

SUITE – The Housing Project

Synthesis Meeting Santiago Report

7 & 8 October 2010



Connecting cities
Building successes





SUITE – THE HOUSING PROJECT

SYNTHESIS MEETING - 7 & 8 OCTOBER 2010

CENTER FOR ADVANCED STUDIES IN SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA

Opening

Mercedes Rosón, City Councillor in Urbanism and Housing in Santiago

SUITE is a useful instrument for interchange and learning for all parts involved in the development and implementation of policy in the cities. It recognized best practices of one city and how this can be implemented in another. On the other hand it's also an excellent meeting place to treat the topic of social housing, and make use of studies and analysis that have been realized with diversity of expertise, entities and cities throughout this network. Principal objectives are diversification of the housing offer, re-launch of sustainable housing production and all this with the aim of to know the necessities of the new families and be capable of assure housing for the new residents of the city. With this objective we will continue working, in these times were housing is such a key factor in overcoming the economic crisis.

Synthesis in Housing Policy

**Heidrun Feigelfeld, Lead Expert
Darinka Czischke, Thematic Expert**

Overall objective of the project is achieving a synthesis between the three pillars of sustainability; social, economic and environmental. Three Thematic Meetings has been celebrated; social aspect in Nantes, economic aspect in Newcastle and environmental aspect in Hamburg.

Social aspect: most important factor in social integration is social mix. To make this work it is important for two conditions to be in place; political leadership and funding.

Economic aspect: The focus on problems on housing affordability and housing exclusion. A special focus on homelessness and a specific policy on this matter is important, maybe with a specific focus on young people (case study).

Environmental aspect: It is important to view the environmental aspects in a holistic context; including technical, urban and social measures.

Results from the Synthesis Questionnaire:

Application of lessons in the city: All partners have applied the lessons, but only three partners have applied all three pillars in their work. There seem to be a heavier focus on social, although environmental aspects has also been successful. There has been a strong sign for an interest in and a capacity for the implementation of a synergy in housing policy.

Ways of application: Each partner has applied different ways, but they have all used three of our ways. The advice has been to not have one dominant focus. The dominant tendency has been to plan future actions. The social aspect has been the strongest, and mostly in planning future actions. The application of the economic aspect is also a “future action”. The application of the environmental aspect is strongest in “talking with colleagues”.

Enablers and obstacles: The strongest enabler is staff and appropriate skilled staff.

Article.

Case study.

Parallel working groups

Group 1: Newcastle, Krakow, Nantes Métropole, Santiago de Compostela

Group 2: Hamburg, Iasi, Medway Council, Rennes Métropole, Tallinn

Key results for the SUITE network:

- sustainability approach was new
- environmental issue seem to be the most difficult aspect to integrate
- financial issues are important for the correct implementation for the project (especially for environmental implementation)
- holistic approach

Key results for the targeted “integrated sustainability in housing”:

- Tackling environmental issues can be means to achieve improved social housing standards
- Implementation of environmental technology in social housing can be used to demonstrate the benefits to private developer

Key messages for other cities:

- The need for a holistic strategy
- Definition and measurable
- Not necessary to aim for a 100% fulfilment on all pillars

- Exchange of experiences and learning
- The importance of the integration and support as a integrated part of a housing program
- Get involved!

Key messages to the European level and the European programme level:

- The city is the most adequate level to treat housing issues – downscale competences
- Cost aspect of environmental building
- Use pressure on the Commission - Lack of funding for housing
- Member states should be able use a percentage of ERDF funding for general social housing and energy efficiency measures as part of an integrated plan
- Possibility for cities to apply for ERDF fund should be strengthened in the new funding period.
- Concentrate funding on sustainable regeneration of old housing stock to overcome the technical challenges involved
- Pilot project with a concrete output in fewer cities (Eastern Europe) -> URBACT III



Press conference

Xosé A. Sánchez Bugallo, Mayor of Santiago de Compostela

Mercedes Rosón, City Councillor in Urbanism and Housing in Santiago

Maria Carneiro, Director of EMUVISSA

Heidrun Feigelfeld, Lead Expert

Darinka Czischke, Thematic Expert

The real estate crisis has hit Spain very hard, maybe harder than most other European countries. Before the crisis yearly there were build yearly some 800.000 residential units, while now only 90.000 units are being build. Spain has a tradition for 10 – 20% of the total housing stock to be protected housing.

There is a general problem with urban planning and growth, Santiago has managed for this not to happen. Rehabilitation of existing building mass.

Many landowners of very little land – a complicated situation for authorities.

Rented social housing has been difficult caused by legislation. Difficult to get private developers to want to participate. 200 – 300 units build for rented out of 5.000 units (rest for sale).

The importance of accompanying the tenants on part of social services apart from only provide housing.



The Local Action Plan

Group 1: Iasi, Nantes Métropole, Rennes Métropole, Santiago de Compostela

Group 2 : Hamburg, Krakow, Newcastle, Medway, Tallinn

Chosen focus met in the respective LAPs

Important to first solve **social** problems before economic and environmental problems can be faced. Iasi and Santiago **social and economic**, but main focus on social; Nantes and Rennes have had a focus on all three pillars: **social, economic and environment**

Difficult to find a balance between the three pillars.

How to meet the synthesis target – integration of more aspects possible

Main enablers and obstacles – how to use these findings for the finalisation an implementation of the LAPs

Enablers:

- Political will
- Continuity of the vision (political continuity)
- Close collaboration between municipality and developer (broad participation)
- Municipal staff capacity, cohesion and experience

- Important to obtain contacts with central government – Managing Authority (MA)

Obstacles:

- Lack of funding
- Differences in of scale in conception of the problem between the local authorities – national / local
- Inhabitant resistance to new development
- Discontinuity of the partners involved in the project
- The demand to produce “outputs” - not adequate funding

What is missing? What can still be contributed by the network?

Need to focus on scale before focus on the specific project, territorial urban planning including infrastructure, etc.

Look at specific materials and new constructive methods to promote environmental sustainability.

Look at the possibilities to integrate social housing to other private initiative aesthetically.

Possibility of a URBACT III

Key results and messages for URBACT (for the final report)?



Local Action Plan – peer review

Group 1: Iasi, Nantes Métropole, Rennes Métropole, Santiago de Compostela

Group 2 : Hamburg, Krakow, Newcastle, Medway, Tallinn

Rennes Metropole: Objective is to reduce housing costs. First time home owners; specific criteria for funding. Sales start is being launched this weekend. Construction based on containers. Sales price of 1.600 € /m2. The specific project is not part of social mix, but will be integrated in a larger area that have social mix.

Santiago de Compostela: Social integration is the main objective. Since the scope of the objective is quite big, the LAP will be a part of a greater strategy. Develop a rented housing stock, in order to be able to offer a wide range of housing solutions. The specific project has made a viability study based on a specific municipal plot. The study proved viable with 10 – 15 years to recuperate the investment. However it's conditioned by governmental funding. Construction cost 450 €/m².

Las Palmas: Objective of the LAP is to reduce homelessness in the next few years, expand the stock of affordable social housing and reduce the backlog in core housing need. There construction of 1000 apartments are planned to start in the spring 2011 and finalized autumn 2012. Construction costs are stipulated to 374€/m². The land belonged to Ministry of National Defence. The apartments will be under a rent regime. Self-construction is a threat to housing quality.

Tallinn: Environmental rehabilitation for orphans. Important to also have social support and procedures for the orphans.

Nantes: Low cost / affordable housing in difference to social housing; between private market and social housing. Chose a municipality within Nantes. Also looked at environmental aspect. Cover all sustainability aspects. Located in 30 km from Nantes, but within the city centre of a small municipality.

Medway: Reduce CO₂ in housing. Chatham is a deprived area where housing needs upgrading. Most of housing in the area is unoccupied. Good political support, but in need of funding. Language and cultural barrier; contracted social service with language skills to work in the area. Private sector housing team within the council, working with landlords. Landlord forum every six months. There exist grants and loans for the landlords. Working closely with police with antisocial behaviour and crime as well as landlord licences.

Krakow: Problem with small amount of social housing. Want policy change; Change attitude toward social housing. Want policy change on possibility to evict for private landlords.

Newcastle: Creating an urban village for people with problems within the private housing market. Quality of accommodation; concierge service.

Rehabilitation of old buildings Diego Briega, EMUVISSA

For old buildings where the owners do not have the possibility to refurbish, the Santiago have launched a project for rehabilitation. The council will take over a building in need of rehabilitation, rehabilitate the building funded partially by governmental funds and partially by the council. After the rehabilitation the council will still dispose the building for a specific

amount of time for what time they can rent it out and through the rent get the investment back. When that time is up, the owner gets the property back. This project has been in work for two years and one building has been rehabilitated and is now being rented.

Final report

An editing board will be in charge of the daily work and organize the work on the final report. The report need to be ready by mid-February. The partners will be asked to make a résumé of their local action plan in four pages after this meeting.



CONTACTS

FOR THE NETWORK:

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MORE INFO ON THE PROJECT:

www.urbact.eu/suite
Facebook: SUITE URBACT

SUITE PROJECT SYNTHESIS MEETING AND LOCAL ACTION PLANS

Place: SALA DE DEBATES – CENTRO DE ESTUDOS AVANZADOS
Parque de Vista Alegre, rúa das Salvadas, s/n
Date: 7 & 8 October 2010.

AGENDA 6 OCTOBER WEDNESDAY

21,00h.- Welcome dinner - Restaurante "O 16" (Rúa de San Pedro, 16)

AGENDA 7 OCTOBER THURSDAY

08,45h.- Reception of the participants

09,00h.- Opening

Mrs. Mercedes Rosón – City Councilor in Urbanism and Housing in Santiago

09,15-09,45h.- Synthesis in Housing Policy

Introduction by Lead Expert and Thematic Expert

09.45- 11.00h.-

Parallel Working Groups (network partners and experts)

Short feedback to the plenary

11,00-12,00h.- Synthesis in Local Action Plans

Parallel Working Groups (network partners and experts)

12,00-12,30h.-

Coffee-Meeting with media

12.30- 13.30h.- Synthesis in Local Action Plans (continuation)

Parallel Working Groups (network partners and experts)

Short feedback to the plenary

13,30-15,00h.-

Lunch

15,00-18,00 h.-

The Local Action Plans – Peer Review

Expert

- Introduction by Lead Expert and Thematic

- 2 rounds of parallel working groups

- Coffee break between round 1 and 2

- Feedback to the plenary, discussion

End of first day

21,00h.- Dinner – Hotel San Miguel – Restaurante Broa (Praza San Miguel dos Agros, 9)

AGENDA 8 OCTOBER FRIDAY

09,00-13,15h.-

Towards finalisation – report including LAPs, final meeting, organisation

- 09,00- 11,30h.-

Recap of day 1:

- Wrap up session – key results

SUITE

- Coffee break

- 10,45- 11,45h.-

Finalisation of the report:

- Plenary session

- 11,45- 12,45h.-

More steering activities

- Plenary session (including steering committee meeting)

- 12,45- 13,30h.-

Tasks for time to come

- Short wrap up session 2, plenary and closure

13,15-13,30h.- Closure of the meeting

14,00 - 16,00 h.-

Lunch – Hotel NH Obradoiro

16,00 - 18,00 h.-

Optional visit to social housing in Santiago

URBACT II

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/suite



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