



Baseline study REDIS

(Re)Developing Science Quarters in Cities

A baseline analysis of evolving science quarters in the cities of Aarhus, Biawystok, Halle, Magdeburg, Manresa, Newcastle, Piraeus, and Vienna

- Executive Summary -

**Willem van Winden
Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences
Lead expert REDIS**

Contact:

**Dr Willem van Winden
Schoolstraat 33
2912 CP Nieuwerkerk
The Netherlands
Tel. +31 6 41427013
email: w.van.winden@hva.nl**

Intro

It is generally recognized that knowledge has become the prime source of wealth in advanced economies. This is in line with the vision that European leaders have set in the Lisbon Summit at the beginning of the new century: a competitive Europe that bases its economic strength on knowledge and creativity. The Lisbon Goals include the promotion of innovation, the enhancement of scientific research and its commercialization, and the increase of the skills level of the labor force. National governments have committed to these goals and share the ambitions. In the early years, the 'Lisbon Goals' were mainly understood as a pan-European and national matter.

Increasingly, however, urban regions have become recognized as important active 'engines' and promoters of the knowledge economy. Europe's cities are the main centers of knowledge creation, commercialization and innovation, and their policies and attitudes can make an important difference.

In the REDIS project, we focus on one particular and highly significant aspect of urban policy for the knowledge economy: how to create or promote special locations, zones, quarters or parks, where knowledge based companies and institutes are co-located. These can be new locations (greenfield initiatives) or redevelopment projects that aim to transform existing urban districts. It is in these locations that Europe's knowledge economy has its focal point. They are the cradles of innovation, and therefore lay an important basis for future prosperity.

Based on reviewing existing literature, case studies and other sources, it can be concluded that there are several 'knowledge gaps' surrounding the development of science quarters. We will address them in our project.

Develop science quarters as integrated part of the city

There has been substantial research and many policy initiatives to support 'free standing' science parks. However, there is a growing recognition that science parks or 'science quarters' should be developed as an integrated part of the city. There has been growing interest in different forms of science quarters. Strikingly, however, there has been no systematic analysis of the conditions and policies required to develop successful quarters. 'Integrated' science quarters are embedded in the physical and social structure of the city, and this raises a number of issues, such as how to involve the (large number of) stakeholders, how to ensure connectivity with adjacent areas, how to avoid large disparities etc. Moreover, the policy process of developing such quarters is very complex as well. Many actors are typically involved, with different agenda's. Especially the optimization of the 'triple helix' at the local level deserves attention here. It is difficult to make 'blueprints' or generally applicable guidelines in this respect, but nevertheless, the REDIS project aims to reveal common issues and lines. REDIS takes 8 cities with different conditions at different stages of developing science quarters. This will result in a series of guidelines, tips, examples and recommendations for cities that want to set up science quarters. Moreover, we will organize 'external' site visits to successful knowledge quarters in Europe and seek to derive lessons from their approach.

Elaborate specific themes in depth

There is a lack of systematic knowledge about a number of specific themes and topics in relation to science quarters (examples are: marketing & branding, dealing with heritage, optimizing the 'triple helix' on the local level, management models for areas). A number of individual case studies and descriptions of 'good practice' exist, but what lacks is a systematic and comparative perspective that can serve as a basis for learning for other cities. In REDIS we intend to fill this gap, by selecting a set of key themes (based on the needs of the partner cities) and elaborate them in depth, from a comparative perspective, in our eight partner cities (but also using insights and lessons from good practice cases all over Europe). In REDIS, we will create guidelines, tips, examples and

recommendations for cities. This baseline study has been a key instrument to identify relevant themes for each city, by interviewing key stakeholders in each partner city in a systematic way.

Address complex governance issues

There is a growing recognition that the ‘success’ of a science quarter is the result of a complex interplay between local, regional, national and European level factors and policies. However, it is less clear how these levels interact, and how the interplay can be rendered more fruitful. National conditions and policies are important success factors for science quarters (national science policy, regulations etc.) but there is little knowledge about how to align ‘generic’ national approaches to the particular needs of particular cities. The same can be said of European policies and policy frameworks (EU framework policies, ERDF operational programmes, science policy etc.). These policies are not designed by cities but their effects are strongly felt ‘on the ground’. Here also, the challenge is to improve the alignment between policy levels, learning from the experience of cities. In REDIS, we intend to create a set of broader policy recommendations for national and EU policy on the general conditions for science quarters. Moreover, we intend to inform and inspire the regional operational programmes that are significant for some of our partner cities. Managing authorities are therefore fully involved in the REDIS project.

One of the key aims of the REDIS project is to contribute to the development of the science quarters in each respective partner city. Therefore, each partner has set up a local support group, consisting of key decision makers/stakeholders in the science quarter. Members of this group are actively involved in REDIS’ activities and also provide significant inputs. They are the main beneficiaries of activities at the level of REDIS and the thematic pole, and REDIS will ensure mechanisms to make this work. Moreover, Local Action Plans will be deeply informed by findings, results and lessons that come out of the project’s exchange activities. For this baseline study, a number of LSG members have been interviewed, to learn their view and expectations of the REDIS project and to ensure their commitment. This way, it is ensured that the REDIS project from the start deals with themes and topics of direct relevance to the key stakeholders ‘on the ground’ in each partner city.