

OP
ACT

Options of Actions



Peer Review
a short introduction

Peer Review

One method - used with particular success at project level - is the peer review. The peer review is an instrument used to further mutual learning experience. In this context, projects and practices are evaluated by comparable colleagues from other municipalities (= peers), who adopt the stance of 'critical friends'. Peers come from cities of similar size, are being confronted by similar problems, are working in a similar environment and with similar means.

During the subsequent Op-Act meetings, a shortened and simplified version of the peer review method will be employed in order to support LAP development.

The peer review has two main advantages:

- For the host city: improvement and additional input in their considerations on the LAP
- For the peers: reflect their own practice and experience
- Partner cities can use this method to develop their LAPs with peers from their own country.

The topics of the peer review must focus on the WP dealt with during the Op-Act meeting in question.

Phases and overview of tasks:

Working steps	1. 'initial report'	2. peers' 'desk review'	3. peer review workshop	4. peers' feedback	5. input results into LSG
tasks	content: cp. below	1. develop 'hypotheses' and questions; 2. decide what information is needed beyond the 'initial report' and 3. who should be invited (individuals and/or representatives from stakeholder groups) (for example: cp. below)	1. short presentation of 'initial report' 2. site visit 3. additional presentation(s) on peer questions / hypotheses 4. discussion	at the end of the peer review workshop: peers give short feedback / recommendations / considerations on the basis of their 'desk review' and their experience (with own projects)	incorporate into LSG work
who?	host city	all other OP-Act partners	all OP-Act partners, additional stakeholders	all other Op-Act partners	host city LSG
when?	4 weeks before the workshop	2 weeks before the workshop	part of Op-Act workshops	part of Op-Act workshops	after the workshop

Structure of the 'initial report' (no more than 6 - 10 pages)

1. name (the) main challenge / points of interest and corresponding possible actions that have been discussed in / decided by the Local Support Group
2. brief, problem-focused description of the city and its challenges (remember that the baseline study has more detailed information; this part should only be a 'reminder' and should really focus on the respective challenge and actions)
3. Why will LAP (probably) focus on the challenge stated under point 1? What benefits do you expect for the city through implementing measures in this field? Who will benefit in particular?
4. Is the city already active in this field? Using what measures? Who is involved in these measures?
5. Could these measures be enhanced through LSG work and the LAP? Are you considering this and why? How could it be done? Are there pitfalls and constraints?
6. Which (additional / accompanying) measures are you considering in the LAG / have been decided by the LAG? What are the concrete objectives of these measures? Who will benefit? Who needs to be involved (cp. stakeholder analysis)?
7. Are there legal or other (framework) conditions that could affect the implementation of these measures - in a positive or negative way?
8. Are there specific issues / questions / challenges on which you want input from peers?

Peer 'desk review' - just an example

Challenge / interest field: inclusion of migrants in a disadvantaged neighbourhood

Proposed measures:

- a) open a 'cultural café' as a meeting and information point (on health and educational issues)
- b) introduce a 'neighbourhood mothers' programme (women from the community of immigrant background are trained to support families in health, educational, administrative and other issues; they act as contact and support persons in the neighbourhood in question)

Peers' hypotheses:

Based on information provided in the host city initial report

- we know the city has a permanent consultative committee on cultural issues comprising 15 members that meets 4 times a year;
- we don't know how representative or qualified its members are;
- we suspect that the municipality does not take full advantage of the committee's input.
- we know that immigrants in the neighbourhood do not have adequate competence in dealing with officialdom, are often not familiar with education and that health problems attributable to unbalanced nutrition are present, especially in the case of children.
- we don't know whether women of the cultural / ethnic background in question will be prepared to be trained as neighbourhood mothers;
- we assume that, due to the cultural background of the neighbourhood residents, the 'cultural café' will be a meeting point for men only. The link between the two measures will therefore be limited.

Questions and suggestions on stakeholders to be invited to the WS:

- background of committee members. How were they appointed?
- is the committee taken seriously? How frequently is the committee consulted by the municipality?

- what recommendations have been made recently? What follow-up have they received from the municipality?
- what experience / lessons learnt can be found (for example) from teachers with children of immigrant background?

To meet / to invite to the workshop: Committee chairperson, a teacher from a neighbourhood school,
...

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