenges when it comes to urban development and regeneration. With the opening of their borders and the fall of the former political systems, everything has changed there. Severe economic restructuring has meant a tremendous loss of employment opportunities, creating a burden on public resources and support. At the same time, there is an urgent need for investment in industrial areas and the housing stock, as well as technical and social infrastructure.

The fight for social coherence within our European society is therefore happening every day in local urban policy – at the local level where social exclusion, disadvantage and a lack of perspective in the life of many citizens has become a reality. In the current times of worldwide economic crisis, these tendencies have been accelerated and reinforced and there is not yet any clarity to which degree the negative impact of this crisis will hit cities in the end – and especially their disadvantaged groups of citizens and their most deprived neighbourhoods.

A successful and sustainable regeneration of urban such disadvantaged urban areas has become more and more a “matter of co-operation”. There are many reasons to search partners for co-operation in order to achieve an efficient use of invested resources and sustainable results:

- On the one hand, public resources for urban development and regeneration are getting more and more scarce – and there is an urgent need to activate additional resources in the light of major challenges and severe investment needs in many European cities.
- On the other hand, acting in partnership does not only mean to activate and integrate more capital, it also involves more know-how and experience into the operation – especially valuable when public political know-how is combined with entrepreneurial know-how from the private sector and local know-how from the local community – the residents and local stakeholders from an area to be regenerated.
- And finally, especially the involvement of local people in the design and implementation can help to create a stronger sense of ownership and responsibility amongst the later users of newly created improvements – motivating them also to take care of improvements and take an active role in later maintenance.



The fight for social coherence and competitiveness is happening in Europe's cities

Preface

New models of urban governance are needed to cope with the problems

All over Europe there are numerous examples of Good Practice when it comes to the challenge of motivating and activating local communities and citizens to take an active role in the improvement of their housing and living conditions. New organisational models such as Neighbourhood Management, new financial tools such as Neighbourhood Budgets and many creative methods of participation have enlarged the capacity of co-operation between the public sector and the local communities a lot and have at least started a shift for local people from being mere “consumers of public policy and projects” to assistant “co-producers” of a new future for their neighbourhood.

During the development of the Baseline Study for the RegGov-Network it has become obvious that beyond the local level there is another important element of partnership and co-operation that needs further support and innovation: The co-operation between cities with a region or agglomeration – and support for such cities from the regional level.

With the mainstreaming of European urban policy many regions in Europe – in their new role as Managing Authorities – are not responsible for the management of European Structural Funds to support integrated urban policies and neighbourhood development.

This task - in many cases - is as new for the regional authorities as it is for the cities. And, in such a situation, it is difficult to define role and find the best possible and most efficient way of working together. Many cities would want their regional authorities to act as supporting bodies - not only providing money from European funds, but also providing help to create sustainable progress with this funding: Regions as partner of cities in urban innovation.

For many regional authorities that seems to be a difficult expectation: They see themselves much more as “authorities” - taking independent decisions about funding between cities and then controlling the proper use of European money. This role of a rather controlling public authority seems difficult to combine for them with the role as a supporter and partner of cities.

The RegGov-partners have decided to dedicate 1 of the 4 Thematic Clusters to this topic – to a targeted attempt to find new, innovative and successful ways to support innovative integrated urban policy from the regional level - and to support and enable cities to learn from each other – by developing targeted exchange and learning processes between cities in a region – or even stabilising such processes with the creation of regional networks of cities as Learning Communities.

David R. Froessler | January 2010

I. Introduction to the first meeting of Cluster I

David R. Froessler | Lead Expert

Thematic Cluster No. I works in the framework of the overall topic of the RegGov-network – how to achieve successful und sustainable integrated neighbourhood regeneration on the local level. Within the relatively wide context of this topic, Cluster No. I focuses on two special elements of this task:

- The first is, [how cities within an agglomeration of a region can cooperate and mutually support each other](#) – becoming “Learning Communities” of cities that support each other through a regular exchange of experiences made and through the joint organisation of necessary inputs and know-how for their local tasks of delivering successful integrated neighbourhood or urban regeneration and development programmes.
- The second part of this cluster’s thematic focus deals with the question [how such processes of learning in regions can be supported by the regional authorities](#). Which role can they take and which activities can they offer to stimulate such learning processes between “their” cities. To make urban policies in their regions more innovative, successful and sustainable - not as an aim in itself, but as a tool to strengthen their regions and make them more competitive. This, of course, also implies the underlying question how regional authorities – especially in their new role as “Managing Authorities” for the European Structural Funds, relate to their cities.

The main challenge here is the answer to the questions, if it is possible that regional authorities fulfil their role as “authorities”, and at the same time are able to act as partners and supporters of their cities.

This is a crucial question with regard to the need to [find a balance between the role of an independent authority and the role of a trusting partner](#) – not always easy to be found and filled with life, certainly not for those countries where regional authorities are very new in this policy field and struggling in general to find the right way of acting as a Managing Authority – doing justice to the European Commission as funding provider; to the national governments as authorities they need to report to, and the cities – in need of financial resources, but more often in need of support, learning and innovation that is needed to cope with the many problems cities face in the current processes of economic, social and political restructuring and – to make it even more challenging and sometimes desperate – in the current times of world-wide economic crisis.

One of four Thematic
Clusters in the framework
of the RegGov-network

The difficulties of regional au-
thorities to find their role bet-
ween authority and partner

Introduction

National experiences can form an important and helpful point of reference

All the countries that have more experience with the development and implementation of successful integrated neighbourhood or urban development and regeneration policies – like the Netherlands, Germany and France – always have been struggling with these problems and the central question behind this: *How can you make different levels of state and government and, on the various levels, different policy fields and departments, work together in order to create synergies between resources, to achieve integrated action and, as a result, obtain higher chances for sustainable success?*

There are different philosophies and ways in which this challenge has been dealt with: The smoothest and certainly easiest way was *the British way* in the early years of integrated urban regeneration: All problems occurring in multiply deprived urban areas have been defined as “urban problems” and therefore were dealt with by one single ministry and one single stream of funding. That made it easy to work across policy fields, offering comprehensive resources that could be used for nearly any kind of problem within deprived neighbourhoods. And, British urban policy never has to cope with constitutional restrictions when the national level wanted to intervene on the local level. So, problems of vertical co-operation have been equally easy to cope with in such a policy environment.

The Dutch philosophy, in a general framework of a country that is characterised in all policy development and delivery by a strong “culture of negotiation” has always been a very democratic and bottom-up approach. Central government has always acknowledged that the right solutions in detail could only be developed on the local level – the only level where the necessary know-how and knowledge is available to find the right answers, the best possible, tailor-made solutions for each individual place. Therefore, Dutch urban policy has always followed the rule to only define certain principles and basics for each policy on the national level and to leave the rest – with a checking procedure and approval by the central government – to the cities and their neighbourhoods. The vertical relation between the cities and the central government has normally been organised through contracts between both partners – defining in detail the objectives of a multi-annual programme and the duties of each partner involved. This has made the vertical dimension of co-operation easy and rather smooth in Dutch integrated urban policy. The challenge to make also different ministries and policy fields work together has been more of a problem there. Even though various very innovative elements have been created – such as special resources in the early years of Dutch integrated urban policy – which were offered only to smoothen and fill gaps between the regular funding of different departments – this challenge of competition rather than co-operation between various national ministries has characterised Dutch integrated urban policy for many years.

The French approach again has been very different. Here, national urban policy has always been very important and high on the agenda. And the connection between a lack of integration, multiple deprivation of many groups and neighbourhoods and violence in the cities has always been very obvious. The many approaches to solve these problems or at least improve the situation, have always been characterised by the French policy elements of a strong central and top-down approach, a lack of flexibility and innovation potential due to a very heavy administrative and political systems – and therefore often investing huge amounts of resources and different labels and “new” approaches – but very often without achieving a real solution and sustainable success on the local level

The German approach involves three levels – central government, regional government and the local government which makes things somewhat more complicated – especially as German local authorities have a constitutional right to decide urban policies on their own with no right for the central or regional state to intervene here directly. This has led to many years of experience in Germany with using subsidies to influence policy on the local level – a system that is called “the golden reign of state subsidies”. This means, as the central or regional government has no right to intervene directly in the cities, they can offer financial resources with policy aims and principles linked to them – and if cities want to receive such funding, they have to subscribe to these aims and principles. This system is rather close to the philosophy of the European funding for urban policy over the last years – like the Community Initiatives URBAN I and URBAN II, where the European Commission, also without a formal responsibility in the policy field, tried to intervene and direct integrated action in cities with this “golden reign” of public subsidies.

In Germany, this approach has led to many tailor-made regional policies and integrated urban development and regeneration programmes – and, due to this rather difficult relationship between central, regional and local government in urban policy, to good models of partnership and co-operation, which have developed over the years. Funding for national and regional exchange networks between cities as an integrated part of funding for urban policy has become a more and more common and accepted tool to stimulate learning and innovation in local urban policy and now can offer many valuable examples for countries and regions which are newly facing such tasks and challenges. Therefore, two of such network examples, developed and implemented in the RegGov partner region of North-Rhine Westphalia, have been invited to present their activities and experiences in the framework of this first seminar of Cluster No. 1 – describing it from the perspective of the regional ministry first of all – and then reflecting this presentation from the perspective of the two invited city networks.

Introduction

An additional presentation has been foreseen from [the Polish partner](#), where such organisation of exchange and know-how between cities has in the past not been funded and stimulated by a regional ministry, but by an association of cities in the region. This is a model that might be closer to the situation in many of the new Member States of the European Union – also showing how both form of regional co-operation [bottom-up organised by the cities vs. top-down organised and funded by the regional ministry] can have an added value and can be combined in an intelligent regional and local urban policy.

[Regional governances of integrated neighbourhood development: The core topic](#)

[Regional governance of integrated urban development and regeneration](#) is therefore the core topic of our work here. This topic became even more important with the mainstreaming of the urban policy of the European Commission. For the current funding period, these resources are 'mainstreamed' for the first time, meaning that the European Commission gave up their direct funding for integrated urban regeneration schemes – like for the early Urban Pilot Projects and then, later, for the Community Initiatives URBAN I and URBAN II. Instead, these resources are now given to the Member States – to be precise: to the regions in the Member States, where they are spent on the basis of so called Regional Operational Programmes. In principle, the European Commission has made it very clear that elements of an integrated urban policy should be included in these ROP's, and the Commission needs to approve them before funding is allocated to them. But, despite of those procedural rules and quality checks, it is now pretty much up to the Member States how they spend these resources and what kind and intensity of support integrated urban policy receives through the European Structural Funds.

This development means that regions suddenly became responsible for integrated urban policy. They receive a really high amount of financial resources from the European Union for which, in their Operational Programmes, they had to show how they want to spend this money. Initial experiences show that for a number of Member States and regions this task is very new and difficult to implement, so that at the moment the impression is that European funding for integrated urban policy is not everywhere spent in the most efficient and sustainable way – and not always provided in a way that cities would need and want it.

In some countries, the urban dimension within the Operation Programmes is rather small, others have earmarked a higher amount of funding for this policy field but now encourage difficulties in managing its use. In most countries, the management of the resources is taking place rather close to the cities and in co-operation with them [e.g. Germany or The Netherlands], in other countries these funds are rather managed on the national level [e.g. Hungary, Romania] with a rel-

The regional perspective

atively large distance to the cities – not really involving them in a common process of policy and innovation development, but rather in a more traditional form of a national government providing resources on the basis of competition and national policy guidelines.

Therefore, it seems a very useful plan to use the opportunity that the RegGov-network unites cities and their regional authorities in a debate around integrated urban policy, to create a Thematic Cluster that deals with the potential of co-operation between both of those levels: The regional authorities and the cities for which they are responsible as Managing Authorities.

And this does not only mean that the work of this Thematic Cluster is needed to support cities and innovation in integrated urban policy on the local level. Also the Managing Authorities expressed a strong interest to receive support from the RegGov-network when they had their first meeting as RegGov-partners here in Halandri in January.

So, the central questions to be addressed by this Thematic Cluster are pretty clear and well defined. And, it is equally clear that there is a strong interest in the work of this Thematic Cluster and its outcomes on the side of the cities as well as the regional authorities. On the background of this situation, it seems not only acceptable, but rather necessary that within this framework the concrete work programme of this Thematic Cluster is still a very open one. We have to find out during this first seminar and then the debate of its outcomes with the Managing Authorities what exactly will be our work programme and our mission.

2. Regional Governance and the Socially Inclusive Cities Programme of NRW

Bernd Mielke | Ministry of Building and Transport of North-Rhine Westphalia



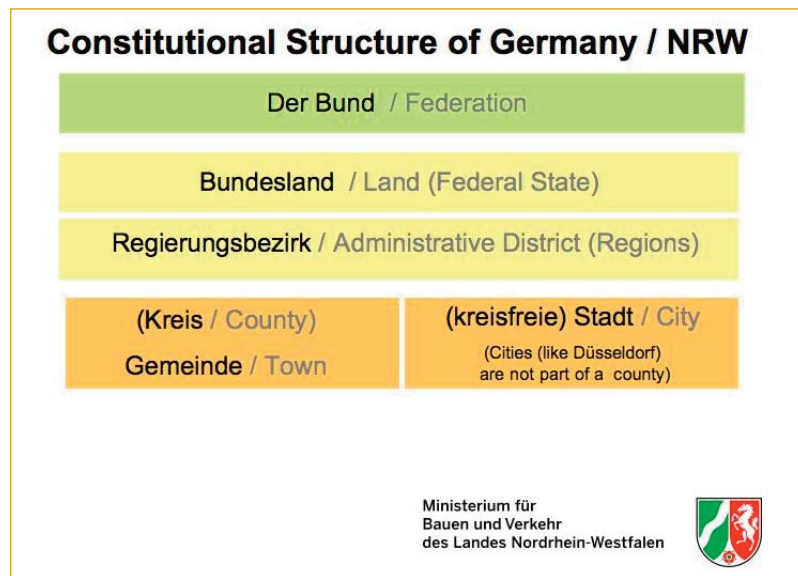
2.1 The Political and Administrative Framework

Germany is a federal republic with 16 federal states. We have three political and administrative levels, which are relevant to understand our urban policy:

- the federal level,
- the federal state level with the administrative districts and
- the city and town level.



The regional perspective



The [counties](#) are in brackets in the overview because they are not responsible for urban policy, but only fulfil certain administrative functions in its delivery.

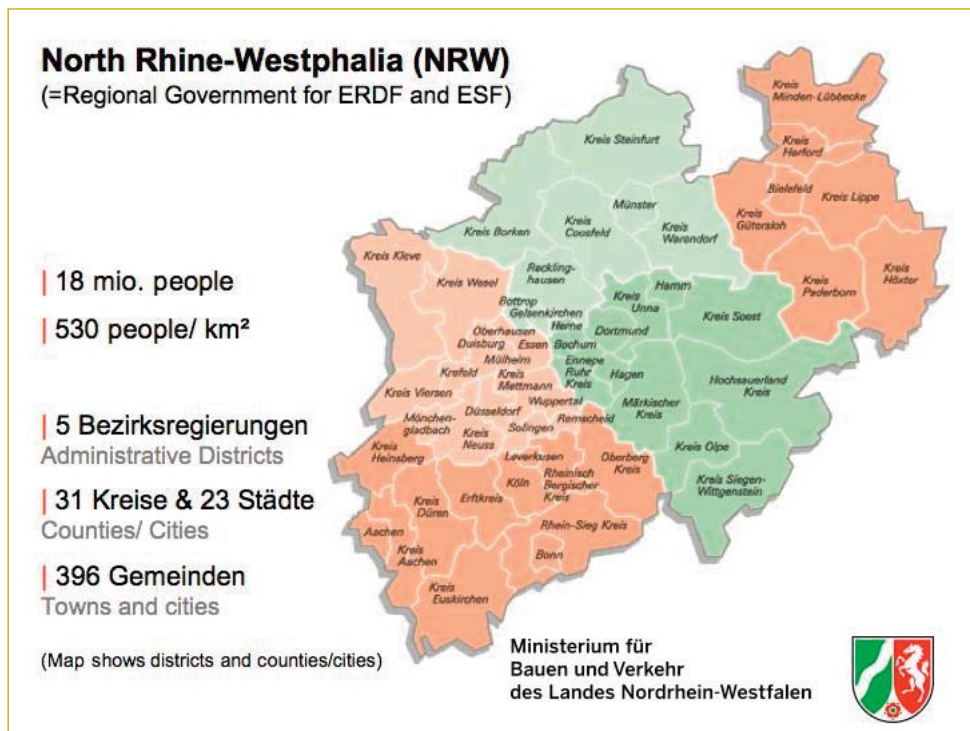
When it comes to the development and delivery of policies, we do not have a strictly hierarchical structure, but rather a [mixture of hierarchy and side by side responsibilities](#). The federal states are, for example, responsible for schools and education. On the federal level there is no responsibility for that. That is why we have different school systems in the different federal states.

The relationship between the cities and the states includes a guarantee of [self-government of cities and towns](#) in the constitution, including urban land use planning. They cannot be controlled by the central government of the regional states, although these levels of government try to influence their local policies by offering them funding programmes.

So, when it comes to the possibilities of the central and the regional governments to take influence on local urban policy, one tool they can use is their right to [define the legal framework](#) – planning laws and related legal regulations that influence the policies in the cities. On the other hand, money is offered for special tasks and in the framework of special urban policies. If the cities want to receive such funding, they have to accept the conditions of the programmes and co-finance with their own local money.

North Rhine-Westphalia has about 18 million inhabitants and there are five quite big administrative districts. These are the Regional Authorities for the ERDF and ESF Funding. The state is quite big representing only one region and one Managing Authority.

The regional perspective



ERDF money is based on [Operational Programmes](#), which outline regional strategies and policy measures. The Operational Programme of North-Rhine Westphalia contains three priority axes:

- The first one is called “[Strengthening the Basis of Business](#)” and provides financial support and advice to SME's and start-up companies.
- The second one is called “[Innovation and Knowledge-Based Economy](#)”, focusing on the promotion of innovation in industry through support for clusters and networks, supporting the development of industry-oriented technology and research infrastructure as well as innovative services and inter- and intraregional co-operation.
- The third one deals with “[Sustainable Urban and Regional Development](#)”. It is targeted on urban areas with specific economic and social problems, such as high rates of unemployment, challenges related to the integration of migrants or deficits in urban design and on the elimination of developmental restraints in regions of industrial change.

About 30% of the ERDF money is transferred to the third priority. This is quite a big part of the entire Operational Programme. The topic “Integrated development of deprived urban areas” is open to all cities that show certain indicators of deprivation. The second topic „Elimination of developmental restraints in regions of industrial change“ is mainly focused on the Ruhr Area.

The regional perspective

NRW Objective 2 Programme 2007- 2013 (ERDF)		
Strengthening the basis of business	Innovation and knowledge-based economy	Sustainable urban and regional development
Providing financial support to SME and start-up companies	Innovation, promotion of clusters and networks in industry	Integrated development of deprived urban areas
Offering advice to SME and start-ups	Industry-oriented technology and research infrastructures	Elimination of developmental restraints in regions of industrial change
	Innovative services	
	Inter- and intraregional cooperation	
Sustainable development		
Equality between women and men and elimination of discrimination		

One of several urban policies of North-Rhine Westphalia as example

2.2 The Example of the Socially Integrative City Programme

The urban policy of North-Rhine Westphalia is partly financed with the resources of this third priority axis. As an illustration of the way in which this is implemented, I will give you a simplified view on the funding procedure of the Socially Integrative City Programme, which is a good example.

Our urban policy has defined a procedure of several steps that need to be accomplished once a city wants to get money for its development in a deprived neighbourhood.

The first compulsory step is to develop an [Integrated Local Action Plan](#) [LAP], which needs to put the intended regeneration scheme into the framework of the city's overall situation and planning. The LAP defines a comprehensive strategy for several years and contains

- an analysis of the situation in the target area,
- priorities for the development of the area,
- measures to improve the situation and
- a financial plan.

Projects that are not related to this LAP are not eligible for funding. In order to obtain such funding, cities need to clearly define the boundaries of their target areas and organise a formal decision of the city council to define this particular area as the target area for a certain urban policy intervention.

The regional perspective

The [rules for the LAP](#) include the funding of different measures, e.g. targeted on an improvement and upgrading of public spaces, support for the local economy or topics like integration and ecology. The main focus should be placed on building measures, but also on participation and empowerment of local communities and the involvement of different key players from the municipality, different ministries and private stakeholders.

Integrated Local Action
Plans are a pre-condition
for funding

The Integrated Local Action Plan is the basis for the application and, once it has been submitted to the ministry, is assessed by an [Inter-Departmental Steering Committee](#) that is comprised of members of several ministries. This committee also has the function to co-ordinate different funding strands.

If the LAP is approved, the cities can apply for funding of concrete projects each year. To stay flexible, the [LAP can be updated](#) if necessary. The ministry annually publishes the schedule of all approved projects. This two step procedure is a central element of the funding procedure: The first step gives the cities an overall framework for multi-annual integrated action that is checked by various regional ministries and approved once the necessary quality is achieved. On that basis, the cities have then the right to put forward annual applications for funding, all within the framework of the approved overall plan, but now breaking it down into annual project and budget plans.

The ministry decides on [exemptions of the funding rules](#) as a further step. This is possible and happens quite often. It simply means that a overall policy is needed as a framework for action – but that then, the ministry still is open to take into account the specific situation in each city and neighbourhood and enable them to implement the best possible projects in the framework of this overall regulation.

A [monitoring system](#) has to be applied by the municipalities – collecting a number of defined data and send them to the ministry in order to allow an overall monitoring concerning the use of public resources and its achievement. In addition, the ministry executes its own evaluation focusing on special elements of this integrated task.

Funding is always provided for a limited period only. Therefore it is necessary to know how the improvements can persist after the end of funding. This is currently a very important field of work for us. How cities can develop so called [“Exit Strategies”](#) and make sure that once the public funding is over a positive development in the target areas can be continued and support without regional funding. In theory, cities have to show right from the beginning how this exit strategy can work. But in reality, such perspectives can only be developed during the implementation of the Integrated Local Action Plan.

The regional perspective

On-going possibilities for
new areas to be included in
the programme

At the moment, we have about **50 areas in this programme**. 25 of them are already finished. The rest of the areas are on the way to be finished. I agree that in some areas it might be difficult to reach the point where one could say the problems of these areas are now solved and they do not need any further regional support. But, we still do have to insist on the development of Exit Strategies and on the fact that our funding is only time limited, as this is part of the constitution, so that local authorities always need to show to the government of North-Rhine Westphalia how they imagine to continue and support the positive development after the end of our funding.

2.3 The Regional Government and its Cities

The key elements of the relationship between Managing Authorities and the cities in North-Rhine Westphalia are the rules set up by the Managing Authority. First of all, there must be a LAP with a certain approved quality if the cities want funding. The element of participation and the nature of an integrated approach must be clearly considered and reflected in that plan. The cities are free to determine their LAP and they are quite flexible regarding inevitable changes during the implementation of these multi-annual programmes, because the ministry believes that the cities know best what to do in certain situations.

The ministry is a connecting link for urban policy as well as funding programmes of other regional and national ministries and the EU. It coordinates different funding schemes for LAPs. It displays general information, i.e. on the funding programmes and on urban policy issues - like the impact of shopping malls or of climate change. The ministry gives direct advice to municipalities i.e. regarding their LAPs.

In finally, the ministry also is funding city networks. At the moment we have **three networks** in North-Rhine Westphalia:

- **The Socially Inclusive Cities Network** – focusing on the most deprived areas in the region.
- The **Network Urban Restructuring West** – related to a funding schemes that helps cities to cope with the consequences and effects of demographic change on urban development.
- And the network related to the funding programme “**Active Urban and District Centres**”, dealing with strategies to reactivate and improve city centres and district centres in the North-Rhine Westphalian cities.

These networks can be used by their member cities for an **exchange of ideas and concepts** between the cities but also between the cities and ministries. Such exchange activities can deal with funding pro-

grammes and their implementation [i.e. requirements of monitoring and evaluation], about experiences and good examples. We hope that these discussions lead to the growth of a spirit of co-operation and mutual support between cities in our region, rather than a spirit of competition.

The networks are normally [connected to one funding scheme](#). If a city gets money in a certain programme, it can join the network and gets 70% of the costs refunded by the ministry. If a city does not receive funding from any of these programmes, it can still join the network but in that case it has to pay 100% of the costs. In principle, all networks are open for all cities.

The networks do also offer [learning opportunities for the entire region](#) because they all have very active web pages where they offer information for each city and stakeholder in the region. The networks publish everything they do.

What we do find very important in our work is that the ministry really acts as a partner for the cities. Cities can always get in touch with the staff from the ministry to ask for advice and support. And we from the ministry go permanently to the cities. And when the ministry is in the cities, both sides try to collaborate to find the best possible solution in each individual case - which is based on the framework of our funding policy and legal regulations, but still in most cases is [tailor-made work](#) for each city and neighbourhood.

3. City Network I: Network "Socially Integrative City NRW"

Hedwig Drehsen | Network Co-ordinator

3.1 General Information

In 1993, North-Rhine Westphalia offered for the first time an Integrated Action Programme for Disadvantaged Urban Areas. This programme was designed as an [Inter-Ministerial Programme](#) in order to bundle resources and to allow integrated action in the cities and the neighbourhoods.

The Integrated Action Plans, which are the basis for the decision of the regional government to provide funding, are developed by the municipalities. This programme, with some modifications since its start in 1993, is still an open opportunity where cities can apply for funding still today and the regional government decides each year about new projects being integrated in the programme.



City Network I

sponsible and the form of funding opportunities they offer to local authorities in order to take influence on their urban policy.

So, the cities can use our network to joint together in this task in order to support each other and receive support from the network level. This is a **voluntary participation** – local authorities, which want to become a member take that decision locally and then apply for membership.



In our work it is important that we are always **close to the members and accessible for them** because our work is based on personal knowledge and contact with the members. In average, the network office has 3 requests per day that it deals with.

But, it is not only the task of our network to support the member cities in their policy and project development and implementation. We also see our role as **a lobby group**, helping the cities to formulate joint positions and to negotiate with the higher political and administrative levels in the strong position of a group of cities.

With these objectives, our network, over the years, has developed into a strong lobby group and knowledge pool that fulfils various tasks in the field of transfer of know-how between cities, but also between the local and regional level

The basis of the entire network business was a **Co-operation Agreement** that was signed in 2003 between the responsible regional ministry – at that time it was still called Ministry for Town Planning, Housing, Culture and Sports of the federal state of North-Rhine Westphalia – and the network Socially Integrative City NRW [see photo].



City Network I



Based on this co-operation agreement, the **core objectives** of the network are:

- Organise an **exchange of experience and a transfer of knowledge** between cities and local stakeholders;
- Organise a **co-operation of the cities** in the region in partnership;
- Contribute to an **evaluation of the programme** Socially Integrative City and its implementation in North-Rhine Westphalia;
- Undertake **dissemination activities** and public relation work for the activities and findings of this programme.

3.3 Structure and organisation of the network

All activities of our network are based on a contractual agreement that is signed by the mayors or city managers of all participating cities. In this contractual agreement, the following aspects of our network activities are agreed:

- the objectives of the network
- its organisation
- composition and role of its Advisory Board
- speakers of the network representing it to the outside
- modalities for a participation of outside “third parties” in the network
- costs and financing of the network and its activities
- modalities for an access of new cities to the network
- duration of the membership and modalities to end membership
- new: composition and membership of a Managing Board for the network’s activities.

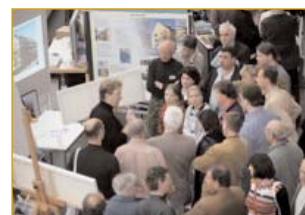
3.4 Activities and tasks of the network

Beside the organisation of exchange of experience between cities, one further important activity of the network over the last years has been the evaluation of the programme Socially Integrative City NRW.

This has contained the following elements and modules which have been carried out in co-operation with various research institutes:

Module 1: Institut für Landes- und Stadtentwicklungsforschung und Bauwesen, Dortmund

Production of a [manual for the development of objectives and a monitoring system](#) to measure the achievement of objectives, finished in 2003



Module 2: Prof. Dr. Strohmeier and Volker Kersting, Bochum

Development of [Contextual Framework Indicators](#) for the Analysis of Urban Districts, developed from 2003 until summer 2007

Module 3: Institut für Stadtforschung und Strukturpolitik, Berlin / Universität Duisburg - Essen

Analysis of [Qualitative Processes](#), carried out from 2004 until summer 2007

Module 4-1: Case Study, Institut für Entwicklungsplanung und Strukturforschung, Hannover

In-Depth evaluation of the topic "[The Role of Schools in Deprived Urban Neighbourhoods](#)", finished 2004

Modulen4-2: Case Study, Rheinisch-Westfälisches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung, Essen

In-Depth evaluation of the topic "[Supporting the Local Economy in Deprived Urban Neighbourhoods](#)", carried out from 2005 until 2007

Module 4-3: Case Study, n.n.

In-Depth evaluation of the topic "[Population with a Migration Background in Deprived Urban Neighbourhoods](#)", still in planning

Module 4-4: Case Study, n.n.

Institut für Landes- und Stadtentwicklungsforschung und Bauwesen Dortmund:

Consulting contracts, Processing of information, this co-operation ended in 2007 due to structural modifications of the institute.

3.5 Advantages of the network for the cities and the region

For the cities of North-Rhine Westphalia as well as for the regional government, the activities of this network have [numerous advantages](#):

- there are short ways of communication and fast ways to spread knowledge and information, e.g. through roundmails;
- training and qualification of local processes and people is carried out, partially a positive standardisation is possible;

City Network I



- mutual support between and for local practitioners and collegial consultation is organised and offered;
- a standardised evaluation system for all participating cities, delivering comparable results, could be developed and tested;
- the network contributes to the creation of comparability and transparency in the delivery of this policy in the different cities of North-Rhine Westphalia.
- the network takes the role of an innovation agent for the cities participating in this programme, so that not each individual city and professional has to take over such responsibility;
- achievements and contract given away are joint activities and products of all participating cities;
- this clearly reduces the necessary efforts for research to be undertaken by the individual cities and professionals;
- the network is an efficient platform to organise the co-operation and contact with other organisations relevant for the successful implementation of this policy in the North-Rhine Westphalian cities;
- the network undertakes a harmonisation of strategies and approaches between the participating cities as well as between these cities and relevant outside approaches and key players;
- the network has become a powerful and widely accepted representative of all cities participating in the programme Socially Integrative Cities in North-Rhine Westphalia.

Future planning for activities and offers to be developed contain the following elements:

- seminars and discussions, e.g. concerning local economy, crime prevention, local real estate groups, self evaluation, challenges for
- workshops and working groups
- placements and partnerships
- exchange of print media and circulars to current topics
- a document and knowledge base for all interested cities and key players
- topic related position papers
- a conference concerning the development of Exit Strategies and sustainability of neighbourhood regeneration projects

- advanced training, field trips, also internationally
- answering to individual inquiries from cities and advice for cities and local key players.



3.6 Experiences

From many years of network activities, some [essential conclusions and experiences](#) can be reported which might be useful for other regions that intend to create similar networks:

- co-operation from the network level with local actors in the cities is not always easy and successful;
- certain topics got more attention by the local actors than others;
- it is an important topic to deal with the various funding schemes offered by the European Union, the central government and others and their changes and developments;
- scientific assessment of the programme delivery and experiences with its implementation asks a lot of resources;
- for a network like ours, the demand in terms of co-operation are tremendous, while the existing rules and regulations clearly limit the potential in this field of activities;
- the number of topics for learning and exchange gets continuously larger;
- it is essential for such city networks to gain the full support and commitment of all partner cities and to organise a good co-operation “on eye-level” with and between all members;
- this means that also for a network and the possibilities for it to act and take influence it is a crucial topic to achieve as much activation amongst its member as possible.

3.7 Current developments and challenges

It is quite normal over the life of a city network, that there are permanently new tasks and challenges coming up that the network needs to deal with. For us, these new challenges are currently formed by the following core elements:

- Many projects in our member cities are now being [co-financed with resources from the European Structural Funds](#). This means for the cities to learn new procedures, rules, demands and requirements towards the European Union, which are difficult for new partners in this European funding system.

Active networks are always
again facing new
challenges and tasks

City Network 2



- This, and the additional requirements of the regional government, also created new and additional demands with regard to the [application of monitoring and report systems for the local projects](#).
- There are also more and more [area-based approaches coming from other departments and policy fields](#), such as social work or youth work, which need to be integrated into the comprehensive area-based approaches.
- There are many people, key players and organisation with [different origins, cultures and “languages”](#) who need to be involved.
- [New co-operation with outside actors](#) needs to be organised, partially imposed by other institutions, also including private service and consultancy agencies.
- Success of networking depends strongly on [persons and individuals](#), who often change their job and then are lost in the place where they were needed for successful network activities.
- Professionals on the ground have in many cases reached or already gone beyond the [limits](#) of what they can do – with these tendencies of course limiting what they can contribute to the activities of the network and the co-operation with colleagues from other cities.



4. City Network 2: “Innovation Agency Urban Restructuring West”

David R. Froessler | Network Manager

4.1 Urban Restructuring West – A programme to support cities in coping with consequence of demographic change

The German society and many of its cities are affected by [processes of demographic change](#). In detail, this mean that

- our urban societies get [smaller](#), with the extent of shrinking processes differing strongly beteen individual regions and [types of] cities;
- our urban societies get [older](#) – with a growing proportion of elderly people living there – following traditional patterns of life, or belonging to the growing group of “new elderly people”, leading a more active and demanding lifestyle and

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Cities participating in the

programme Urban

Restructuring West

- our urban societies get “more colourful” – meaning that the proportion of migrants and citizens with a migration background is rapidly growing.

These tendencies are quite new to German cities and they pose a lot of [questions and challenges](#) to local policy makers and professionals in urban development and urban regeneration:

- How does urban policy work in times of shrinking and stagnation – with all experiences being related to the task of distributing growth through urban development policies?
- How do and can approaches which have all been focused on growth be adapted to shrinking?
- Which new instruments and procedures are necessary to actively design and steer these processes of change and use them for a growth in terms of quality during times of quantitative shrinking?

In concrete terms, this challenge relates to the following [aspects of urban policy](#):

- [The Housing Market](#) – that is characterised by large parts that tend to become redundant in the light of a shrinking demand – and with general tendencies that the housing stock is, in most cases, not pre-

City Network 2



pared for the changing demand in terms of an older and less mobile population of a higher proportion of migrant population with different family sizes and housing demands.

- **Economic Structures** with the well-known shrinking of industrial structures, a growth in service-related employment opportunities, many of them related to household-related services for a changing urban society.
- The **provision of services and daily goods** – especially challenged by the clash of centralisation tendencies on the side of service and goods' provider and a reduced mobility and need for decentralised service provision of an older urban society.
- **Quality of urban life** in times of shrinking – trying to use redundant spaces, sites and buildings for an improvement of urban environment and quality aspects.
- **Cultural and leisure time facilities** – in need to adapt to more multicultural urban societies and to a less mobile, but still interested and active older urban citizenship.

A network of interested cities - managed and offered by a private company

4.2 The Innovation Agency – Partner of Cities

In a certain sense, the Innovation Agency Urban Restructuring West is comparable to the network Socially Inclusive City – as it is also related to one specific funding scheme in the framework of urban policy and also developed for cities as a platform for learning and exchange.

The most important differences of this model, as compared to the previously presented network, is that it is not constituted by a central co-operation agreement between city mayors and town managers. The Innovation Agency is a network formula that has been developed by a private consultancy firm which acts as Network Manager and partner of cities. Each city that is interested in a participation, can sign an individual contract with this private consultancy firm, agreeing on a set of common services which are the same for all cities that sign such a contract. The sum of individual contracts that has been signed between the private consultancy firm and cities from the region determines, at each moment in time, the overall project budget and the scope of activities the network can undertake.

The management of the network is overseen by a Steering Group in which each city, that has signed a project-related contract, is represented with one member and also the relevant departments of the regional ministry and representatives from the county administrations.

This Steering Committee meet twice a year to decide the Work Programme for the Innovation Agency over the next 6 months. Currently, 23 local authorities are member of the Innovation Agency Urban Restructuring West. Most of them have signed contracts with a three-year duration to provide the project with the necessary perspective and stability to develop and implement mid-term services and innovation.



4.3 Tasks and Activities of the Innovation Agency

Unlike the network Socially Inclusive Cities, the Innovation Agency Urban Restructuring West has, from its start on, had the objective to [work and create innovation on two levels](#):

- The [network level](#), where an exchange of information, dissemination and the creation of innovation in urban policy is undertaken with a wide range of activities and methods.
- The [city level](#), where the team of the Innovation Agency provides direct support to cities – not only in project development and the creation of strategic innovation – but also in terms of designing and moderating local participation and planning processes.

The most important activities of the Innovation Agency are the [services provided to the cities](#) in the region:

- [Individual support to local authorities in the development of long-term integrated projects and funding applications](#) in close co-operative with the funding authorities.
- [Individual support and coaching to the local authorities in the implementation of their integrated programmes.](#)
- Support with the [design and management of local co-operation processes](#) in the member cities –neighbourhood-based processes as well as city-wide processes.
- Organisation of a [structured and targeted exchange of experience](#) between cities and [training sessions](#) for all relevant groups and stakeholders in local urban policy.
- [Information Management and Public Relation Work](#) through a very active website which is updated on a weekly basis.
- Organisation of an [Annual Conference](#) for wider dissemination and dialogue.

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One core element of the innovation support that the agency provides not only to its members, but to the general public are the services offered through its [website](#). They contain the following core elements:

- [Information and documents concerning the policy](#) and its implementation in the region as well as on the national level.
- [Information and links to similar projects](#) in other regions to support online learning and exchange.
- [Detailed information about all projects implemented in North Rhine-Westphalia](#) by presenting each of them in a standardised format on the website [Project Files] and updating them regularly in co-operation with the cities.
- [Information about relevant studies, publications and conferences](#) – in the most relevant cases not only by putting the general information online – but by visiting conferences and meetings and writing Online-Reports for the website.
- A [weekly NewsService](#) with a limited range of core information that is put online every Monday morning with the information about the update sent to currently 600 subscribers to this NewsService.
- An [Online Dictionary](#) to answer general questions of cities with regard to the recently changed funding regulations.
- [„Project of the Week“](#) – a standardised project description that is published with the NewsService each Monday – always showing an innovative example of a German or international project related to the currently most urgent questions and tasks in the implementation of this policy.
- [„Good Practice Readers“](#) published twice a year – each of them dedicated to a topic where innovation is needed – presenting an overview over achievements and developments with regard to this topic [“State of the Art”] and a wide variety of Examples of Good Practice that can help local authorities to adapt ideas and formulas that worked elsewhere to create successful projects and innovation in their own target areas.
- [Flash Lights](#), which are short publications that deal with absolutely new questions and ideas – just indicating the direction for further thinking and innovation development, without being able to present already a variety of examples of good practice like the readers. They are mainly meant to stimulate debate and thinking in cities and amongst interested and creative people.

- **On-Site reports** from relevant events in North-Rhine Westphalia – reports that are written by the team from interesting conferences or workshops as well as events in the member cities as part of the dissemination work for the member cities and their “success stories”.
- The “**Urban Restructuring Lounge**” – a different format of exchange platform – unlike the thematic workshops the lounges are carried out in the evening, with wine, antipasti and candle light – offering a different atmosphere and space for thinking, which is more free, less output oriented, stimulating wider thinking and creativity as part of the planning process.



The **main activities and topics** for the work of the Innovation Agency in 2009 are:

- **Activation and structural integration of house owners and housing companies** in urban development strategies – especially with regard to the often poor individual house owners with limited potential to contribute to such strategies.
- Development of **new Corporate Identities and Marketing Strategies for Deprived Urban Areas** to help overcome their stigmatisation and encourage the local communities to work jointly on a new future for these areas.
- How to deal with the **most problematic estates and houses**, who have been given up by their owners and now create a burden for the image of cities and neighbourhood as widely visible redundant and run-down buildings [“Garbage Estates”]
- **Public Procurement and Tendering** and the challenges created by these regulations for local authorities and their efforts to implement projects efficiently and with quality standards.
- How to cope with the **new Funding Regulations** that have been changed recently in North-Rhine Westphalia, improving the funding situation, but still raising many practical questions for the cities in applying them. ?
- Development of a **Formative Monitoring System** for the local programmes to accompany cities in their implementation efforts with an approach that provides them with a regular feedback and a chance to gradually improve their action and its impact.
- Local Strategies for the **Re-Use and Interim Use of Redundant Shops** which is more and more becoming a problem for many city and district centres.

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- New Forms of [Decentralised Provision with Goods and Services](#) – mainly in the form of mixed public-private shop and service-models.

4.4 Added Value for the Participating Local Authorities and the regional ministry



The success of this permanently growing network of cities over the last four years has shown that there is a clear added value for the cities as well as the regional ministry in the work of this Innovation Agency. The most important elements of added value are:

- [Unbureaucratic and quick consultation and decision making](#) between all authorities involved to design the agenda for the Innovation Agency and decide on topics it should deal with in the interest of the cities and the ministry.
- [Flexible and qualified moderation and mediation competence](#) for the sometimes difficult local co-operation processes which does not need to be hired in by complicated processes, but can immediately be booked on demand for network members as part of the general services they pay on an annual basis.
- [Flexible strategic advice and support](#) for all local authorities on the background of growing experiences and skills within the Innovation Agency.
- [Active lobby work & marketing](#) for the participating local authorities and their projects regionally, nationally and internationally.
- [Flexible and short-term possibilities to deal with new and future topics](#) creating problems for the local authorities – using existing budgets to start short-term model projects to try out possible new solutions and disseminate the results and related recommendations to all cities in the network.
- A [high potential to create innovation](#) in regional urban policy through working closely in the member cities – gaining local knowledge – and building bridges with international practice and experience through parallel involvement in European projects and policy debates.

The Example of Silesia

5. Co-operation between the cities – the example of the Region of Silesia

Dr. Ferdynand Morski | Executive Director | Author

Tomasz Rzezucha | City of Ruda Slaska | Presenter

Self-organisation of cities in

the absence of regional

support structures

The Silesian Union of Municipalities and Districts is a voluntary association of local governments located in Katowice in the Region of Silesia in the south of Poland. It refers to an area with 4.7 mio. Inhabitants. The association currently has 125 members [cities, towns, rural communities, districts] and is organised in 12 committees and one Urban Policy Working Group.

5.1 Urban Policy on a regional level – the case of Silesia

Silesia is a highly urbanised region with its 71 cities and towns; 19 cities with district's competences, 79% of the region's population lives in cities and towns. This creates the highest population density in Poland with 382 people/km² compared to 122 people/km² in Poland and 116 people/km² in the European Union.

There is no distinct urban policy dedicated to urban issues on a regional level in the Voivodship of Silesia.

Only priority no.VI of the Regional Operational Programme for Śląskie Voivodeship for the years 2007-2013 is devoted directly to urban actions [Priority Axis VI: Sustainable Urban Development]. 312,8 million Euro is dedicated to this priority, that is 18.26% of the total allocation for Silesia [the 2nd largest allocation per priority], In total, the Silesian ROP has been allocated with 1.720 million Euro.

Priority VI includes such measures as strengthening the regional centers for growth and revitalisation of deprived areas. Middle-sized and small towns are less satisfied with the final version of the Regional Operational Programme. In the final version of the ROP, the allocation for priority VI was significantly increased [about 100 million Euro more than foreseen originally.

5.2 The Working Group on Urban Policy

This Working Group was created by Silesian Union of Municipalities and Districts in 2007 with the following aims:

- to study the results of the URBAN Community Initiative in EU-15 [the Acquis URBAN];

The Example of Silesia

- to participate in the European debate about urban aspects of Cohesion Policy in the programming period 2007-2013 and beyond 2013;
- to participate in Polish debate about the future of national urban policy;
- to urge the regional government to create a regional urban policy;
- to exchange experiences concerning urban development between Silesian cities;
- to support cities in URBACT II projects [thematic networks and working groups].

5.3 Experiences with the 'Support for Cities'-Initiative

The Silesian Union of Municipalities and Districts has participated in the „Support for Cities” initiative that was offered in the framework of the URBACT I programme from May until June 2007.

The mission of the expert team financed by the SfC was to support the Upper Silesian Agglomeration with its more than 2 million inhabitants. The cities in that agglomeration have similar problems, large population [over 2 million inhabitants], forming the largest urban conurbation in Central Europe after Berlin.

The final operation's shape was, unique in the framework of this 'Support for Cities'-initiative, that three international experts created an expert pool that worked with cities, including five boroughs located in the centre of the Upper Silesian Agglomeration



The Example of Silesia

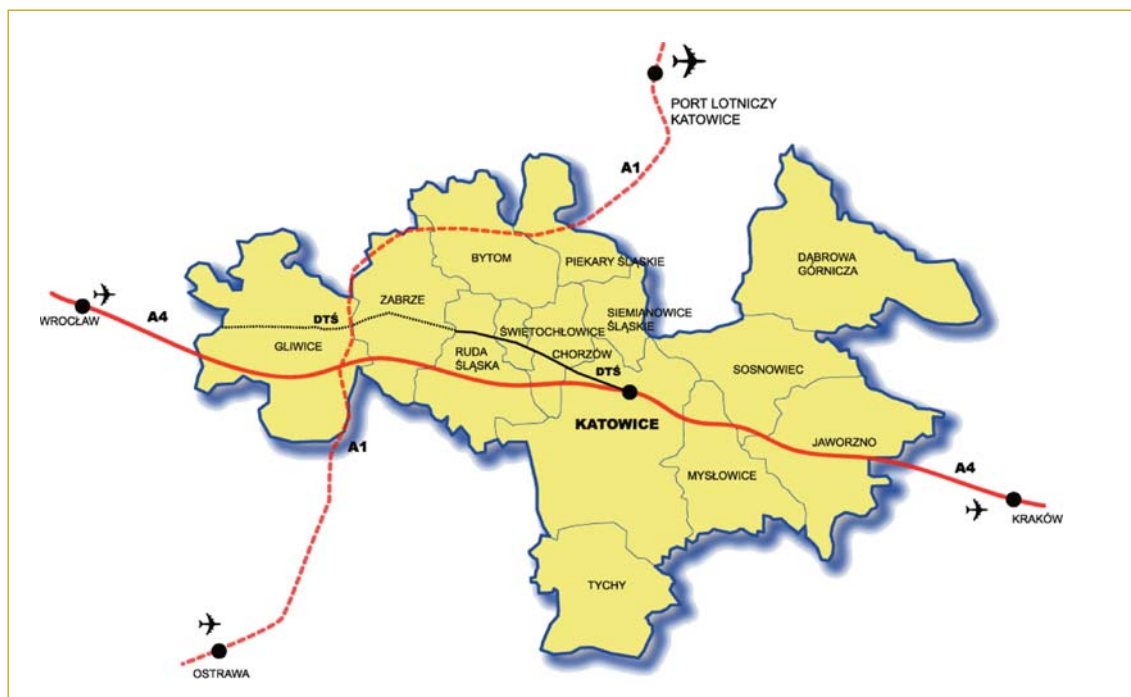
These three experts were coming from the following domains:

- Brownfields and revitalization of urban areas
- Spatial planning
- Economic and social development.

Their Final Report has arrived very timely and, in line with the mission of the experts, an idea of a common project for five boroughs emerged: It was the concept of „Local Initiatives Centres” – an idea of a network of community centres in the region. Soon after completion of Final Report, the Metropolitan Association of Upper Silesia was established which shows that such an expert report can stimulate the strategy for the development of the Agglomeration.

5.4 The Metropolitan Association of Upper Silesia

The Metropolitan Association of Upper Silesia [GZM], established in 2007, combines the potential of 14 cities of the Upper-Silesian conurbation. It is an organisational structure that is aimed at the integration and promotion of a cohesive metropolitan organism. The Association is comprised of cities of the total area of 1,218 km², inhabited by nearly 2 million people. This places the Upper Silesian Metropolis in the group of important metropolitan centres in Europe.



The Example of Silesia

The Upper Silesian Metropolis shows the following distinct characteristics in terms of location and transport:

- location on the intersection of important transport routes;
- three airports available in the area: Katowice-Pyrzowice, Kraków Balice, Ostrawa;
- the most developed municipal transport system in Poland is found here, transporting 1,2 million passengers every day.

The Metropolitan Association of Upper Silesia has the following objectives:

- Preparation of common development strategy for its member cities.
- Funds raising from domestic and foreign sources.
- Co-operation with local governments, local and regional organisations as well as government administration authorities.
- Preparation of a promotion strategy for the Upper Silesian Metropolis.
- Co-operation with the Regional Association of the Ruhr Region and with the University of Technology in Aachen.

5.5 Projects under implementation

Thanks to the co-operation of cities in this platform, it became possible to initiate several projects aimed at an improvement of the quality of public transport and the environment. These projects indirectly contribute to the economic growth of the region:

- Unification of the electronic enrolment system for upper-secondary schools in the area of Upper-Silesian Metropolis [in the area of the whole province].
- The Silesian Public Services Card – a project implemented among others by KZK GOP and GZM.
- The modernisation of tramway and trolleybus infrastructure including accompanying infrastructure [Partners: Tramwaje Śląskie S.A., Municipality of Tychy].
- Development of a waste management system for GZM cities including the construction of waste incinerators. This project was implemented by GZM and co-financed from the Infrastructure and Environment Operational Programme.

The Example of Silesia

5.6 Examples of infrastructural investments

- Reconstruction of the road system in the Upper-Silesian Metropolis – construction of A1, A4 motorway and Cross-Regional Highway (DTŚ)
- Reconstruction of cities centre in Katowice: A developer plans the development of office and residential as well as retail space. The project intends to enlarge and improve the public space in the city centre.
- Reconstruction of cities centre in Gliwice: The New Centre will comprise, amongst other improvements, a reconstructed railway station, the central transfer junction, shopping centres, new pedestrian routes and administration and office buildings.

Core investments in Sosnowiec

- The Sosnowiec Science and Technology Park
- EXPO SILESIA Fair and Exhibition Centre

Core investments in Gliwice

- PODIUM entertainment and sports arena together with a training arena.

5.7 The Union of the Western Subregion in Rybnik

Another example of good regional co-operation is the Union of the Western Subregion in Rybnik Society of local governments, located in western part of the Silesian Voivodship. The Union acts as a subregional organisation, over 650.000 people live in this territory, the region has NUTS III status.

The society was established in 2002 and it represents a new form of institution in Poland. Its main [aims](#) are:

- lobbying for the most important for Subregion issues,
- integration of different social groups
- investment and economic promotion.

Conclusions

6. Conclusions: Stimulating Innovation and Progress in Integrated Urban Development through Regional Exchange

6.1 The overall situation

With regard to the overall situation and political framework in the participating cities and regions, the following relevant [key conclusions](#) can be summarised at the end of this seminar:

- Only a few of the member states represented in this Thematic Cluster do have a national ministry for urban development or urban policy that has a tradition and experience in designing and delivering the framework for integrated urban regeneration on the local level.
- In those countries with such ministries dedicated to the policy field of urban policy, there is a reliable policy framework that has been developed over years and that allows cities to develop long-term policies and projects under the guidance and with the support of their national partners in the ministries.
- In other countries, urban development projects - mainly large projects - are financed by national ministries on the basis of ad hoc decisions. This is a model that gives targeted support to urban policy on the local level in selected cities and for selected projects, but in most cases does not support or allow continuity and conceptual urban policy on the ground over the years and beyond the limits of each single project that is subsidised.
- In this last group of countries with more project-related funding from the national level, urban policy is still seen as a mainly physical development and construction task. A good example for this type of urban policy on the national level is Greece, where these projects are financed by the Ministry for Public Works.

6.2 The Regional Dimension

The [conclusions with regard to the regional level](#), central to the topic of this Thematic Cluster and more relevant to the direct potential to bring about change within the framework of the RegGov-network, are similar to the national level observations:

- Only a few of the member states represented in this Thematic

Cluster do have regional ministries or authorities with a strong position in policy development and related experiences with the provision of funding for urban policy in the region's cities.

- In cases like Germany, those regional ministries work in the framework of a national urban policy and nationally defined funding schemes - but they can specify and adapt those national regulations to a certain degree to the specific situations and needs of the cities in their region.
- In other cases, like the Netherlands, such negotiations and adaptations of urban funding to local needs are undertaken in direct contact between the national ministry and the cities. Here, groups of cities – in most cases organised along the lines of size of cities – cooperate and form exchange and lobby groups. But, in the end, each individual funding agreement in most cases is based on a contract or a contractual agreement between the national government and each individual city. Regions – in this case. The Provinces – take a more and more stronger role in this game by offering valuable support to their cities and the creation of innovation in urban policy.
- In all other countries, the mainstreaming of funding for urban policy from the European Union has created for the first time a need to deal with urban policy on the regional level. Sometimes, the political system and culture allows regions to practice such a new role and “grow into it”, in other cases this role is taken over rather by the central governments, leaving the regions without much factual influence on this new policy field and task.

6.3 Forms of Regional Support Activities

Obviously, the amount and variety of [experiences with support activities for integrated urban policy](#) – provided from the regional level to the city level – differ again along the same lines of various policy models and experiences in the participating regions:

- In some countries with regional ministries and experiences of target urban policies, the support for regional exchange and support activities to and between cities is initiated and funded by the responsible ministries as integrated part of their urban policy.
- In cases like the Netherlands, such co-operation and exchange activities are again organised mainly by the central government, in most cases grouping and organising cities with relation to their size and placing an equally important focus on the involvement and organisation of residents' participation in such exchange and learning

Conclusions

experiences as they are seen as equally important partners in the development and implementation of local integrated neighbourhood policies.

- In the case of North-Rhine Westphalia, exchange and learning between cities is organised with a very strong focus and commitment from the responsible regional government. The main difference towards the Dutch model is that here the cities are not grouped and organised along the lines of a comparable size. In the North-Rhine Westphalian model, cities – no matter which size or location in the regions – are organised in networks which focus on a specific policy. For each of the three integrated urban policies, which are offered currently in North-Rhine Westphalia, a network of cities receiving funding in the framework of this particular policy is subsidised. Therefore, in this case, a city can at the same time participate in more than one regional network.
- In other cases, like the Polish partner city and its region, the organisation of regional co-operation and exchange is taken over by associations of cities. Here, in the light of a lack of a regional ministry as an active partner, cities from coalitions and lobby groups to support each other and to strengthen their voice towards the regional and the national policy level. The results are valuable and important regional frameworks for co-operation – with regard to the Dutch and the German model they show a clear lack of funding that would be necessary to make a better use of these platforms and the commitment of cities and actors involved.
- No case has been reported in the framework of the participating cities and regions where a newly established Managing Authority would be sufficiently developed and organised in the implementation of this new task to offer support for such co-operation and exchange activities. In these countries and regions, where this is a completely new task, the corresponding national and regional authorities still seem fully occupied to fill this new role and responsibility with life and did not use this opportunity to extend this role beyond the provision of mere funding, by adding elements of providing know-how and exchange opportunities at the same time.

6.4 Forms and Activities of Regional Co-operation

Those cases where cities have a tradition of co-operating and exchanging know-how with regard to integrated urban policy show us a variety of forms and activities that are possible and useful:

- One model is the organisation of subsidised city-networks as a platform for exchange of know-how. In these networks, which are financially supported by the regional authorities, cities can join voluntarily – normally having to pay a contribution to the network's operational costs – and can then jointly decide what kind of activities the network implements to fulfil the needs of the participating cities for input, support and innovation.
- If such regional financial support to city-networks is not available, cities can join together to create self-financed exchange platforms. Such a form of co-operation between cities is not only valuable to provide to each other support in the absence of support from the higher political and administrative levels. It can also be useful to create a platform of cities for a more powerful lobby work – to achieve a higher recognition for the topic of integrated urban policy on the regional and national level and, in an ideal case, a growing awareness for the added value of exchange between cities on those level, possibly then followed by the provision of national and/or regional resources to support such exchange. Until such resources are provided, the potential of self-financed regional city networks is limited and in the cases regarded offers more in terms of lobby work than in terms of real learning and innovation potential.
- A third model that has been discussed is the option of exchange and training activities organised by associations of cities for their members. Such associations can exist on the regional, the national and on European level, financed with different models, and they can offer valuable learning and exchange opportunities for their members.
- Another model of regional co-operation of cities in the field of integrated urban policy is joint lobby work of cities to maximise their influence on policy making. The difference towards the models described above is that in these cases the coalition between cities is rather realised in ad-hoc groups of cities – related to a specific common topic or a regional project framework. This kind of co-operation can have a clear added value, but normally only related to the specific occasion and planning case, without have an immediate structural option for an improved learning and exchange potential between cities.
- Very closely linked to this last model are the occasions where cities co-operate in the framework of the development of regional plans. These cases are rather forms of “participation” of cities in regional planning than co-operation activities between cities. Nevertheless, they can help to convince local professionals and policy makers of

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the added value of regional co-operation between cities in urban planning.

- Very closely related to that last group, but usually more implementation led and bottom-up organised, is the co-operation between cities in a joint project development and / or project implementation, e.g. on the level of metropolitan areas or agglomerations, in order to improve the impact of a project or an action. Here, cities join together for planning as well as implementation, which also means the contribution of funding from each city into the overall project. Again, such co-operation is case-related and does not necessarily go beyond the topic of the individual project, leading the way to a potential structural co-operation of cities on the regional level.

When it comes to the question [how regional authorities can support and stimulate co-operation and learning between cities](#), again various forms can be found in the participating regions:

- The first and easiest form is the provision of funding for regional exchange and co-operation networks of cities. Here, the regional authorities define rules and regulations for such networks, pre-conditions for their funding and then support the networks and their exchange activities as part of their urban policy. The degree to which they participate or get involved as regional authorities in these exchange activities and the network business can then take different forms.
- In a further model that can be found in practice, the regional authorities do not only provide funding for the creation and operation of such networks, they directly organise these exchange activities themselves. This leaves them more scope to define the topics and contents of the network activities and allows them to use them in a much more targeted way for their regional policy making and for targeting the learning and innovation they create. The potential risk of this form is that it leaves cities more in the role of “consumers” of regional activities and does not allow them to become the “drivers of exchange” and take over responsibility to maintain and develop such exchange networks and activities.
- A different form of regional support to integrated urban policy can be the provision of funding for experts – either employed by the regional authorities or hired as external experts – to support cities in the development of integrated projects and the acquisition of necessary funding. This model can be very helpful in political contexts where the national governments still keep the main respon-

[Starting the development of
a Tool Box for Local
Monitoring Systems](#)

sibility for urban policy making and the provision of related funding and where the creation of city networks still seems to be difficult in the given policy context and experience of policy making. In such cases, coaches for cities can be a first and very helpful step on the way to quality development and support in integrated urban policy.

- A similar form to provide “expertise on demand” to cities is the provision of finance for Regional Expert Teams who can be used by cities for the development of strategies and projects to support the acquisition of funding or – less developed – for the later implementation of their projects. Again, this can be a valuable input to promote quality and innovation in integrated urban policy but, like the last form, leaves it pretty much as a business between an individual city and an expert, while the element of mutual learning and support between cities is not developed in the framework of such models.
- A further, and again more indirect, form of regional support to the creation of success and innovation in integrated urban policy is the financing of practice-oriented research projects related to questions of urban policy. Such research projects can create valuable know-how that can help to improve the performance of urban policy if the right channels and methods for dissemination are found and used afterwards to manage the transfer from research result to local practice.
- A final valuable form of regional support for the creation of progress and innovation in local integrated urban policy is, of course known in this Thematic Cluster, the financial support provided by regional authorities for cities to take part in European exchange and learning processes. Such support and its impact is of course maximised if the benefits are not limited to the individual participating city, but if the regional authorities at the same time organise a dissemination of the innovation and learning amongst more cities within their regions, e.g. through regional seminars or regional publications, promoting innovative policy elements and principles and examples of good practice in other countries or regions.

6.5 Regional Co-operation & Support: Added value for cities

For a Thematic Cluster that wants to strengthen the support for and participation in regional co-operation and exchange activities, it is of course essential to identify the added value that is linked to such activities. During this first seminar of Thematic Cluster No. 1, the follow-

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ing elements of added value created by regional exchange and learning activities could be identified:

- For the participating cities, such exchange opportunities offer a chance to get support and gain know-how in the development of urban development strategies and projects – looking beyond the limits of their own experiences and becoming able to integrate a larger amount of experiences into their local policy development and implementation.
- The debate of the participating local professions indicated very clearly the a direct exchange with other cities and professionals from those cities dealing with the same problems and topics delivers in most cases knowledge and insight that is much more useful than the knowledge of advisors and researchers which could be hired in by the cities.
- In this sense, such co-operation activities if provided with a structured or even structural framework, can be used by cities as a valuable platform to develop new solutions and approaches, including the know-how from various cities and local policy environments and adapt it to their own local situation with the support of colleagues who are close to the same situation, but still have an external view on the policy of the other city.
- At the same time, such structured co-operation can be used as a platform to develop joint positions towards policy makers and funding providers on the regional and national level, which is something that should not be seen as a more powerful opposition mainly, but rather as a more qualified partner on the local level for regional and national governments – also helping them to create a better use and a more successful and sustainable impact of the resources they invest in the local level in urban policy.
- Such co-operation platforms of cities also have the added value that here numerous problems can be solved and questions can be answered by mutual support which would otherwise lead to requests towards resources from the regional or national authorities.

6.6 Regional Co-operation & Support: Added value for regions

The last two observations have already indicated that regional co-operation between cities does not only have a clear added value for the cities, but also for the regions. [Motivations for regions to organise and or fund such co-operation activities](#) of cities include the following elements of added value for them:

- With such support, they can help to increase the knowledge-basis in the region with regard to urban policy topics, leading to an improved potential for the creation of innovation and sustainable success of urban policy on the local level.
- This means at the same time an increase of problem solution capacities in the cities of the region – normally enhancing the potential of regional resources invested to really contribute to lasting change and improvement of social cohesion and competitiveness in the cities of a region.
- At the same time, such support can help cities to become organised partners of regional authorities, leading the way for an improved and more coherent feedback from and co-operation with cities in regional policy.
- Especially with regard to the new role of many regional authorities as Managing Authorities for the European Structural Funds, it can be confirmed that such form of support for exchange and learning between cities lead to more qualified funding applications with higher chances for success and sustainable achievements, something that is important not only for the development of each individual region, but also for the results of the monitoring that Managing Authorities have to do towards the European Union.

In [summarising](#) these benefits also for the regions, it can be said after the discussions of this cluster meeting, that support for exchange and learning activities between cities in the field of integrated urban policy leads to

- a more efficient and successful use of public funding and subsidies;
- the development of stronger cities with increased competitiveness and improved social cohesion and, as a sum of these benefits, to
- stronger and more competitive regions in inter-regional, national and international competition.

6.7 Regional Co-operation & Support: Questions to the Managing Authorities

This first meeting of Thematic Cluster No. 1 was also used to identify and formulate questions to be clarified with the regional authorities taking part in the RegGov-network. An opportunity for the clarification of these questions will be the forthcoming seminar of Managing Authorities with the European Commission in early summer this year. The participants of this city seminar formulated the following [questions to](#)

Conclusions

be submitted to and discussed with the regional authorities in the framework of that seminar by the Lead Expert:

- What kind of support and / or incentive could DG Regional Development provide to stimulate the development or regional support and exchange activities in the framework of the implementation of the various Regional Operational Programmes – especially in those cases where the responsible regional authorities are not yet prepared to offer such support?
- Why are the parts of the Regional Operational Programmes that are dedicated to Technical Assistance not available for such activities provided to the cities and what exactly are they spent for in the participating regions?
- What are the obstacles for the participating Managing Authorities without regional support and exchange activities towards the development of such services? Is it a lack of staff resources or rather a lack of understanding with regard to the added value of such activities?
- What kind of support would such Managing Authorities need to enable them to develop and offer such services their cities?

david r froessler | duesseldorf | january 2010

Annex

Seminar Programme

List of Participants

Imprint



Seminar Programme

Thursday, 25 June 2009

- 9.00h Departure from hotel and walk to Halandri Old City Hall
- 9.30h Welcome of participants and opening of the first meeting of Cluster I
[Alexander Cappos | Halandri Project Partner](#)
- 9.45h Introduction to the first meeting of Cluster I
[David R. Froessler | RegGov Lead Expert](#)
- 10.15h Coffee Break
- 10.30h Expectations and Support from the Regional Level
[Bernd Mielke | Ministry of Building and Transport of North-Rhine Westphalia](#)
- 11.00h Discussion & Clarification of Questions
- 11.30h City Network 1: Network "Socially Inclusive Cities" NRW
[Hedwig Drehsen | Network Coordination](#)
- 12.00h Discussion & Clarification of Questions
- 12.30h City Network 2: "Innovation Agency Urban Restructuring West" NRW
[David R. Froessler | Network Manager](#)
- 13.00h Discussion & Clarification of Questions
- 13.30h Lunch Break
- 14.30h Experiences from the Silesian Union of Municipalities and Districts
[Tomasz Rzezucha | City of Ruda Slaska](#)
- 15.00h Discussion & Clarification of Questions

Seminar Programme

15.30h Summary of Day I and Lead Questions for second Seminar Day

[David R. Froessler | RegGov Lead Expert](#)

16.00h End of Seminar Day I

Friday, 29 May 2009

9.00h Departure from hotel and walk to Halandri Old Town Hall

9.30h Recap: Central Findings and Results from the Work of Day I

[David R. Froessler | RegGov Lead Expert](#)

9.45h Panel Discussion: Stimulating Innovation and Progress in Integrated Urban Development through Regional Exchange

- The overall situation in the member regions
- The regional dimension
- Forms of regional support activities
- Forms and activities of regional co-operation
- Regional co-operation and support: Added value for the cities
- Regional co-operation and support: Added value for the regions

11.15h Coffee Break

11.30h Concluding Debate

- Conclusions and Central Findings from the Seminar
- Questions to Managing Authorities,

12.30h End of Seminar

List of Participants

List of Participants

- Alexandra Alexandropoulou | Halandri
- Alexander Cappos | Halandri
- Hedwig Drehsen | Essen
- Bernd Mielke | MBV NRW
- Tomasz Rzezucha | Ruda Slaska
- Hendrik Jan ter Schegget | Nijmegen

Moderation:

- David R. Froessler | urbano | Urban Research & Consultancy



RegGov Fast Track Network

Regional Governance of Sustainable
Integrated Neighbourhood Development

Thematic Cluster I:

New Forms of Regional Co-operation
in Integrated Neighbourhood Regeneration

Seminar | Halandri | 25 & 26 June 2009

Seminar Report

Author:

Dipl.-Ing. David R. Froessler



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Urban Research & Consultancy

Talstraße 22 - 24

D - 40217 Düsseldorf

Fon: 0211 - 5 444 866

Fax: 0211 5 444 865

eMail: info@urbano.de

Web: www.urbano.de

Duesseldorf | January 2010