



Greater Dunkirk Council Local Action Plan

RUnUP Thematic Network

AN URBACT II PROJECT



Connecting cities
Building successes



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Foreword

The economy is fundamental for a territory which controls the 3rd biggest port in France and one of the biggest industrial energy platforms in Europe.

The Greater Dunkirk Council has for a considerable time supported and invested in the development of its local economy. It has done this through providing services, materials and scientific research in key areas: employment, economic promotion, help for start ups, university development, Research & Development and contribution to the development of the port of Dunkirk.

Worldwide economic changes and the signing of the Lisbon Treaty reflect how we must drive towards reinforcing and adapting our policies by supporting local economic development.

For these reasons, the Greater Dunkirk Council has decided to link up with key actors (specially the university) and together they have confirmed their common strategic objectives through a local action plan.

That is the reason why the Greater Dunkirk Council has decided to integrate the URBA2 European programme and more specifically the RUnUP project (The Role of Universities for Economic Development in Urban Poles).

The specific challenge we wish to address in our city is enhancement of university knowledge and competencies to support economic development and encourage entrepreneurship. We are convinced that by working through this URBA2 network we will be better able to address these challenges.

In fact, the Council has decided to become part of this project so that the territory can participate in a European network of towns, mainly marine and industrial, providing opportunities for academic cooperation. Moreover, it is a catalyst for the participation of the University in the coastal economic development of Dunkirk.

Together we feel that this wish is not only an indispensable response to the expectations of our citizens but one which also provides us with a strong competitive force and attractiveness for our region.

Our partnerships prove to us that there is a real regional interest for the harmonious development of our area.



Michel DELEBARRE

Former Government Minister
MP and Mayor

Chairman of the Greater Dunkirk Council

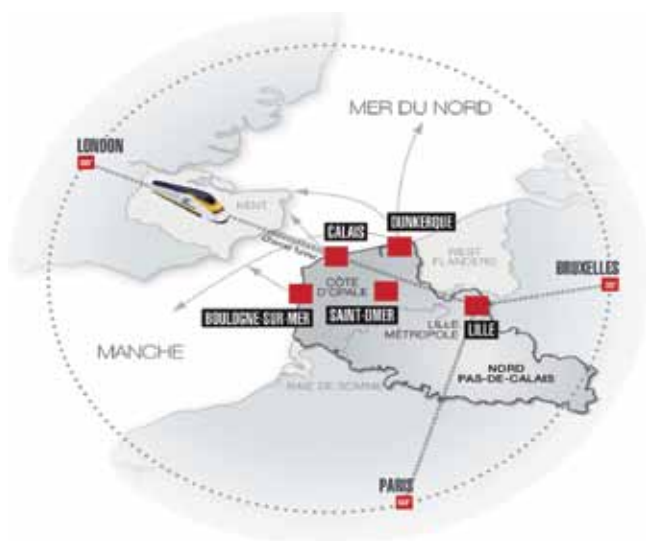
Introduction

The Nord-Pas de Calais region covers 12,414 km² or 2.3% of the French surface area. The region is home to four million inhabitants accounting for approximately 6.5% of the national population.

Main urban centres are Lille (the capital with more than 1 million inhabitants), Valenciennes, Dunkerque, Calais, Arras and Boulogne.

The region shares 350km of border with Belgium and 100 million inhabitants within a 300 km radius. Trade between Great Britain and continental Europe has given rise to the large seaports of Calais, Boulogne and Dunkerque.

Dunkerque is in a strategic geographical position within range of 5 European capitals: London, Paris, Brussels, Amsterdam and Luxembourg.



The Greater Dunkirk Council was established in 1969 and consists of 18 towns (200 000 inhabitants), located in the region of the Nord - Pas de Calais that stretches from the Belgian border to Le Touquet.

Its current president is Michel Delebarre, former Government Minister.

The Greater Dunkirk district is an industrial and seaport conurbation, marked by the establishment of an internationally-renowned iron and steel centre in the 1960s.

In the new millennium, Dunkirk became one of the first energy platforms in Europe, due to its manufacturing infrastructures and to industrial needs.

In the late 1980s, it went through a major economic crisis that resulted in a sharp increase in unemployment which weakened the economic fabric with resultant negative effects on social and urban life.

The resulting urban, social and economic challenges were substantial.

In 1989, a new integrated and comprehensive strategy was adopted with contribution from national and European Union Structural Funds which helped manage a long period of economic recession.

Then, after 2000, the funds were used to facilitate diversification and development of the Dunkirk region. Since then, over 300 new businesses have been created with investments totalling 2,7 billion.



Since 2007, the Greater Dunkirk Council, driven by Michel Delebarre (Chairman of the Regional Committee of the European Union at that time), understood the strategic interest to participate in European programmes.

That is the reason why in 2008, the Council joined the URBACT II - RUnUP network which is a unique opportunity to examine the role of the university in the territorial economic development. The main objectives of the RUnUP project are:

- to stimulate Research & Development
- to enhance the cooperation between the territory, the University and companies
- to promote entrepreneurship.

Under this programme, the Council has strengthened its' ties with the university. Together they developed a local action plan which makes a progress report of what actions have been done and what actions will be done under the RUnUP programme.

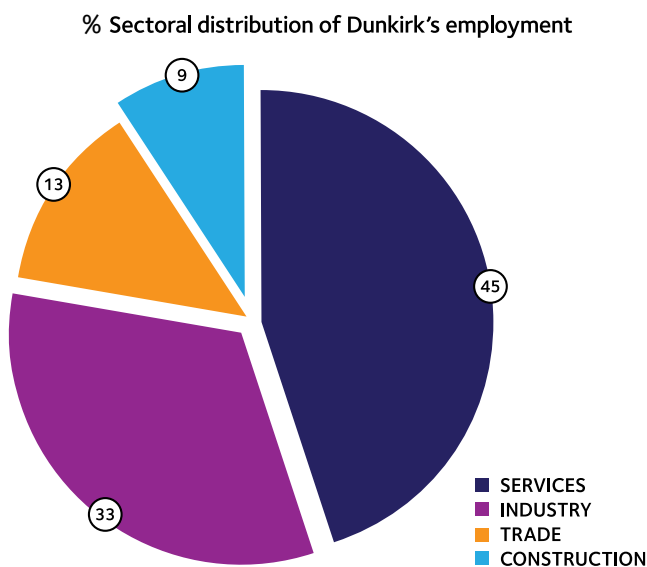
In this Local Action Plan, we will firstly look at the economic situation of the territory of Dunkirk, which will lead us to develop how the Université du Littoral Côte d'Opale (ULCO) has become a major territorial partner.

Then we look at the stakeholders involved in the Dunkirk ULSG and the methodology (study visits, network visits). Finally, we will conclude the Local Action Plan with a description of actions linked with the RUnUP programme and set up by the Greater Dunkirk Council.

Economic assessment

The economy of the Nord-Pas de Calais region is dynamic and diversified. It ranks first as host region for foreign companies with 1,500 companies possessing foreign equity. The region ranks third in France in the number of businesses with over 500 employees.

The traditional sectors of coal-mining, metal-work and textiles have undergone major economic and social restructuring in the last 25 years.



In the Greater Dunkirk Council area industrial employment accounts for 33% compared with 16% and 22% at national and departmental level respectively. Since 1998, the number of jobs in industry has fallen by 3 points, whilst jobs in services have risen by the same amount. The same trend can be observed at national level. This illustrates the strong influence of industrial employment within the Dunkirk Council area and its continuing importance with regard to other areas of France.

With an unemployment rate of 12,8% in the fourth quarter of 2009 in the Dunkirk employment zone, the area has a structural gap 3 points higher than the national average (9,6%), which shows no evidence of a sustainable reduction.

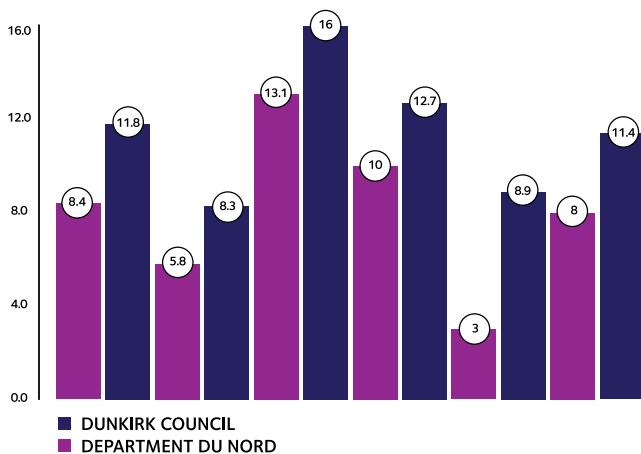
On the other hand, the unemployment rate is structurally lower by an average of 0,5 to 1 point compared with regional level. Since the first quarter of 2006, the Dunkirk employment zone has seen a sharper drop in the unemployment rate compared with the regional average.

At a local level the business requirements in terms of workforce training are changing significantly.

There is a need for increasingly versatile and qualified personnel boosting recruitment at BAC Pro (BTEC National diploma) and BTS (Brevet de Technicien Supérieur - vocational training certificate) level. In particular, skilled areas where companies have identified a need, include hydraulics engineers, technicians, heating mechanics and in the metal and steel industry.

In terms of company creation, the number of new businesses being created in the Dunkirk Council area remains below that at departmental level (Département du Nord). In particular the business creation rate is three percent lower than at departmental level for all sectors of activity.

% Employment creation rates



This is particularly true in the services sector, which, in terms of structure, forms the basis for the majority of new business creations at national level. Significantly there is a strikingly low creation rate in industry and transportation and low levels of expansion among Large Enterprise, due to the concentration of employees in pure production activities and additionally low levels of innovation within Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises.

However the Dunkirk Council area lacks the Research & Development and business service activities that are normally associated with the location of Large Enterprises. Related to this, there is the risk increasingly identified by SMEs of their dependence on these Large Enterprises alongside their lack of creativity and innovation.

Key issues include the mismatch between employment opportunities and appropriately qualified staff and the appeal of the area and the property offer for the relocation of staff.

Despite these weaknesses, the Greater Dunkirk Council area has major project opportunities with development potential which include the Liquid Natural Gas terminal, an agro-food industrial park, a technological platform and an I-Trans etc.

The area also provides a favourable climate in the energy and maintenance sectors in particular around nuclear energy, fuel-cell technology and bio-fuels.

The analysis of the economic potential of the territory, put together by the consulting firm KATALYSE, underlined the principal characteristics of the local economy:

Strengths

- Third biggest French port
- Europe's leading energy hub
- Solid industrial culture
- A dense skill base
- The region's second largest site for foreign investment (77 sites, 13 000 jobs)
- Training programmes well-adapted and directly linked to the economic situation of the territory
- Good networking between local industries
- Strong dynamics in coastal and urban development
- One of Europe's largest land reserves: 3500ha available in 7000 ha of industrial estates

Weaknesses

- Lack of R&D facilities within companies
- Low GDP per capita and low productivity
- Under-performing in all indicators of the Public Knowledge factor, in particular in high Tech services and public R&D
- Less high-tech and medium/ high-tech manufacturing than in the average French regions
- High risk of globalisation
- Low company creation rate
- High unemployment rate (12,4%)
- High competition from other European ports
- Ageing population

Opportunities

- Certain projects with huge potential development which should improve the territory's positioning in the sector of logistics / transport
- Favourable situation in the energy sector (development of a cluster of excellence)
- Competitive land price compared to Belgium
- Efficient public research centres and lab. Groups
- Absence of structurally risky sectors in the very short term (currently balanced, due to the recent economic crisis)

Threats

- Ageing population
- Recent repurchases of SMEs (globalisation)
- Competitiveness between seaports (Antwerp, Rotterdam, Le Havre...)
- Unlikelihood of survival of manufacturing in Western Europe
- Insufficient links between the partners of the economic sectors to generate effective networks
- Dispersion of business and weakness of links with other regions

The KATALYSE study has identified opportunities in the area highlighting what areas should be prioritised and which activities should be developed.

One of the objectives of the Lisbon Strategy is to make the European Union the most competitive and the most dynamic knowledge economy of the world.

Economic Diversification is seen as the key problem in relation to Dunkirk where the university contribution to the economy is seen as insufficient and the linking of the local economy to the energy sector makes the future particularly uncertain given the current global climate.

The focus in this case is on the diversification of companies into new knowledge economy areas linked to the environmental sector and sustainability with particular links to the environmental research centre and developing entrepreneurial support services of the university.



In particular the Local Action Plan identifies a requirement to enhance the level of innovation by developing partnerships working between businesses to maintain and develop industrial employment.

The potential impact of concentration on Large Enterprises for employment is well recognized and there is a requirement to maximize the position of the council area as a transport and logistics hub.

Specifically the Greater Council considers the development of a cluster of sustainable technology supported by the involvement of the university in technology transfer and logistics as key development.

The development of an entrepreneurial and innovation culture is particularly important. In this context the council sees the importance of a strategy that targets:

- The development of emerging and potential new economic sectors
- The creation of an entrepreneurial university campus.
- The attraction and retention of students, graduates, researchers and businesses
- The establishment of an innovation culture and environment for SMEs
- The development of Innovation and Research & Development projects with big firms

The challenges identified by the baseline study are as follows:

- Fully articulate the state of diversification in its local economy.
- Fully understand how its knowledge based partners deliver activity in support of economic transformation.
- Deliver new knowledge-based collaboration activity in line with economic transformation requirements. The RUNUP baseline study has clearly identified the importance of the Université du Littoral Côte d'Opale as a mechanism for research, technology transfer and entrepreneurship with all local partners.

One of the main objectives of the territory is to develop its attractiveness, especially towards researchers, students, engineers or skilled workers, and company creators.

That is the reason why the whole territorial communication is based on offers in terms of infrastructure, environment and dynamism.



How Dunkirk has made the University a major territorial partner

The Nord-Pas de Calais region is the second largest academic centre in France, with seven universities, 23 engineers schools and more than 150,000 students.

There was no higher education system in Dunkirk until 1988. ULCO opened in 1991, having spent one year attached to Lille III University (human sciences and management).

The Greater Dunkirk Council is one of the most important stakeholders in its development.



ULCO is a multi-disciplinary university with 11,000 students split over four campuses:

- Boulogne-sur-Mer
- Calais
- Dunkirk
- Saint Omer

The main campus of the university is based in Dunkirk: in 2008, there were more than 6,800 students in this campus.

This commitment is the result of an agreement signed between ULCO and the Greater Dunkirk Council between 1996 to 1998.

The second stage of the convention corresponds to the period 2000–2006 during which the Greater Dunkirk Council provided €4,600 000 in funding.

This subsidy covers:

- the development of research (co-financing of research bursaries, organisation of conferences and staging of various events);
- international co-operation;
- professional and social mentoring of students (counselling and information, campaigns for company creation, etc); and
- a cultural organization (participation in substantial cultural events opened for all kinds of public over the years).

The new agreement for 2009–2013, signed in 2009, encourages the development of an entrepreneurial culture in collaboration with the other local partners (Flandre Création Association, the Local Committee for Projects Support, etc).

The Greater Dunkirk Council has funded the University on numerous projects from before its opening in 1991:

- construction of university premises
- purchasing of research equipment
- construction of laboratories
- subventions for cultural events led by the university
- financing of PhD students
- support on international partnerships
- financial help in the setting up of the University careers office
- refurbishment of a former tobacco warehouse (Entrepôt des Tabacs) on the docks of Dunkirk: student's services office (Maison des Etudiants), ISCID (international business school) and the Enterprise Hub
- financing of two new positions focused on employability

This support has enabled ULCO to become a key economic player in the Dunkirk area regarding socio-economic decisions directly linked to the University.

As ULCO is a relatively new university, its training and research programs are directly oriented towards local industries and economic priorities such as industrial environment and safety, erosion/flooding, renewable energy and port logistics.



For instance, ULCO has developed training and research programs which focus on:

- sustainable development
- tourism
- transport
- urban development
- industrial processes and environmental impact
- cross-border development (Dutch language in particular)

The Greater Dunkirk Council and ULCO are in the process of setting up projects linked with promoting the “Lisbonisation” strategy, increasing the level of private and public R&D expenditure and projects, promoting entrepreneurial spirit, fostering the creation of knowledge intensive jobs and upgrading scientific and technology performance of existing higher education institutions.

Through these projects, the Greater Dunkirk Council aims to reinforce its links with ULCO and makes the university a major territorial partner that contributes to economic development.

That is the reason why some economic and research projects have been or are being developed by key actors from the territorial, economic and higher education structures following the “triple helix” methodology, for instance through the development of Public-Private Partnerships (PPP – Partenariats Public-Privé).

Tutored projects

Since its creation in 1991, certain departments of the Université du Littoral Côte d’Opale (ULCO) have worked alongside local industry, especially the department of Chemistry.

The idea behind the tutored projects is that local companies can use student’s skills in order to address a particular development or technical issue within the company.

In that respect, ULCO (and ISCID) makes students available for small to medium sized companies who need them for projects where they don’t have the means or time to set up for themselves.

Master’s students are targeted with tutored projects however certain scientific undergraduate courses also work on a tutored project during the third year

In ULCO, the university year begins in October. From October to March students have to follow courses in the University.

Depending on their course, students or groups of students (usually two to five students per group) spend one to two days a week working on tutored projects in project rooms allocated in the University.

They have two tutors: one within the University and one within the company which enables the work to achieve both a practical and an academic perspective.

Students can also visit the company where they are working to gather information necessary for their work.

As an example of tutored projects, we can quote the cooperation between ULCO’s students and “Bâtisseurs d’Economie Solidaire” (BES, which is an association which promotes ecological construction and social and community-based activities. BES is subsidised by the Greater Dunkirk Council).

To strengthen the ties between the University, companies and territory, BES has taken part in the tutored projects initiative regarding the creation of an eco-zone based in Coudekerque-Branche (a suburb within the Council).

This eco-zone project consists of converting an industrial waste land into a business park dedicated to “the green economy”, with solar panels, wind machines, health food shops and health food restaurants. At least, fourteen tutored projects have been set up with the University and BES.

From April to June, students spend three months on a paid work placement within the company in order to complete their academic year.

The University hopes that these tutored projects will give students the opportunity to be kept on in the company in the form of a work placement and possibly give them the chance to be kept on in full time employment after the work placement.

Thanks to the tutored projects, students can be a part of the “companies’ life” through the setting up of a specific project.

Moreover, the President of ULCO felt that it was necessary to involve students directly into companies so that they would gain valuable professional experience related to their field of study.

From the companies' point of view, ULCO's students bring a young and dynamic vision to the company through these projects. They address certain issues of development that they did not have the resources or time to devote attention to. The University also feels that this initiative enables the company to reap great benefits.

One of the objectives of the RUnUP project consists in enhancing the Triple Helix partnership represented by the cooperation between the territory (represented by the Greater Dunkirk Council), Higher education (ULCO) and the economic world (companies).

The tutored projects clearly link up students from ULCO and companies since students work on specific projects and help companies' development.

In May 2010, the Council recruited and financed the position of a project manager in the Centre for Entrepreneurial studies whose missions consist in overseeing all the projects that are being carried out by students in companies and identifying potential companies. Lastly, the tutored projects are mainly financed by the companies themselves but the Greater Dunkirk Council also contributes in part to this financing.

Volontariat International en Entreprise (VIE)

Companies can engage the services of a graduate (aged 18-28) for an export assignment, lasting 6-24 months, under the umbrella of the Ministry of Foreign Trade.

This VIE (Volontariat International en Entreprise) was set up in France in 2001 and since then 21 000 students have carried out a placement on behalf of 2 800 companies in about 137 countries.

The Nord-Pas de Calais is the region which has the third highest number of VIEs with about 240 students on placements abroad.

90% of these VIEs concern graduate with Masters degrees, but it is possible to apply for a VIE with a Higher National Diploma or a Bachelors Degree.

These technical or commercial placements are determined by companies: market research, identifying new customers or strengthening of local teams.

Since the setting up of the system, ISCID has sent six students abroad every year through the VIE system, mostly in sectors such as transportation, purchasing, retailing and marketing.

Currently, ULCO (especially ISCID) wishes to develop the VIE system with SMEs from Dunkirk area which have not yet considered their development on an international scale.

The cooperation with ULCO students could stimulate companies in this project since the funding of these placements is tax deductible and eligible for grants from the French Government and the region.

There is no contractual link between the students and the companies. All management is delegated to UBIFRANCE (a state body in charge of the internationalisation of companies) covering remuneration, insurance policy and social security.

For the companies, the VIE brings them the possibility to expand internationally at a low cost. Furthermore, it could be an opportunity to test out a potential future employee. This graduate represents resources that they did not have, put at their disposal by the government to stimulate export.

Concerning the benefits of a VIE for students, these assignments bring them an international professional experience, giving added value to their CV.

Moreover, it gives them a privileged access to international posts with high responsibilities. Since its creation, 75% of VIE have been hired at the end of their contracts and 80% remain abroad.

Finally, VIEs bring students a considerable personal enrichment through the discovery of a new country and a new culture.

Dunkirk's URBACT Local Support Group

A local support group has been established to deliver the RUnUP project in Dunkirk. The members are from:

- **The Greater Dunkirk Council**
- **The University (ULCO)**
- **The Nord-Pas de Calais region**
- **The economic development agency (Dunkerque Promotion)**
- **Chamber of commerce (CCI)**

The local meetings were chaired by an elected representative. Most of the time, it was the vice-president in charge of economic development and sometimes the vice-president in charge of research and higher education.

Many initiatives, conferences and meetings have been put up with quite significant issues for the URBACT RUnUP program:

- 24th September 2009: presentation of the main objectives of the Local Plan for Economic Development (including innovation and entrepreneurship) for all the partners
- 19th October 2009: "Innovation Forum", conference held in Dunkirk, with the university, students, researchers, firms, and including a stand where the URBACT Run Up was presented.
- 5th November 2009: presentation of the territory's local action plan to the elected representatives of the Greater Dunkirk Council
- 20th November 2009: official launching of the local action plan. The presentation included the forthcoming building in Dunkirk of the Central Lab of the Institute of Research in Industrial Environment (program financed by the Greater Dunkirk Council, the Region and ERDF). This project is the junction point between the industrial world, the territory and the university.
- 21st and 22nd January 2010: Annual Forum for Innovation and Creation on the Littoral (FACIL - Forum Annuel pour la Création et l'Innovation du Littoral)
- 8th June 2010: official launching of the "tutored projects" disposal
- 18th October 2010: ULSG and Dr. WINTER's masterclass

- 21st December 2010: meeting with all the university's sites, in order to rationalize the university's building and rehabilitation programmes
- 14th January 2011: official launching of IRENI's project management group
- 8th April 2011: opening of the "Entrepôt des Tabacs" building, including the enterprise hub

The role of this local support group was to:

- develop comprehensive programmes that will bring universities, the business sector and the public sector together to drive forward economic development
- provide structured support to start-up companies, providing strategic consultation and help in the expansion of companies through partnerships working together
- ensure university curricula meet the skills requirements of local businesses
- influence appropriate local economic regeneration practices and policies
- promote employability in the area by linking student courses to company needs

The Dunkirk local support group has made a specific effort in the field of entrepreneurship : it was consulted about the recruitment of an entrepreneurship project manager as well as the appointment of the selected candidate.

Moreover, the local support group has focused on research in the industrial environment, setting up a management group in charge of the "IRENI" building program including researchers in environment and local political figures.

Methodology

Opening Conference

Gateshead, UK. The thematic network visit took place on 9th February 2009 and consisted in conferences on RUnUP themes, like "The importance of knowledge-based industries to the regional economy and the role of One NorthEast", "The economic impact of Universities", "The role of a RUnUP Project Partner".

Study Visits

To develop the Local Action Plan, the ULSG members have participated in a number of exchange and learning activities including study visits to:

- Enschede, Netherlands. Focusing on the University of Twente where "The Cooperation between the private sector, the University and the government is unique". The study visit took place on 24th and 25th March 2010.

Representatives from Dunkirk attended conferences such as "University/Industry interaction", "Business development support activities and their role in creating an Entrepreneurial University", "Joint working and development between the local authority and the University", "Cooperation between the University of Twente and the Community of Enschede/Province of Overijssel".

- Coventry, UK. Exploring how the city of Coventry works in collaboration with the University. One representative of the Greater Dunkirk Council and two representatives of ULCO (ISCID and CEL) went to Coventry and were welcomed by Dr Clive Winters.

Network Visits

They also attended thematic network visits to:

- Águeda, Portugal. Exploring how cities can harness the triple helix as a motor of local development.

ULSG members went to Águeda on 24 June 2009 and attended a meeting entitled "Triple Helix: Local development engine".

Conferences during this meeting included "The role of universities for economic development in urban poles", "Fostering the triple helix at the local level", "From concept to practice: cooperation networks for innovation".

- Potsdam, Germany. Exploring the Urban Poles' potential of being a city of science. This thematic network took place on 18 February 2010 and proposed conferences such as "What is the science marketing/knowledge marketing and what can it achieve?", "How cities without a dominant higher education sector can benefit from knowledge marketing?".

Topics more specifically related to the Potsdam case were presented: "What role communicating knowledge city qualities play so far in Potsdam?", "Which key actors have to be activated to design and implement such a knowledge marketing strategy?", "How may triple helix collaboration help achieving this?", "Which role do you see location marketing playing in tackling fundamental challenges such as talent retention?".

- Barakaldo, Spain. Exploring how cities can adopt talent attraction and retention strategies to foster growth. Dunkirk representatives attended conferences on 17 June 2010. Conferences included "Lea Artibai region's Strategic Plan", "Goierri region's Innovation Pole" and "Faculty of Mining in Barakaldo and its future challenges".

Furthermore, Chris Wilson and Clive Winters came to Dunkirk in February 2010 in order to see what initiatives were being undertaken in the Dunkirk area.

ULSG Peer Review

According to the territory's proposal, a "preferential partner" was successfully identified bilaterally across the URBACT RUnUP network: the Municipality of Águeda.

This partnership allowed the setting up of an Erasmus partnership between ULCO and the University of Aveiro, next to Águeda.

A peer review program in each country was programmed in order to reinforce the links and to discuss common difficulties, in June (Dunkirk) and December (Águeda) 2010.

Representatives from Águeda came to Dunkirk from the 27th to the 30th of June 2010.

Members of the Greater Dunkirk Council showcased the “Entrepôt des Tabacs” building, home to ISCID (University’s International Business School) and the Research Centre in Industrial Environment (MREID: Maisons de la Recherche en Environnement Industriel de Dunkerque).

Representatives from the Greater Dunkirk Council also presented the IRENI project and gave a conference on “the coordination between university, territory and the economic partners”, presenting the involvement of the University in the project, the public/private Research & Development project “Innocold”, the tutored projects and the Centre for Entrepreneurship.

Finally, representatives from Dunkirk went to Águeda on 15 and 16 December 2010 and met the members of Águeda’s Local Support Group:

- The Municipality of Águeda
- The University of Aveiro
- ESTGA: Escola Superior de Tecnologia e Gestao de Águeda (Superior School of Technology and Management of Agueda, a part of the University of Aveiro)
- AEA: Associação Empresarial de Agueda (Agueda’s Firms’Association)
- AIDA: Associação Industrial de Distrito de Aveiro (Industrial Association of Aveiro District)
- IAPMEI: Intituto de Apoio às Pequenas e Medias Empresase à Inovação (institute for development of SMEs)
- ABIMOTA: Associação Nacional das Industrias de Duas Rodas, Ferragens, Mobiliario e Afins (association of two wheels industries)
- Instituto Pedro Nunes - Valorização do conhecimento e inovação (knowledge valorizationand innovation)
- LIQ: Laboratorio Industrial da Qualidade (Industrial Laboratory for Qaulity)

They also attended many conferences:

- Social Business Responsibility: What is the role of business in society ?
- Biodiversity and the business world: What relationship is possible ?
- Energy and climate: How companies can make a difference ?
- Innovation versus Internationalisation
- The importance of triple helix network in the innovation process
- Presentation of the “Entrepôt des Tabacs” (see appendix)

All of these visits and meetings have a snowball effect for ULCO, creating new networks and joint projects with the other partners from the RUNUP programme.

Erasmus partnerships between ULCO, the University of Aveiro (Portugal) and the University of Coventry (UK) are already underway.

ULCO is working to develop an Erasmus partnership with Patras in Greece and Newcastle in the UK.

A number of successful pilot initiatives have also been developed as a result of opportunities identified by the Local Support Group, including:

- the launch of the enterprise hub (located in the “Entrepôt des Tabacs” in Dunkirk): delivery of support and incubation services and support to entrepreneurs
- linking companies to University with tutored projects
- creation of a post of “Business Development Manager” for company prospection
- IRENI (Institute for research in industrial environment, associated with four other universities at the regional scale)
- provision of student accommodation

Finally, representatives from Dunkirk attended thematic seminars and thematic master classes

Forum de l’innovation



The objective of the Innovation Forum is to gather the stakeholders of innovation from the territory (innovating companies, research centres, universities, banks, local authorities). As a result, they can meet and share information about innovation. Moreover, the actors such as companies or research centres can present their projects and find funding opportunities from banks or other companies.

The Greater Dunkirk Council participated in the Forum of Innovation in October 2009. This event is linked with the European Union's strategy which presents innovation as a key element of competitiveness and attractiveness.

The discussions during this forum were about stimulating and funding innovative projects thanks to European funds and public/private partnerships.

Forum FACIL (Annual Forum for Creation and Innovation)

For the 10th edition, the forum FACIL have been organized by ULCO in partnership with the Greater Dunkirk Council.

FACIL is a forum which gathers the different stakeholders in economic development on the coast in order to discuss and share ideas about the topics chosen in advance, concerning creation and innovation.

For example, the 10th forum FACIL (21 and 22 January 2010) was entitled "What is an entrepreneurial city ?" Many representatives of the Greater Dunkirk Council attended this event.

The 11th forum FACIL took place on 17th and 18th March 2011 and was entitled "What territorial leaders are necessary for the development and creation of SMEs?".

Semaine de l'innovation



The "semaine de l'innovation" is an entire week dedicated to meetings and exchanges in order to promote and favour future innovations.

The objective is to raise awareness of the "innovation reflexes" giving the incentive to innovate.

This event is staged over five days and brings together Heads of industry, SME's, researchers, large companies, innovating creators and investors.

Many topics are discussed and many show cases, workgroups, conferences and open days are set up in order to network, create partnerships or initiate projects.

Masterclass

Dr Clive Winters and Dr Gideon Maas (co-directors of the Institute of Entrepreneurship within the University of Coventry) visited to ULCO on 18 October 2010 in order to present a two hour masterclass entitled "Developing the Entrepreneurial University".

The business school students from ISCID attended the masterclass along with the business creation degree students from ULCO.

It is planned that Dr Winters will return to ULCO in 2011 to carry out a second, more intense masterclass on Entrepreneurship with students from the United Kingdom who are in the process of setting up their own companies.

In this way, French and English students can compare and contrast the different factors that are involved in the setting up of a company on both sides of the Channel. It is hoped that ULCO students will be inspired by the conviction of the UK student creators from Coventry where there are on average 100 business creations per year.

Enterprisers



Enterprisers is an experiential entrepreneurship programme based on experiential learning and a vehicle to build a bridge between research and business through knowledge transfers, established by the Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning at the University of Cambridge.

It is a four-day residential programme and each programme involves 64 students UK Universities.

One representative of ISCID and one representative of the Centre for Entrepreneurial studies of ULCO (CEL) attended the Enterpriser programme on 10 June 2010.

The principal aim of this programme is to develop entrepreneurial confidence in individuals, to stimulate enterprising projects and to unleash creativity.

For students, it is an educational experience that builds self-confidence and self-belief in order that they can begin to apply their knowledge and skills in entrepreneurial ways to create new companies or support existing ones through being more innovative.

The activities proposed by the Enterprisers programme tests the reaction of students regarding working in teams, interacting with entrepreneurs, simulating a business task and working on real creative ideas.

It is hoped that Cambridge Enterprisers will use Dunkirk as a venue during the 2011/2012 academic year involving ULCO, the University of Lille and the University of Gent.

Continental Spin-off

Thanks to contacts made between ULCO and the University of Gent during the Enterprisers programme, the University of Gent invited ULCO to be a part of a European Entrepreneurial Interregional partnership funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

The aim of this project is to disseminate knowledge and experience to learn from others (exchange know how and contacts) and to set up a business network throughout the European Union.

An International Entrepreneurial seminar is being held in Knokke from 4 to 8 April 2011. Eight European Universities will participate in the week long residential course, entirely funded by the ERDF: the University of Applied Sciences in Gent (Belgium), Zuyd (Netherlands), Lille (France), ISCID/ULCO (France), Algarve (Portugal), Buckinghamshire (England), Frankfurt (Deutschland), and Wilhemshaven (Deutschland).

Dr Gideon Maas from Coventry will come to Knokke to observe the seminar in order to plan new European projects and to reinforce links between Enterprise Hubs of UK, France and Belgium.

Local Action Plan

The conclusions of the KATALYSE survey allowed the territory to draw up its economic policy and to create a Local Plan for Economic Development (LPED) entitled “Diversifying and Reinforcing the Local Economy For Everyone”.



The Local Plan for Economic Development (LPED) is led by the Greater Dunkirk Council and Région Nord/Pas-de-Calais and includes the involvement of key actors who have an important role to play in economic development.

The key actors are:

- The territory, represented by the French State, the Nord-Pas de Calais region., “Département du Nord”, the Great Dunkirk Council and the regional direction of land settlement and housing.
- Higher education, represented by the “Université du Littoral Côte d’Opale” (ULCO).
- The economic world, represented by the Dunkirk Chamber of Commerce, the Chambers of Trade and Industry, the Employment agency, the port of Dunkirk, “Dunkerque Promotion”, “Maison de l’emploi” and Flanders-Dunkirk planning office.

The LPED is based on 5 focus areas:

- 1 Helping companies to develop in key emerging areas
- 2 Developing the innovation potential in the territory
- 3 Encouraging new activities and developing the entrepreneurial spirit in the area
- 4 Developing the services and tourism sectors
- 5 Employability and solidarity

The Greater Dunkirk Council used the LPED to write the Local Action Plan, in particular objective 1 (helping companies to develop in key emerging areas), objective 2 (Developing the innovation potential in the territory) and objective 3 (Encouraging new activities and developing the entrepreneurial spirit in the area).

Four projects were set up by the CUD, linked with the RUnUP project, in order to develop research and development, to strengthen the role of the university in the land development and to enhance the triple helix partnership.

Projects	Lead organisation	Other stakeholders	Financing route	Timescale
IRENI Setting up of a central laboratory focusing on air quality, consequences of air quality on public health. Socio-economics and juridical consequences.	The Greater Dunkirk Council (GDC)	The European Union The French State Département du Nord Nord/Pas-de-Calais region ULCO	Estimated cost: 5.5 millions euros The European Union (EFERD): 1 million The French State: 1 million Département du Nord: 0.5 million Nord/Pas-de-Calais region: 1 million The GDC: 2 millions	The end of the construction of the building is expected in 2013
Pole of regional economic excellence The territory of Dunkirk wants to create a pole of regional economic excellence concerning industrial environment and energy.	The GDC	Nord/Pas-de-Calais region	The Greater Dunkirk Council and the Nord-Pas de Calais region co-financed a positioning study regarding the pole of excellence.	It is hoped that the pole will be officially presented to the conference of the Regional Plan for Economic Development in June 2011.
Innocold The Innocold project consists in Research and Development, technology transfer and training centre about industrial implementations of cold technology.	The GDC	Dunkerque LNG (EDF), Dalkia, Europipe, Entrepose Contracting ArcelorMittal	Public-private co-financing. Total amount: 9.5 million euros co-financed by the GDC, the French State and the Nord/Pas-de-Calais region.	The timescale of the action depends on the setting up of the Methane Terminal in Dunkirk.
“Entrepôt des Tabacs” The GDP provided ULCO with a renovated warehouse which houses “la maison des étudiants”, the Centre for Entrepreneurial studies, the “Espace Projet Initiative” and ISCID (business school within ULCO)	The GDC	The French State The Nord/Pas-de-Calais region ULCO		Official opening in February 2011.

IRENI
(Institut de Recherche en Environnement Industriel -
Research Institute for Industrial Environment)



Air quality, industrial pollution and industrial risk are all major concerns for a population living close to an industrial area. At present there is not one research facility in Dunkirk which focuses on these subjects.

Five Universities in the region have come together to research problems associated with air pollution. Researchers from ULCO, Université de Lille 1, Université de Lille 2, Université d'Artois and the Ecole des Mines in Douai will all be able to use IRENI for their research projects.

The research works will focus on the following key areas:

- air quality
- the consequences of air quality on public health
- socio economic and legal consequences

The IRENI central research centre will cover approximately 1350 m² divided into offices, laboratories, collective instrumentation platforms and common services.

The Greater Dunkirk Council wishes to include environmental quality objectives in the construction process of IRENI such as eco-construction, eco-control (energy water, activity's garbage), comfort (visual and acoustic comfort) and health (air quality).

The cost of this project has been estimated around 5.5 million euros. This operation will be co-financed by the French Government, the Nord-Pas de Calais region, Département du Nord, the Greater Dunkirk Council and the European Union through FEDER (European Funds for Economic Regional Development). Construction is hoped to be completed at the beginning of 2013.

The IRENI project will encourage synergy in research between the 5 universities and local companies, industries and the port of Dunkirk.

It will also enable the partners to establish a bank of high technology equipment unique to France which will increase Dunkirk's scientific attractiveness at a European level towards researchers, students or engineers.

It is also hoped that Dunkirk will become a regional pole of excellence specialising in industrial environment.

IRENI will be the scientific part of this pole providing a real asset for business development and business retention.

Pole of regional economic excellence



The territory of Dunkirk wants to create a pole of regional economic excellence specialising in industrial environment and energy.

This project is linked with the Local Plan for Economic Development of Dunkirk, whose main objective is to "help companies to develop in key emerging areas".



The vocation of this pole is to enable the development of economic activities and SME's by setting up many services (networks to stimulate innovation, international development, training...) and by the federation of industrial actors and researchers in a specific region.

The priorities of the pole will be:

- to structure new or existing industrial activities through services
- to stimulate innovation and stimulate the emergence of new projects
- to develop interaction between companies, research centres and the territory in order to stimulate technological transfers and develop the competence of Dunkirk concerning energy.

The idea behind the regional pole of excellence is to enhance the Triple Helix partnership, developing the links between the territory, companies and the University.

The Greater Dunkirk Council and the Nord-Pas de Calais region co-financed a positioning study regarding the pole of excellence. The conclusions underlined a specialisation on energy subjects, which confirmed a regional legitimacy of Dunkirk on these aspects.

In fact, energy is a strategic subject in the core of socio-economic, environmental and international issues. These issues are specific to the Dunkirk area which is a first class energy platform on the European level.

The pole of excellence will have four principal axes:

- New energy: the aim is to identify and make the most of renewable energy such as wind machines, solar panels, marine energy, etc.
- Energy efficiency: to control the use of energy in order to reduce the costs (process efficiency, new energy...).
- Transport and storage of energy: to improve the knowledge of how to transport and store energy.
- Methodology and means sharing: to reinforce partnerships between companies working on industrial ecology.

It is planned to set up an industrial association which will give conferences on varied scientific subjects.

It is hoped that the pole will be officially presented to the conference of the Regional Plan for Economic Development (Schéma Regional de Développement Economique - SRDE) in June 2011.

Many projects have already been identified to justify Dunkirk as a pole of excellence:

- The Innocold project (see below)
- Transport and storage of energy (pipeline/oil and gas business)
- Development of a wind farm offshore
- Energy and ecological efficiency applied to heat exchange
- Development of new kinds of energy: marine, geothermic or bio fuel

Innocold

The Greater Dunkirk Council wishes to prioritise innovation development in the area.

The Innocold project came about as a result of the construction of a Methane Terminal in Dunkirk.

The terminal stores liquefied natural gas at a temperature of -163°C which can be utilised for industrial processing. This project would enable the region to stand out in the field of cold technology and innovation.

The Innocold project, resulted from a public and private co-venture, consists in Research and Development, technology transfer and a training centre specialising in industrial implementations of cold technology.



Three main themes came to light following a feasibility study which was co financed by public partners (the Greater Dunkirk Council, Département du Nord and the Nord Pas-de-Calais region) and private stakeholders (involving the EDF subsidiary managing the gas terminal project, ArcelorMittal from the steel industry or Europipe, world leader for oil and gas pipeline):

- Material
- Energy and environment
- Industrial security

These themes emerged within regional industry to satisfy demands identified in local industry with newly qualified graduates. These three themes are split into three different activities

- The research side which focuses on materials (characterisation of materials and equipment in extreme conditions), energy and environmental efficiency and industrial security.
- The testing side: it is planned to go from test level in the laboratory to piloting schemes and using real life conditions. In order to achieve this, a cold room industrial test centre is necessary.

- The training side: the need for training in the area of cold technology is lacking in the region. The 2011/2012 University year plans to open with a new professional engineering degree focusing on cold technology. The University is currently searching for industrial partners in order to recruit students in the form of a work placement.

It is hoped that the Innocold project will address the following key issues:

- Acquire the leadership of extreme conditions in order to gain access to major international markets.
- Guarantee the security of equipment and of people in extreme conditions.
- Improve efficiency of transport and cold storage.
- Respond to environmental problems.

“Entrepôt des Tabacs”

The Nord Pas de Calais region hopes to encourage students to set up companies and take over existing business. For this purpose, the region is financing the creation of an EPI (Espace Projet Initiative) in certain regional universities (ULCO included).

Moreover, the Nord-Pas de Calais region supports the staging of events concerning entrepreneurship in ULCO and financially contributes to the creation of the “Campus de l’Entrepreneuriat” project.

Besides, the Greater Dunkirk Council (and other regional territories) faces the problem of company transmission and takeover. An experimental project, inspired by a model from the Université de Laval in Quebec, could be developed in ULCO in Dunkirk with the Council’s support and the Nord-Pas de Calais region.

The objective of this project is to identify volunteer company bosses who wish to sell their business and work with a future entrepreneur who is studying in ULCO.

The Greater Dunkirk Council, ULCO and the Nord Pas de Calais region want this experiment to enable the confrontation of each partner’s ambitions, setting up a pilot area put forward for the development of Entrepreneurial studies within the University.

In this connection, the Council has come up with the creation of the “Campus de l’Entrepreneuriat” (Entrepreneurial Campus) and provided ULCO in 2010 with a renovated warehouse called “Entrepôt des Tabacs” on the port of Dunkirk, just next to the existing University building.

The “Campus de l’Entrepreneuriat” is home to the Centre for Entrepreneurial studies of ULCO (CEL) and the “Espace Projet Initiative” (EPI).



It is a key element of the “Entrepôt des Tabacs” building project which also includes the « Institut Supérieur de Commerce International de Dunkerque » (ISCID) the business school within ULCO), “la maison des étudiants” (students services) and the “Campus de l’Entrepreneuriat”.

The rehabilitation of the “Entrepôt des Tabacs” make available a four floor building measuring about 3,500 square metres:

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| 1st floor: | “la maison des étudiants” (student services, insurance, medical and psychological services) |
| 2nd floor: | CEL (Centre Entrepreneuriat du Littoral) and EPI |
| 3rd and 4th floor: | ISCID |



ISCID has 400 students from 43 countries and offers courses in French and English languages with an international teaching staff.

ISCID also develops work placements in private and public companies abroad through a project called “Volontariat International en Entreprise”, VIE It is an international programme designed to develop international markets for local companies in the Nord-Pas de Calais area.

The CEL opened at the beginning of the 2008-2009 University year. Its aims are to make teaching staff and students aware of the entrepreneurial culture and mostly to encourage and supervise students in the creation of their own companies.

Students are assisted in the setting up of their projects and can test and begin their business during their studies or after their graduation.

That is the reason why the EPI and CEL will be on the same floor. The Campus of Entrepreneurship will be a resource centre, raising awareness among students and monitoring those who have a company creation project or have an "entrepreneurial profile".

This area will be a convivial and a functional space with phone and internet access. Dunkirk will be the second EPI in the Région (a total of 5 to be funded over the coming years).

The Centre for entrepreneurial studies currently has three employees.

The director who heads up the research team has worked in the area of entrepreneurship for many years and is also head of the degree in business creation programme.

The project manager oversees tutored projects that are being carried out by students for companies. She also identifies companies in the area with work placements and projects for ULCO's students.

The secretary oversees the student awareness classes on entrepreneurship which are carried out in approximately 20 different degree courses at undergraduate and post graduate level.

The centre also puts together various seminars on Entrepreneurship, Creativity sessions and also organises a yearly event where students are brought together with companies in the area to facilitate their search for a work placement.

The objective of the "Campus de l'Entrepreneuriat" is to develop an entrepreneurial culture (to inform, initiate...) in the ULCO Dunkirk pole, to respond to one of the main focuses of the regional programme for economic development: making the Dunkirk area an entrepreneurial territory.

The purpose is to encourage students to set up their own companies during or at the end of their studies. This preoccupation is linked with the global objective of the Council: the employment of graduates.

The total amount of the building project is up to 9,5 million euros. The project is co-financed by the Greater Dunkirk Council, the French State and the Nord Pas de Calais region.

The aim for 2011 is that there will be at least two business creations per year within the University that have been housed and assisted in the centre and it is hoped that the numbers will increase over the years to come.

The Regional Council also plans to recruit at least one person to be based on a permanent basis in the centre to offer guidance and assistance to start ups in the area.

Lastly, it is important to quote that this building project is part of a larger urban redefinition programme, which includes, directly nearby the "entrepôt", another building programme which will offer housings for students and engineers, offices, and commercial areas, in order to reinforce the whole area of the university in Dunkirk.



Conclusion

A specific issue facing Urban Poles is that they can not make sufficient use of existing University knowledge and skills to support economic development and encourage entrepreneurship.

The aim of the RUnUP project is to stimulate the partners of the network to develop triple helix structures (companies-territory-university) and the alignment of university activity to local economic development priorities.

The ambition of RUnUP project is to enhance innovation, Research & Development and entrepreneurship in Urban Poles.

Following its Local Plan for Economic Development, the Greater Dunkirk Council set up projects which correspond to RUnUP to develop triple helix partnership.

This ambition could bring new companies, new students and new researchers to the Dunkirk area which could become a reference in private and public R&D, entrepreneurial spirit and in the creation of knowledge intensive jobs.

The RUnUP network gives European partners the opportunity to work together and to share and learn from each other.

Moreover, study visits, network visits and other meetings within the RUnUP programme have a snowball effect for the University which has now developed new networks and joint projects with other Universities involved in the programme.

For example, Erasmus partnerships between ULCO, the University of Aveiro and the University of Coventry are already underway.



The Greater Dunkirk Council expects to reap a lot of benefits from these projects, more particularly concerning the attractiveness of the Dunkirk territory.

Indeed, as an industrial area Dunkirk needs to attract new companies to increase its economic development and to diversify its business activity.

In order to respond to these potential new companies needs, it seems necessary to develop and specialize training and research within the University and to develop innovation and entrepreneurship.

Because the University has become more involved in Entrepreneurship, a partnership has also been formed with Gent Hogeschool and seven other European Universities with the aim of creating a European Entrepreneurship network.

Although the project will be complete in the coming months, the Greater Dunkirk Council aims to continue to work closely with the University by developing more and more joint projects, especially concerning innovation and entrepreneurship, for the future of its territory.

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

It enables cities to work together to develop solutions to major urban challenges, reaffirming the key role they play in facing increasingly complex societal challenges. It helps them to develop pragmatic solutions that are new and sustainable, and that integrate economic, social and environmental dimensions. It enables cities to share good practices and lessons learned with all professionals involved in urban policy throughout Europe. URBACT is 181 cities, 29 countries, and 5,000 active participants

www.urbact.eu/RUnUP

