TRANSFER STUDY
Final Report

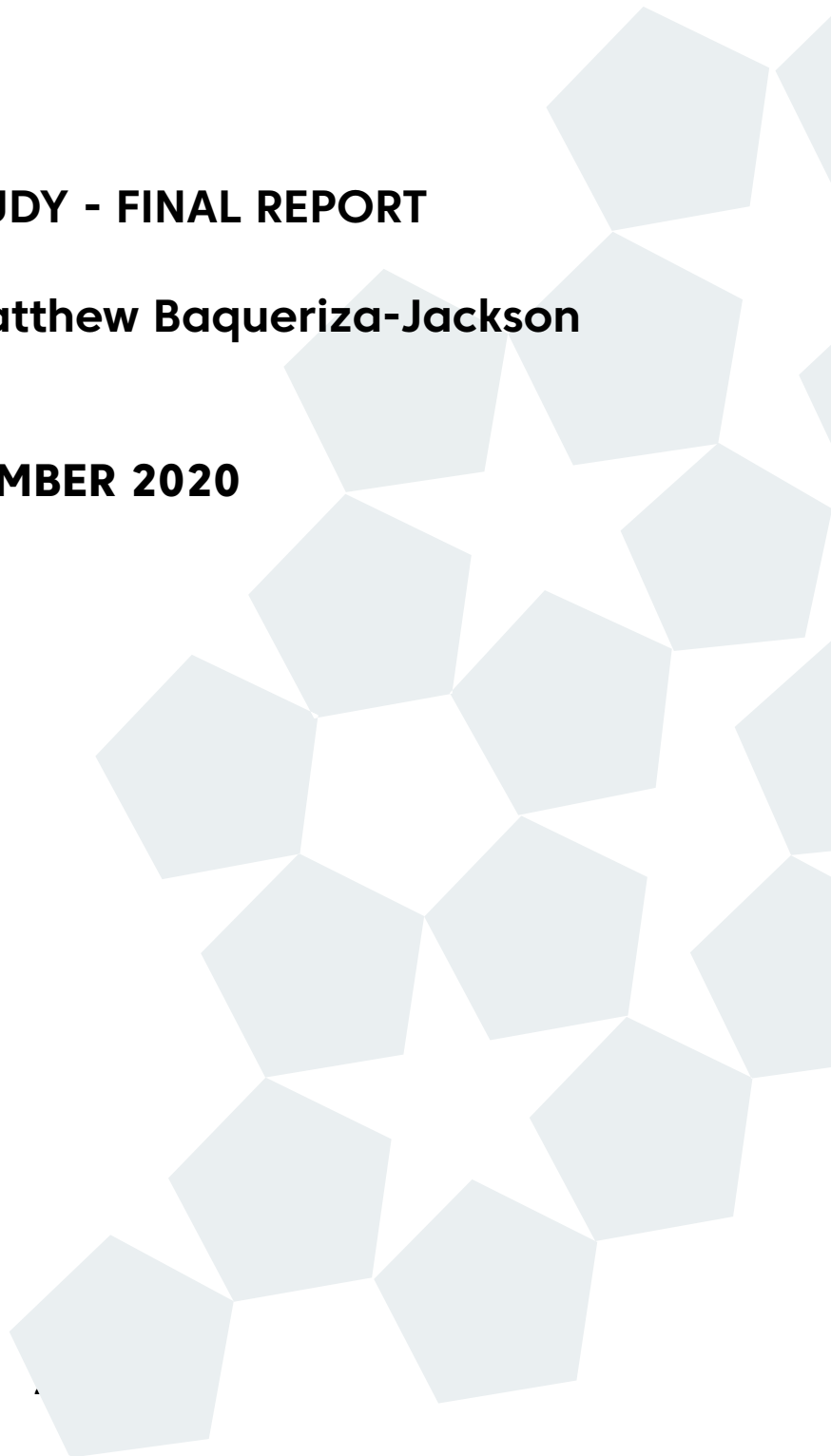# TRANSFER STUDY - FINAL REPORT

By URBACT Expert **Matthew Baqueriza-Jackson**

DECEMBER 2020

1. INTRODUCTION

Matthew Baqueriza-Jackson[1] is pleased to present this final report to the URBACT Programme. The report relates to work undertaken between July and December 2020 reviewing the key lessons learnt from URBACT's 23 Transfer Networks. This section of the report introduces the context to Transfer Networks and the methodology deployed for the review.

1.1 CONTEXT

Launched in 2018, each the 23 Transfer Networks is framed by an URBACT identified piece of city level Good Practice and an objective for the Good Practice City to transfer the principles and activities of the good practice to up to 8 other cities. Shaped by an URBACT defined methodological framework of 'understand, adapt, re-use', the 23 Transfer Networks have focused on very different themes ranging from procurement and spend analysis to urban gardens to music schools to play. In addition, the transfer networks have deployed the URBACT methodological framework in different ways.

Although not yet complete, it is clear that the URBACT Transfer Network model is a success. High levels of good practice adaptation and transfer are already evident across all networks. Although this is highly satisfactory, it is important to understand the factors behind this, in order to build on what has been achieved in future.

Consequently, this review has been commissioned to seek to understand what 'has' and 'has not' worked in relation the transfer networks, and particularly:

- *Which tools and techniques have worked well and less well at network and local levels?*
- *How have the good practices been transferred?*
- *Why have some networks and cities been more successful in the transfer than others?*
- *What have been the key barriers to effective transfer?*
- *What would networks and cities do differently?*

The review has also sought opinion of networks and cities as to how URBACT could improve the transfer network process, with responses to this and other questions informing recommendations for URBACT when designing the forthcoming URBACT IV Programme.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

To undertake the review, Matthew has worked closely with the URBACT Head of Unit – Projects and Programming, Adele Bucella, and URBACT Programme Expert, Eddy Adams, with the findings informed by four key stages of methodological activity:

---

[1] *Matthew Baqueriza-Jackson is an URBACT Lead Expert, and was commissioned by URBACT to work alongside Adele Bucella, Head of Unit at the Secretariat, and Eddy Adams, Programme Expert, to undertake this review of Transfer Networks.*

In **Stage 1**, we co-produced a framework for undertaking the review. This consisted of a series of lines of inquiry and questions for exploring as part of the review. This framework has been iterative and has been amended and adapted as the review has progressed. It has remained focused however upon: what has happened with transfer, how transfer has happened, and why it has happened.

In **Stage 2**, we undertook an initial desk review of the documentation associated with each of the 23 Transfer Networks, to gather evidence in relation to the questions in the review framework and identify gaps in information. This was largely undertaken through exploring each network's Transferability Study and State of Transfer Report. This was followed up by email conversations with the Lead Partner and Lead Expert of each network to populate gaps. Stage 2 enabled an understanding to be developed as to what had happened with each of the transfer networks.

In **Stage 3**, we wanted to delve deeper into the questions of how things had happened with transfer networks, and why things had happened. We therefore started with a workshop with the Lead Partners and Lead Experts of transfer networks to gather overarching reasoning. This was then followed by the identification of 6 networks and 17 cities to work with further. With these networks and cities, we undertook case study interviews with each to identify further how transfer had happened and why transfer had happened.

In **Stage 4**, we utilised all of the information from stages 1,2 and 3 to develop overarching recommendations for URBACT bearing in mind the future URBACT IV programme and the coordination with the future European Urban Initiative (EUI)[2] .

1.3 ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report brings together the findings of our work in four sections:

🔸 *Section 2 explores what does and does not work at the network level in relation to transfer networks and why – this has been drawn from the desk review described in Stage 2 and the 6 Network Case Studies.*

🔸 *Section 3 explores what does and does not work at the city level in relation to transfer networks and why – this has been drawn from the City Case Studies described in Stage 2.*

🔸 *Section 4 explores how, from a network and city perspective, the transfer networks could be improved at URBACT Programme level - this has been drawn from each of the stages of the methodology.*

🔸 *Section 5 offers conclusions and recommendations for the URBACT Programme when designing future activities related to transfer networks in URBACT IV.*

The network and city examples cited in this report have been drawn directly from the study sample. **Appendix 1** details the full 6 Network Case Studies, with **Appendix 2** detailing the full 17 City Case Studies.

---

[2] *The European Urban Initiative draws together previous urban development programmes such as Urban Innovative Actions into a singular coordinated programme of activity. URBACT's skills and knowledge are informing the development and coordination of the EUI.*

2. NETWORK LEVEL FINDINGS
What does and does not work and why?

This section of the report details the key findings of the research undertaken with the transfer networks. This includes the desk review of Transferability Studies and Mid Term Reflection (MTR) Reports; the Workshop with Lead Partners and Lead Experts (held on Monday 5th October 2020); and the case study interviews held with a sample of 6 Networks.

In the analysis from these activities, we have sought to identify in particular: the tools and techniques that had been used by networks at the transnational level to transfer the good practices; the factors which had made those network's successful in that transfer, the barriers faced around the transfer, and what networks would do differently if they were to do this again.

The following identifies the key emerging themes from that analysis, with each theme complemented by network examples (these examples have been drawn solely from the 6 Case Study Networks). Full case studies from these 6 identified networks are detailed in Appendix 1.

2.1 TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES USED AT TRANSNATIONAL LEVEL
Which have worked well and which have worked less well and why?

As part of the analysis of networks, we sought to reflect on the tools and techniques that had been utilised to transfer the good practice at the transnational level. We were interested particularly in the types of tools that had been used as part of transnational meetings to enable the understanding, adaptation and re-use of the good practice. The findings can be split into the following themes, with there being four key tools and techniques.

DIVIDING THE GOOD PRACTICE INTO MODULES AND DELIVERING IT THROUGH WORKSHOPS

The time utilised in Phase 1[3] of the Transfer Networks to work with partners to share the good practice and shape the transfer methodology has been a key component of realising the ambitions of transfer networks. Many networks used this opportunity to co-produce the methodology with partners, and particularly to divide the good practice down into particular modules. This was undertaken through site visits by the Lead Partner and Lead Expert to individual phase 1 partners, through the end of phase 1 meeting, and through the production of the Transferability Study.

---

[3] *The URBACT Transfer Networks comprised two phases. The main output from phase 1 was a transferability study. An external assessment panel assessed these and successful networks progressed to phase 2. 23 of 24 networks were approved to phase 2.*

In the **ALT/BAU** network, the Transferability Study was seen as a key element of the structured methodology development but was undertaken in a co-produced manner with each partner and across the partners. The partners discussed which elements of the good practice should be component parts of the methodology, and identified how they would like them to be delivered in Phase 2, whether that be through workshops, or masterclasses, or inspiration sessions, for example.

During our fieldwork discussions, Transfer Networks also reflected that it was important not to 'set the methodology or modules in stone'. For many networks, the methodology has been adapted and amended throughout Phase 2 and they have been flexible to introduce new modules or different methods of learning as the network has evolved. This flexibility is important, as it has enabled networks to respond effectively to challenges and adapt accordingly. Effective Lead Experts and Lead Partners have been able to identify and implement required adaptations, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic[4].

In terms of the delivery of the 'modules' of transfer, networks have used a myriad of tools including: Good Practice City presentations, masterclasses from Lead and Thematic Ad-Hoc Experts, workshops focused upon transferring practical elements of the good practice, peer review approaches and site visits to elements of the good practice.

The introduction of specific and practical workshops for delivering the modules has worked well across many of the networks, and particularly those chosen as Case Studies for this study. Workshops have enabled partners to receive a clear introduction to an element of the good practice, enabling them to jointly explore how it can be practically adapted and re-used in their own circumstances. It has also meant that networks have not featured a 'top-down' domination from the Good Practice City through lots and lots of teaching, but a more collegiate approach, with partners learning about the good practice and then working cooperatively to transfer it. Indeed, and as explored later, cities have not just learnt from the Good Practice City itself – there has been lots of multilateral learning across all cities.

ONSTAGE has used practical workshops to engage a range of stakeholders in their transnational meetings and in order to create real-life situations throughout the network. The 'middle-block' {as described by the Lead Partner} was very much focused upon practical operations and teachers from across the partner cities coming together to learn and share. There was recognition that not all teachers are natural music teachers and that workshops were a key means of transferring principles around musical education across the diversity of teachers in attendance.

This dividing of the good practice into modules delivered through workshops has worked well. It has enabled a 'bottom-up' approach to the delivery of the transfer networks, supporting partners to share and learn from each other. It has particularly enabled partners to understand the good practice deeply enough to adapt it at their local level.

---

[4] *The Covid-19 pandemic meant that much of the activity of transfer networks needed to move online. URBACT also extended the timeframes of the transfer networks by six months.*

BOOTCAMP AND INTENSIVE MEETINGS

At the outset of Phase 2, some Transfer Networks held intensive 'Bootcamp' style meetings with a purpose of explaining to partners in depth the good practice and its different component parts. The target of these 'Bootcamps' were largely ULG Coordinators and ULG Members from each partner city. These were seen as the key stakeholders who would need to understand the good practice and be responsible for implementing, transferring and adapting the practice in their cities. In these 'Bootcamps' a range of methods were used to explain the good practice and to create a partnership dynamic, including: ice breakers, masterclasses about the good practice, talks from key stakeholders, visits to elements of the good practice, and informal engagement between partners.

In **BeePathNet**, the Lead Partner and Lead Expert spent a lot of time in phase 1 visiting the partner cities and getting to know them and their Project Coordinators. At the beginning of Phase 2, the attention switched to ULG Coordinators and Members, and the network held an intensive Bootcamp with a focus upon supporting the partners to understand the good practice and all its different elements and to commence early thinking upon how it could be adapted to their own circumstances. **Tech Revolution** also held a Bootcamp at the outset of Phase 2, which was also about supporting partner cities to understand the good practice. However, it also had a secondary purpose to raise awareness of the project internally in Barnsley (the Good Practice City) and showcase the depth of people involved and the linkages to wider economic development policy and strategy.

This Bootcamp approach has worked well because it has enabled a range of stakeholders to understand the good practice and start the process of adapting it to their own circumstances. It is also an effective tool for creating strong bonds between participants, due to the intensity of the immersive experience. Bootcamps have happened early in the transfer process and have been different from other transnational meetings, in that they have enabled partners to see the good practice in action and explore its principles and activities forensically.

PEER REVIEW APPROACHES AND ONE-TO-ONE EXCHANGE

Whilst transfer networks have largely encompassed methods and tools which have brought together partners at transnational or bilateral meetings, these meetings and exchanges have not just been about learning between the Good Practice City and the Transfer Cities. It is evident from these networks that the learning experience is multi-dimensional, with transfer partners often bringing their own knowledge and experience to the network.

Consequently, there has been an opportunity for all partners to share their practices and activities through peer review approaches. This has not only enabled partners to share their activities and learn, but also to explore and scrutinise each other, and to assist each other with the transfer.

This is important as peer review has enabled Transfer Cities to adapt the good practice to different local circumstances, and also work with cities that face different contexts perhaps to the Good Practice City. There have been different approaches and reasons for peer review.

BioCanteens has utilised lots of peer review activities during their transnational meetings as a way of creating learning and pride across all cities in the network, and in ensuring that not one city has dominated. They have used the 'Proud of It' tool to enable each partner to showcase what they have done between transnational meetings and enable other partners to comment and explore improvement collaboratively.

ACTive NGOs has not only used peer review at transnational meetings but has also encouraged ULGs to utilise such methods at the local level. The network has placed a key emphasis on encouraging the members of ULGs of each partner city to attend transnational meetings. This has meant that peer review activity has been very practical and has enabled partners and ULG members to create new ideas, which they have piloted and implemented when they have gone back to their own cities. This model has also been effective at linking the transnational and local activity, a recurring challenge for all URBACT networks.

Transfer Networks have also emphasised the value of one-to-one exchange within the overall process. This has happened in one of two ways. First, there has been one to one exchange between the Lead Partner and Lead Expert and an individual partner city. This has focused specifically upon how the good practice can be transferred and re-used in that city; or it has been about the structure of the transfer, or it has been about realising the communication deliverables required as part of the transfer network process.

This first type of one-to-one exchange has been particularly important during the Covid-19 pandemic to maintain engagement between Lead Partner and individual partners. Indeed, many networks have utilised individual one to one online meetings anyway throughout the transfer networks. Second, it has been one-to-one exchange between partner cities as part of transnational meetings. This has happened both formally and informally, with cities with similar contexts and circumstances working together to adapt the transfer and to exchange and learn collectively.

Tech Revolution has both embedded one-to-one sessions into transnational meetings and also undertaken online meetings with partners throughout the transfer network process. This has enabled the Lead Partner and Lead Expert to address any challenges and support the delivery of the transfer on a partner-by-partner basis. The online meetings have also been particularly effective in supporting individual partners with their transfer stories and learning logs. Tech Revolution has also undertaken direct one to one support visits with individual partners, with this particularly helpful in convincing Mayors of the potential of the good practice.

This peer review and one-to-one exchange has worked well as it has not just been about Lead Partners and Lead Experts 'forcing' the good practice onto the partners. Instead, it has been about a collaborative approach to learning, making mistakes, and realising the transfer. It has particularly enabled partners to adapt the good practice to their own contexts and circumstances. Peer review, in many networks, has been a 'bottom up' approach developed and delivered by the partners themselves – this is important as it has enabled specific challenges to be discussed and resolved collectively. Peer review has not been a 'top down' teaching approach instigated by URBACT – instead it has been driven by the bespoke nature of each network.

IMPROVEMENT PLAN AND EMPHASIS

A common question for Good Practice cities at the outset of the transfer network process was 'what is in it for us?' This question has been answered, certainly by the six Case Study Networks through their approach to improvement. The Improvement Plan has been viewed not only as an integral part of improving the good practice, but also as a way of shaping wider network methods and activities. Lead Partners have used network techniques such as peer review and workshops as described above to understand how partners were going to adapt and re-use the good practice, and subsequently identify ways in which they could deliver upon their own objectives as set in their Improvement Plans. The Improvement Plan process has been used by Lead Partners to challenge and further evaluate the good practice, with the workshops as part of transnational meetings used to learn and identify areas for delivering upon improvements.

BioCanteens felt it was very important at the outset of the network to not only focus on transfer but also improvement. They wanted to further evolve the good practice and disseminate it beyond the URBACT Transfer Network. They have achieved this through also using the principles of transfer on an established network with other French cities to promote the role of canteens in food sustainability; and in using the tools developed with cities from other transfer networks – for example Lille from Com.Unity.Lab.

The development of Improvement Plans or the emphasis placed upon improvement has worked well for both Good Practice Cities and others. It has enabled Lead Partners in particular to adapt and improve their good practice utilising the input of the wider partner cities.

2.2 SUCCESS FACTORS AT TRANSNATIONAL LEVEL

As part of the analysis with networks, we sought to identify the key success factors at the network level in transferring the good practice. The following presents the common ones that emerged from the case study interviews, along with commentary and accompanying examples.

POWERFUL LEAD PARTNER

Networks felt that a key factor of success to transfer networks was having a powerful Lead Partner in place. It was felt that Lead Partners needed to be integral to the development and delivery of the good practice historically, giving them the knowledge and experience to explain it accordingly to other partners and to influence its adaptation. It was also felt that a powerful Lead Partner would be able to link the network to other policy areas and activities at the European level, including the EU Urban Agenda Partnerships.

> In **ACTive NGOs**, the Good Practice City (Riga) has taken great pride in being the first Latvian City to lead an URBACT network. This pride has translated into the leadership of the network, with an eagerness to enable the transfer and ensure success both internally in Riga, with the partners, and externally and beyond URBACT.

CONTINUITY OF LEADERSHIP

There are a number of Transfer Networks that have been formed out of or have evolved from previous action planning networks on the same theme. Lead Partners have been particularly effective, where they have been previously involved in or have led other URBACT Networks; and where there has been a consistency of the Lead Expert involved.

> The **Tech Revolution** Network has its basis in a previous Action Planning Network (**TechTown**), with the network effectively being used to realise some of the objectives of the Barnsley's Integrated Action Plan. There has been a continuation of the Lead Partner and Lead Expert team from the action planning network, which has also been important in linking the network to wider policy contexts and activities around digital.

LEAD PARTNER AND LEAD EXPERT RELATIONSHIP

Networks felt that a key transfer networks success factor was a strong relationship between the Lead Partner and Lead Expert, particularly where it built upon their complementary skills. Networks have

worked most successfully where Lead Partners and Lead Experts have developed defined roles and responsibilities and have coordinated effectively to deliver upon them, with the Lead Partner focused upon the Good Practice and the Lead Expert concentrating on the methodology, animation and facilitation of the transfer. There has also been a key role and linkage in successful networks between the Lead Partner and Lead Expert, and the person with responsibility for communications.

This has meant a shift in the Lead Expert role compared to Action Planning Networks. This transition was not always easy for some experienced URBACT Lead Experts and took some time to adjust. Some networks have benefitted from having a Lead Expert new to URBACT, unperturbed by past experience. In the most successful networks, Lead Experts and Lead Partners have tended to be of the same nationality.

In **BeePathNet**, the Lead Partner and Lead Expert have developed a very strong working relationship which has enabled the network to be successful. In phase 1, the Lead Partner and Lead Expert spent a lot of time together visiting the partner cities and framing the methodology with the partners; this has continued into phase 2.
In **ONSTAGE**, the Lead Partner and Lead Expert have worked well together to introduce new tools and techniques to animate and facilitate the transfer. This has been particularly evident during the Covid-19 Pandemic, with the Lead Expert in particular introducing new tools to stimulate engagement during online meetings.

PARTNER WILLINGNESS TO LEARN AND MOTIVATION

Networks felt that a key factor of success to transfer networks was the partners themselves. The most effective partnerships are always driven by the knowledge and experience of their members; however the transfer networks have really required a desire or a willingness to learn amongst all individuals and partners and a need for partners to be motivated to realise real change in their cities. This has been particularly noticeable in results terms in the more practical networks; however, motivation to change cultures and behaviours have also been evident in more process focused networks.

This focus on practical delivery at the local level makes transfer networks distinct from action planning networks and affects the type of motivations. Whereas the motivation in action planning networks is upon producing the Integrated Action Plan at the end of the network, in transfer networks, the motivation is upon making tangible and incremental change throughout the network process.

It is also important to note that partner willingness and motivation is not just created through formal transnational meetings; instead it is also created through the dynamic developed as part of the network through ice-breaking, and also informal learning and engagement across partners. In many cases a factor of network success is pushing partners and individuals 'out of their comfort zone' and creating a dynamic that enables learning, adaptation, and friendships.

In **ALT/BAU**, the Lead Partner and Lead Expert have been extremely impressed by the amount of effort and work the partners have put into the transfer. It was felt that the partners were incredibly motivated and focused and this could be as a result of the structured nature of the approach to transfer adopted by the network.

In **ACTive NGOs**, the willingness to learn and motivation was not necessarily restricted to the Project Coordinators for each partner but was felt in particular with the ULG Coordinators and ULG Members. The number of ULG Members attending transnational meetings was seen as being a key factor in this.

In **Tech Revolution**, a whole host of ice-breaking and informal tools were used to create both a network dynamic and to stimulate learning. This included the use of speed networking and fishbowl methods.

CO-PRODUCED METHOD WITH PARTNERS AND CO-PRODUCED AMBITION

Networks felt that a key Transfer Network success factor had been the bottom-up approach utilised to developing methods for the transfer of the good practice and for setting the levels of transfer ambition for each partner. Whilst the URBACT framework of different transfer models[5] and transnational and local methods have been useful, networks have generally welcomed the flexibility to work with their partners to co-produce the method for transfer. This also applies to developing levels of ambition, with some networks having developed 'core' elements of transfer which all partners were expected to undertake and complete, and more optional elements which were voluntary. This does not however happen naturally, with Lead Experts key here in developing the tools that enable partner cities to work together and match their levels of ambition to the realities facing their cities.

In **Tech Revolution**, two Ad-Hoc Experts worked alongside the Lead Expert to support the delivery of the transfer. They had a blend of experience related to the Good Practice City, knowledge of and relationships with the other partners, awareness of the network theme (digital enterprise), and familiarity with types of transfer methods.

OTHER SUCCESS FACTORS

In addition to the key success factors emerging from the Case Studies as described above, there were others which were mentioned less so, but which were also picked up as part of

---

[5] URBACT published guidance for the Transfer Networks which proposed two basic transfer process models. One proposed a series of bilateral sessions between Lead and Transfer Partner cities. The other proposed a model where all partners met and worked together. As this study shows, most networks adopted a hybrid of these two options.

the desk review of the Transferability Studies and Mid Term Reflection Reports of the other 17 networks, and during the session with all Lead Partners and Lead Experts. These included:

- ⬠ *The need for Political leadership and engagement in both the Good Practice City and amongst the Transfer Cities;*

- ⬠ *The need for cross departmental working across municipality departments in the Good Practice City and cross-organisationally, in terms of their ULG;*

- ⬠ *The need to engage very specific stakeholders such as teachers, farmers and cooks, particularly in networks which are focused on practical transfer;*

- ⬠ *The ability to take risks, make mistakes, and learn from those mistakes by developing solutions and adapting;*

- ⬠ *The ability to adapt the pace at which partners undertake activities through the network and add activities if necessary;*

- ⬠ *The need for large cities not to dominate network membership;*

- ⬠ *The value of learning from others and sometimes from lighthouse cities that are not even in the network through research and study visits. A good example of this is the case of Tech Revolution through visits to Tallinn and Helsinki.*

2.3 BARRIERS AT NETWORK LEVEL

As part of the analysis of the networks, we also sought to identify the key barriers they had faced in transfer of the good practice at the network level. These can be split into three overarching themes:

PROGRAMME LEVEL BARRIERS

NUMBER OF REQUIRED DELIVERABLES
The core Programme level barrier identified by the Network Case Studies to effective transfer were the output requirements from URBACT around, for example, Transfer Diaries, vox-pops, and Learning Logs. Networks felt that this sometimes distracted from the importance of the actual transfer of the good practice and were unnecessary in terms of some of the elements.
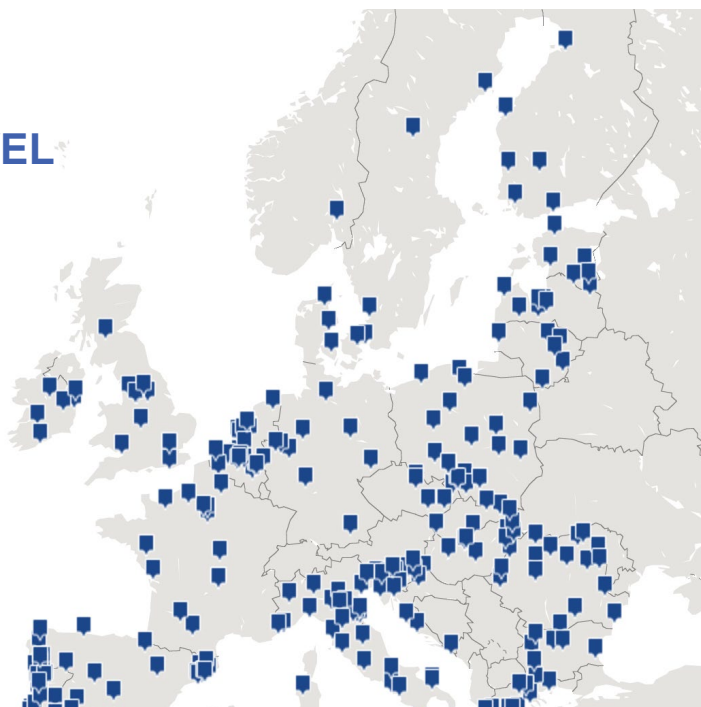
BioCanteens felt that URBACT had not been as excellent as usual on communications tools in these transfer networks – there was potentially a need for clarity on the tools described above and more effective reasoning as to why they were being used.

ACTive NGOs felt that some of the tools described above were potentially not necessary and there were other ways in which transfer could be recorded and tracked which would require less work from partners.

TIMEFRAMES

A further key barrier identified by the Network Case Studies was the transfer timeframe. Networks felt that there was a real diversity of transfer networks, with varying types and complexity of Good Practice. Even before Covid-19, it was evident that some networks had already completed transfer activities, and others needed much more time – this suggests a need for fluidity with transfer timescales and flexibility for networks to work quicker or slower, as appropriate. BioCanteens, for example felt that the initial 18-month transfer period went very quickly, with Active NGOs feeling that the Phase 1 activities were undertaken at a difficult period in terms of the summer holidays.

PARTNER BARRIERS

DIFFERENT PARTNERS CONTEXTS AND CULTURES

The core partner barrier identified by the Network Case Studies was the different contexts and cultures that their partners operated within. This meant that whilst some partners were very quick to understand and adapt the good practice, others were less so due to national or local bureaucratic challenges, level of partner experience in URBACT, and as a result of language skills. This meant that sometimes the pace of transnational meetings had to be shifted, and more emphasis needed to be placed on the understanding of the good practice, and its bespoke adaptability to different partners.

In **ONSTAGE**, the different contexts and cultures around educational systems across partner countries and cities was challenging, meaning that the Lead Partner and Lead Expert needed to be flexible in how they approached both transnational meetings and one to one engagement with the partners.

In **Tech Revolution**, partners struggled initially a little with the peer-to-peer element of a transfer network, due largely to the varying starting points and positions of partners in relation to digital, and the fact that not all partners had a physical asset in place. This has meant that partners have had to think more laterally in their approach and focus upon the elements that they can adapt and re-use.

STAFF CHANGES AT PARTNERS

A further barrier identified by Network Case Studies in relation to partners was the occasional change in staff members from the partners engaged in the network and subsequently different core people attending transnational meetings. This happened predominantly where there was a need for more practical input into network activities, particularly from local Project Coordinators, and making this distinctive to transfer networks. This, however, had in some cases a disruptive influence upon the flow of meetings and the speed of the transfer as things needed to be explained to new people again. ALT/BAU identified staff changes at partners as the core barrier for their network, particularly in terms of dynamics.

LEGACY BARRIERS

ENSURING SUSTAINABILITY

The core barrier related to legacy identified by the Network Case Studies was around ensuring the sustainability of activities and ULGs in a post URBACT Transfer Network context. The networks felt that more time needed to by allocated to this, but the focus was largely on the transfer and deliverables, meaning there was simply not the time to focus upon it as part of transnational activities. The Sharing Period and Final Network Events were seen as areas of potential opportunity for these considerations[6]. It should be noted that this is not unique to transfer networks, however, ULGs should set the foundation to future partnership working at the local level and it is effectively the responsibility of cities to ensure that the conditions are in place to sustain this into the future.

BeePathNet felt that as everyone in their network was so focused on the transfer and deliverables, they 'kind of forgot what happens next'. The Lead Partner and Lead Expert have however tried to push the importance of sustainability throughout the network activities, particularly during one-to-one engagement with partners.

OTHER BARRIERS

In addition to the key barriers emerging from the Case Studies and as described above, there are other barriers which were picked up as part of the desk review of the Transferability Studies and Mid Term Reflection Reports of the other 17 Networks, and during the session with all Lead Partners and Lead Experts. The other identified barriers in transfer networks are:

- *Maintaining the continuous involvement and motivation of ULG stakeholders (more on this in the City Case Studies in Section 3);*

- *Capacity to deliver upon all the requirements – relevant for both Lead Partners and Lead Experts and for partners;*

- *Changing political environments and commitments.*

---

[6] *The Sharing Period and Final Network Events were starting to commence as this report has been written, meaning it is difficult to comment upon their effectiveness as of yet.*

2.4 THINGS THAT WOULD BE DONE DIFFERENTLY AT NETWORK LEVEL

As part of the conversations with the 6 Network Case Studies, we asked directly that if we were transposed back to April 2018 and the start of Phase 1 of the transfer networks, what they would do differently. The following summarises the key themes emerging from those conversations.

SPEND MORE TIME ON THE UNDERSTANDING PHASE

The ONSTAGE Transfer Network stated that they would spend more time on the phase of activities associated with understanding the Good Practice. For OnStage, they would spend more time in the Good Practice City and with the other partners seeking to further understand the good practice and its nuances.

PAY GREATER ATTENTION TO ULG FORMULATION

BioCanteens suggested that they would spend more time with partners on the formulation of ULGs. The Lead Partner and Lead Expert, both of whom have been involved with URBACT projects before, recognised that ULGs in transfer networks needed to be different from those in action planning networks, meaning a different approach to their formulation, constitution, leadership and activities. BioCanteens would make their approach a bit more structured when it came to support for their partners with ULG formulation.

THINK MEDIUM AND LONG TERM

BeePathNet suggested that they would think a lot earlier in the transfer network process about legacy and sustainability. This would probably be introduced right at the outset and explore how activities and ULGs could be continued following the completion of the transfer network, and how partners could work with both URBACT and other European Programmes to attract further resource to continue and sustain their work.

DO MORE ONLINE

ALT/BAU, would look to undertake more activities online throughout the duration of the network, and not just as a result of Covid-19. They have recognised that there are some areas of transfer that are vital to be undertaken face to face, and others that lend themselves to online working. They would try not to 'cram too much' into transnational meetings around the understanding of the good practice, for example; instead they would do more of this element online. Active NGOs would also think about the content of their transnational meetings more, and particularly where they fitted conversations around deliverables.

BE BOLDER IN ASKS OF URBACT

Tech Revolution would be bolder in their asks and relationships with the URBACT Secretariat. In this they would seek to gain a fuller understanding of the role of being a Lead Partner in a transfer network and seek greater clarity on the role and objectives of the wider deliverables such as Transfer Diaries and Learning Logs.

3. CITY LEVEL FINDINGS
What does and does not work and why?

This section of the report details the key findings of the case study work undertaken with a sample of 17 URBACT cities. In the conversations, we sought to identify in particular: the tools and techniques that had been used by cities at the local level to transfer the good practice; the factors which had made those cities successful in that transfer, the barriers faced around the transfer, and what cities would do differently if they were to do this all again.

The following identified the key emerging themes from those conversations, with each theme complemented by city examples. Full case studies and details about the cities, and the network they have been a partner of are detailed in Appendix 2.

3.1 TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES USED AT CITY LEVEL
Which have worked well and which have worked less well and why?

As part of the conversation with cities, we asked them to reflect on the tools and techniques that they had utilised to transfer the good practice at the local level. We were interested particularly in the role of the ULG in enabling the transfer and the types of tools that had worked well at the local level in understanding, adapting, and re-using the good practice. The findings can be split into three overarching themes.

ENGAGEMENT WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Cities have adopted different approaches to the constitution and activities of their ULGs and their subsequent engagement of stakeholders. There have been three key types of ULG development or stakeholder engagement that have worked well:

BUILDING ON EXISTING PARTNERSHIP
ULG's have worked well where they have built upon an existing partnership of stakeholders or have linked the activities of the network to bigger policy agendas. Cities have used existing cross-departmental and cross-organisational partnerships as the means to transferring the good practice and to ensuring the buy-in of partners. This has tended to happen in cities where there is already a focus upon the types of good practice activity being transferred in wider strategies or plans.

Forlì (Come in!) expanded an existing partnership which focuses upon cultural festivals and tourism to include new stakeholders involved in inter-generational engagement (between younger and older people), and integration of students from the local University.

Loures (RU:RBAN) have widened their existing partnership around gardening activities and the environment to include a wider set of stakeholders from within the municipality, including those working in planning and legal teams. This has made the ULG more cross-departmental and more multi-disciplinary in its make-up.

Hamburg (Rumourless Cities) already had a nucleus of stakeholders involved in their plans to produce an anti-discrimination strategy and campaign in the district of Altona. Participation in the transfer network added momentum to this and the good practice inspired them to add the concept of ambassadors within the ULG – influencers drawn from elected officials, civil servants and citizens.

CROSS-CUTTING ULG

ULG's have worked well, where they have addressed all the activities and aspects of the transfer as one large cross-cutting group. This has meant that the same group of stakeholders has consistently come together to work on and deliver both the transfer and some of the wider requirements of the transfer network's around communications outputs. This has tended to happen in cities and networks, where the good practice has largely been a process and where the transfer has been complex.

Viladecans (Lead Partner, ON BOARD) has developed as part of their improvement activities a cross-cutting ULG which sits across the 4 'axis' of the good practice improvement of: new stakeholders, youth, developing a suite of indicators, and sustainability. In turn, they have encouraged their wider ON BOARD partners to adopt similar cross-cutting approaches to their ULGs.

Lille (Com.Unity.Lab) is a city with a long history in neighbourhood regeneration, as part of the French Politique de la Ville urban policy framework. A motivating factor for participating in Com.Unity.Lab was to explore fresh ideas to this challenge. Through their network involvement, the city was able to reframe the actors involved, via a ULG which started from scratch and combined stakeholders at the neighbourhood, metropolitan and regional levels.

Cork (Playful Paradigm) skillfully applied the flexible concept of 'play' to broker a wide cross-cutting local partnership. This enabled them to actively engage stakeholders from the health, sports and urban planning sectors. As well as widening the ULG's expertise, this enabled them to leverage additional resources for project delivery.

Mataró (BluAct) created a ULG framed around the key assets of the city, in terms of the sea and the university. The ULG included stakeholders which could harness the potential of those two key assets, including businesses, export associations, and environmental organisations.

THEMATIC ULG SUB-GROUPS

ULGs have worked well where elements of the activities and the stakeholders have been broken down into thematic sub-groups. This has meant that stakeholders have worked on issues that are relevant to their experience and day-to-day activities. This has tended to happen in cities where the transfer and the good practice has been more practical in its nature.

Mantova (C-Change) broke their ULG into sub-groups to enable the adaption and delivery of carbon literacy training at the local level, with a particular focus on changing the environmental behaviour of local cultural organisations. This learning was subsequently fed back and inputted into the wider cross-cutting ULG.

Aveiro (CARD4ALL) broke their ULG into two groupings. One was very practically and technically focused on the Citizen Card and sought to particularly engage with educational and transport providers to embed the principles of the card into their systems. The second has been cross-departmental within the municipality and focused upon joining the project up to wider activities, including a UIA project (Aveiro STEAM CITY).

USING TRANSNATIONAL APPROACHES LOCALLY

TOOLS FROM TRANSNATIONAL MEETINGS

Cities have used the tools developed by Lead Partners and Lead Experts for transnational meetings and have applied them to their own approaches to adapting and transferring the good practice. This has included tools to facilitate meetings, for example, and in the very practical elements of transfer. This has tended to happen in cities and networks, where there is a key element of participation anyway in the Good Practice.

Cork (Playful Paradigm) participated in a transnational network meeting focused on the interface between play and placemaking. From this they were able to directly apply lessons locally, through identifying an opportunity in their newly pedestrianised harbour area. This translated into a series of open-air participatory sessions around a key question: How would Cork look if it was playful? This creative and effective intervention caught the attention not only of the community, but also local politicians and national media.

INFORMAL ENGAGEMENT

Cities have also learned from some of the more informal techniques used by Lead Partners and Lead Experts to facilitate the engagement of stakeholders. This has included using ice-breakers developed at the transnational level at ULG meetings, and having more informal gatherings over coffee or dinner at the local level. This has tended to happen in smaller cities, and where stakeholders already know each other quite well.

Pregrada (Volunteering Cities) recognised that it was important for ULG members to be involved in network activities in both formal and informal settings. This has been important in keeping stakeholders engaged and motivated. It has also helped ensure that tasks set for undertaking between meetings are delivered.

PRACTICAL TOOLS

SURVEYS

Cities have used bespoke surveys at the local level as a means of collecting information from a broader set of stakeholders than the ULG. This has been used as a way of identifying the need for particular activities, or for consulting upon activities and their relevance, for example. The use of surveys has tended to happen in cities, where the transfer of the good practice will affect a significant number of stakeholders or citizens and there needs to be much wider engagement than with the ULG.

Debrecen (Welcoming International Talent) has undertaken a survey of university students in the city, as a way of understanding some of the challenges they face around integrating, and to identify the future skills of the workforce and how they can be matched to the growing number of multi-national corporations in the city.

Hamburg (Rumourless Cities) adopted a very proactive approach to engaging local stakeholders in the development of the Altona Declaration. The starting point was the generation of 17 statements to describe positive social cohesion. Through a variety of tools – including an online voting mechanism – residents were invited to prioritise the most important. The top seven selected through this process became the core of the Altona Declaration.

PEER TO PEER APPROACHES

Linked to the theme around the transfer of transnational tools, cities have also used other URBACT methods and tools as a way of engaging stakeholders and transferring the Good Practice at the local level. This has included the use of peer-to-peer approaches to sharing learning, both internally within the municipality and across the wider ULG. This peer-to-peer approach has tended to happen in networks that are focused upon the transfer of social innovation practices. It has also tended to happen between people that have and have not attended transnational meetings, as a way of exchanging information.

Rotterdam (InnovaTO-r) has used a peer-to-peer approach as a way of bringing together different groups of individuals who have not previously met, but who work in similar fields. For example, they have brought together designers in specific sessions, so that they can share and exchange practice. Covid-19 has also meant that Rotterdam has changed its approach to their inspiration sessions so that they are more online. This has opened up a wider set of stakeholders to social innovation and presented greater opportunity for peer-to-peer learning.
Łodz (URBAN REGENERATION MIX) is focused on neighbourhood renewal and the mobilisation of residents within this. As Lead Partner, Łodz's model includes the active use of community mediators, knowns as Local Area Hosts and Social Lighthouse Keepers. The network model has underlined the value of brokering direct contact and dialogue between these actors in each partner city. Through this, Łodz has improved its own approach, applying lessons from Braga, Birmingham, and Toulouse.

NETWORK SPECIFIC PRACTICAL TOOLS

Cities have transferred good practices through directly implementing at the local level practical tools that have been developed by the Good Practice City and explained at the transnational level. This has included (as explained in the example) mechanisms for measuring procurement spend, and in the case of Aveiro (CARD4ALL), the technical tools required to create a citizen card. This has tended to happen in networks which have a particular tool or methodology as the good practice.

Kavala (Making Spend Matter) joined this network at an early but critical point in the revision of its approach to public procurement. Although tentative steps had been taken to improve transparency, there had been no focus on measuring the impact of public expenditure. The tools developed by Preston (the Good Practice City) to re-engineer their procurement model, through improved impact intelligence, became available to Kavala at the perfect time. Consequently, the city was supported to design and apply the spend analysis tool, which it has further built upon. As well as immediate local benefits, the city authority has also been able to influence public procurement policy at the regional and national levels.

PILOT PROJECTS

Cities have transferred the good practice at the local level through applying the principles of the good practice and what they have learnt at transnational meetings to locally specific pilot projects. This has tended to happen in networks where there are existing activities around the transfer theme in place, and where the good practice is a process – this gives the Transfer Cities the opportunity to adapt this to local contexts and circumstances through piloting and experimenting.

Melgaço (Re-GrowCity) have used the principles of the good practice to set up a series of 'pop-up shops' in the city. Importantly as part of this piloting they have adapted the good practice to local circumstances and have worked with shop owners in particular to offer empty premises to entrepreneurs for three months for free.

Ghent (Civic eState) has used the principles and processes of the good practice around the commons and citizen ownership of land and assets to develop a pilot project around the use of St Joseph's Church in the city. They have set up a specific Working Group around this asset and are working with the ULG in a very practical way to pilot the transfer activities.

BESPOKE DIGITAL PLATFORM

Cities have developed their own webpages or social media accounts to showcase the activities they are undertaking at the local level. These digital platforms are both targeted at stakeholders involved in the ULG or the transfer activities practically, and at citizens of the city to highlight what they are doing. This has tended to happen in cities and networks where the outputs of the transfer are very visual or where the activities are seeking to change the behaviour of organisations and/or citizens.

3.2 SUCCESS FACTORS AT CITY LEVEL

POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT

The involvement of Mayors and other Politicians directly in the project at a local level was highlighted as a key factor of success in transfer at the local level. It was felt that this involvement brought validity and a sense of ownership to the project. From our sample, political involvement was mentioned as a key factor of success by Loures, Melgaço, Mantova, Zuglo, Gent, Aveiro, Viladecans, and Hamburg.

It is interesting to see that these are largely networks which have been quite practical or tangible in the nature of the good practice that is being transferred or relate to quite politically involved agendas such as migration or citizen engagement.

In Melgaço (Re-GrowCity), the Mayor is effectively the leader of the project and has been able to identify working with technical officers the need to revitalise the City Centre and bring empty shops back into use.

In Viladecans (Lead Partner, ON BOARD), direct political involvement is seen as important not only for the improvement of the Education Innovation Network Good Practice, but also in the transfer in each of the partner cities to ensure that education is a political and policy priority.

In Hamburg (Rumourless Cities), the Mayor of Altona district has been an active ambassador for the Altona Declaration, an explicit commitment to tackling discrimination. Following an atrocity in France in autumn 2020, hate mail was sent to the Altona mosque. In response the Mayor made a public statement condemning discrimination with reference to the Declaration.

PROJECT PART OF A BIGGER PLAN

The fact that the network and good practice linked to existing activities within the city, forming part of a bigger plan or strategy, was a key factor of success at the local level. It was felt that this had to be the case given the relatively small budget associated with the transfer at the local level, and the need for the transfer network to be linked to wider policy, themes and issues to realise true impact. The project being part of a bigger plan was mentioned as a key factor of success by Loures, Debrecen, Zuglo, Forlì, Ghent, Aveiro, Hamburg, and Cork.

It is interesting to see that this is a blend of networks, with some focused around festivals and events, some focused on practical areas of transfer, and some more focused on processes.

In Zuglo (Tropa Verde), the local activities around recycling and re-use form part of a much bigger environmental strategy for the District and which influences the wider City of Budapest.

In Forlì (Come in!) the project links to the much wider cultural route which passes through the city, and which seeks to achieve wider social and cultural outcomes.

In Mataró (BluAct), the project forms part of a much bigger plan to harness the potential of key assets in the city (particularly the sea) and to develop other relationships around maritime strategy with other cities in the neighbouring area.

CROSS-DEPARTMENTAL AND STAKEHOLDER WORKING

The ability of cities to include stakeholders from across municipal departments and wider organisations was seen as a key factor of success in transfer at the local level. It was felt that this cross-departmental, cross-organisational, and multi-disciplinary approach brought different skills, knowledge and experiences to the ULG and to the transfer. The importance of cross-departmental and stakeholder working was mentioned as a key factor of success by Loures, Mantova, Zuglo, Forlì, Ghent, Rotterdam, Aveiro, and Cork.

It is interesting to see that these cities are involved in networks that set objectives to work across themes, departments and organisations at the outset of the transfer network process.

Loures (Re-GrowCity) have involved a range of departments in the project at the local level, including economy, environment, social sciences, and communication.

In Ghent (Civic eState), this project is the first time that representatives of the legal team and the community engagement team have worked together, and this cross-departmental working has been successful.

In Cork (Playful Paradigm) the ULG leaders have been particularly effective at cultivating cross departmental relationships. In their own words, "we've been good at joining the dots." They have exploited the fact that the concept of play does not comfortably sit anywhere, to apply it everywhere. This has enabled them to mobilise knowledge and expertise across sectors, but also to leverage resources, including funds from National Health Ireland and national sports funds to finance their "Let's Play Cork" platform.

MOTIVATED STAKEHOLDERS THROUGH ULG

The motivation of stakeholders to deliver upon the transfer was identified by cities as a key factor of success at the local level. It was felt in these cities that stakeholders went 'above and beyond' what was expected of them in terms of the transfer and were highly motivated to continue activities on after the formal completion of the transfer network process and link the transfer activities to other plans and activities. The motivation of stakeholders through the ULG was viewed as a key factor of transfer success by Loures, Debrecen, Melgaço, Mantova, Pregrada, Lille, and Cork.

The examples relating to this factor sit largely across different types of network in terms of their focus.

In Mantova (C-Change), the involvement of specific stakeholders from culture and environmental organisations has enabled creativity and greater motivation to tackle the challenge of climate change.

In Lille (Com.Unity.Lab) the long history of regeneration activity means that initial expectation levels around ULG participation were quite modest. However, the ULG Coordinators have been pleasantly surprised by the levels of engagement and commitment. This has been evident not only from the two selected city areas which form the project's focus, but also at the regional level. The extent of this active multi-level government involvement is not always easy to achieve, in Lille's experience.

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

The involvement of citizens was seen as a key factor of success at the local level. It was felt that citizen involvement was integral to the development of transfer activities, and in the cities achieving their objectives. The involvement of citizens was viewed as a key factor of transfer success by Melgaço, Forlì, Gent, Pregrada, Aveiro, and Łodz.

It is interesting to see that these cities are all part of networks, where citizen involvement is such a core component of the Good Practice.

In Melgaço (Re-GrowCity), citizens have been involved in the project right from the outset and the ULG has been expanded to include stakeholders with key links to citizens, including the church;

In Pregrada (Volunteering Cities), the involvement of citizens as volunteers has been a key component of the engagement process, with citizens also involved with the ULG.

In Łodz (URBAN REGENERATION MIX) the effective mobilisation of residents in priority areas has been a central feature. Although the scale of Łodz's process – involving the decanting and rehousing of communities – is atypical across the network, many shared issues emerged. The mobilisation of residents as mediators – forming a bridge between the community and the municipality – is a common denominator between all network partners, who have improved their approaches through structured mutual exchange.

HARD WORK, PASSION AND AMBITION

The hard work, passion and ambition of individuals associated with the network was seen as a key factor of success at the local level. This in many ways links to the earlier point around

motivation, and it was felt that such hard work was needed to learn from other partner cities, and such passion and ambition was really needed to affect change at the local level. It was also felt that whole URBACT ethos and transfer network process also gave cities the opportunity to experiment and in some cases fail first time round and learn from mistakes – cities welcomed this opportunity. Hard work, passion and ambition were viewed as key factors of success by Loures, Melgaço, Ghent, Rotterdam, and Cork.

These cities sit across different types of networks, in terms of being a mix of those with a process or practical focus.

Rotterdam (InnovaTO-r) has a strong history of social innovation and the municipality wanting to challenge the 'norm' every day. Involvement in the project has moved this on further and Rotterdam is now involved in wider European level activities around social innovation.
Pregrada's involvement **(Volunteering Cities)** has been the first time they have participated in an URBACT project and they have sought to self-evaluate and learn from their mistakes along the way – this is something they like about the Programme.

LEAD PARTNER AND LEAD EXPERT INVOLVEMENT

The direct involvement of Lead Partners and Lead Experts at the local level was seen as a key factor of success at the local level. It was felt that Lead Partners were particularly helpful in describing and expanding on some of the nuances associated with their good practice, and in helping to overcome specific challenges. It was felt that Lead Experts brought wider policy knowledge to the good practice, and brought tools and techniques that facilitated more effective ULG meetings. The involvement of Lead Partners and Lead Experts were viewed as key factors of success by Loures, Debrecen, Forlì, Kavala, and Cork.

For **Loures (RU:RBAN)**, the involvement and experience of the Lead Partner and Lead Expert has been really important in overcoming some of the legal challenges associated with private land in Portugal;

For **Forlì (Come in!)**, the involvement of the Lead Partner and Lead Expert has stimulated the city and stakeholders and has pushed them to achieve their objectives.

For **Kavala (Making Spend Matter)**, the direct targeted support from Preston's Lead Partner and the network's Lead Expert has been transformative. It created an in depth understanding of the Kavala context, enabling the network leads to prescribe specific guidance for the city. This dialogue was also extended through the inclusion of another partner – Pamplona – which had been identified as a good bilateral match for Kavala. This too proved to be highly valuable.

REPUTATION OF PROJECT LEADERS

The reputation and leadership skills of the individuals leading the project was seen as a key factor of success at the local level. It was felt that both ULG and Project Coordinators needed a degree of experience of being involved in URBACT projects before or had key knowledge and experience of the theme of the good practice or network. This enabled respect amongst wider stakeholders and the ability to link the project to other activities and strategies at the local level. The reputation of project leaders was viewed as a key factor of success by Debrecen, Rotterdam, Aveiro, and Cork.

In **Debrecen (Welcoming International Talent)**, the Economic Development Center which has been responsible for delivering the project has a very strong local reputation, and this has complemented both political leadership locally and network leadership transnationally.

In **Aveiro (CARD4ALL)**, the project coordinator has been involved with URBACT for a long time and has also used the transfer process to link the project to their UIA project, and wider strategy around economic development.

For **Cork (Playful Paradigm)**, this was their first URBACT experience. An important factor in their decision to participate was their respect for the Lead Partner, Udine, through long standing involvement in the WHO Healthy Cities network.

OTHER SUCCESS FACTORS

In addition to the above, the following were identified as less common factors of transfer success by the case study cities:

- *The importance of a practical approach – identified by Debrecen, Aveiro, and Cork;*

- *The importance of attracting further funding - identified by Mantova;*

- *The importance of informal engagement – identified by Pregrada;*

- *The value of URBACT's green light to experiment, and comfort with the risk of failure – identified by Pregrada.*

3.3 BARRIERS FACED AT CITY LEVEL

As part of the conversations with the 17 identified City Case Studies, we also discussed the key barriers they had faced in transfer of the good practice. The themes detailed below complement exercises undertaken as part of the URBACT Campus (held March to June 2019) and the Mid Term Reflection process used in individual Transfer Networks between October 2019 and March 2020.

Cities have faced barriers at the local level in relation to how the good practice fits with local cultures and contexts. There have been sometimes local regulations and bureaucracy that prevent the direct transfer of the good practice, or different ways of working that do not enable it to happen neatly.

In **Pregrada (Volunteering Cities)**, this local cultural barrier has been that the city does not have local strategies and action plans to push the agenda around volunteering forward;

In **Mantova (C-Change)**, this barrier has been both national and local in relation to the bureaucracy associated with procurement processes in Italy;

In **Debrecen (Welcoming International Talent)**, this barrier is because traditional approaches to economic development are all about developing infrastructure, and this project has been about people, meaning it is not the 'norm'.

In **Kavala (Making Spend Matter)** the commitment to altering procurement procedures was not universally welcome, particularly at the start. The network's good practice model seemed radical and alien to established procedures.

Cities have faced barriers at the local level in relation to the time and capacity individuals involved with the network have to spend on the local transfer. All of the people involved have other activities to do, and sometimes it has been difficult to find the required time to deliver fully on the transfer and the accompanying communications outputs.

In **Rotterdam (InnovaTO-r)**, activities associated with the project have often taken place after the usual working day, meaning that it has required further effort to motivate participants;

In **Aveiro (CARD4ALL)**, they have been lucky to find the time and skills to undertake all the technical activities associated with the citizen card during the lifetime of the project; however, this will be difficult in the future.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Cities have faced barriers since March 2020 at the local level as a result of the Covid-19 Pandemic. This has been particularly evident in networks and cities where there has been and is a need for face-to-face engagement between stakeholders, and particularly citizens, or where the good practice relates to education or is a festival, for example.

In **Viladecans (Lead Partner, ON BOARD)**, Covid-19 has impacted upon the development and delivery of pilot projects, particularly those focused on the engagement of youth;

In **Forlì (Come in!)**, Covid-19 has impacted upon the running of the festival associated with the good practice and wider cultural events.

In **Hamburg (Rumourless Cities)**, the pandemic halted the roll out of the anti-discrimination activities in schools and other public institutions. Although there has been some limited online activity, the pressure on key delivery agents – most notably teachers – has brought this to a temporary halt.

In **Lille (Com.Unity.Lab)**, plans for a ULG study visit to the Lead Partner, Lisbon, were well developed in early 2019 with the visit scheduled for March. Although this would have been hugely helpful for Lille stakeholders, it had to be abandoned.

PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT

Historically, it has been difficult for URBACT cities to engage with and involve the private sector in network activities in both transnational and local activities. These transfer networks and the development of ULG's at the local level have been no different generally. Where private sector engagement has happened, it has tended to take place in cities where wider private sector funding is needed or there has needed to be a monetary type relationship. The following are two examples of cities that have overcome this barrier.

Zuglo (Tropa Verde) has engaged with both the private and public sectors to provide the 'rewards' for citizens that recycle and re-use more of their waste, offering them discounts on products and services in exchange for better environmental behaviour. The ULG has had to develop more effective relationships with the private sector to enable this to happen.

Kavala (Making Spend Matter) has used the transfer network experience to transform its relationship with local businesses. The city's initial spend analysis revealed a hitherto unknown picture of its public expenditure and procurement patterns. This created a platform not only to revise its procurement practices, but also to initiate a dialogue with their local SME community, via their trade associations. Consequently, SMEs have helped co-design new approaches more likely to lead to contracts for local firms, and several of them have initiated their own spend analysis to cascade the good practice within their own supply chains.

RESOURCES

Cities have faced barriers at the local level around the resources required to fully deliver upon the transfer. Cities have often required further resource to trial pilot projects, or develop project websites, for example.

In **Loures (RU:RBAN)** further resource was needed in particular to engage with a wider set of gardeners and gardenisers, and to undertake physical improvements to gardens and allotments in the city.

SUSTAINABILITY AFTER NETWORK

Cities have faced barriers around identifying what will happen after the transfer network process is complete. These relates to many of the previous barriers and relates to who will continue the activities, what will happen to the ULG, and how will the activities be resourced.

In **Melgaço (Re-GrowCity)**, there is particular concern over what happens to the ULG after the network is complete, and how the entrepreneurs which are utilising the Pop-Up Shops can be further supported to develop and grow.

Cities have faced barriers in communicating about the network and activities at the local level. This challenge of spreading the word has often been with stakeholders that sit outside of the ULG and do not see the project as part of a bigger plan or strategy.

In **Zuglo (Tropa Verde)**, challenges have been faced in marketing and promoting recycling and reuse facilities, despite the web platform.

In addition to the above, the following were identified as other barriers to transfer at the local level:

- *The fact that nothing like this approach to transfer has been tried before – identified by Melgaço;*

- *The lack of measures of success at the local level – identified by Zuglo;*

- *Changes in political administrations during the lifetime of the project – identified by Forlì;*

- *The cities in the Network not necessarily being a match in terms of size and expectations – identified by Ghent;*

- *The barrier of having to engage in English at transnational meetings – identified by Mataró.*

3.4 THINGS THAT WOULD BE DONE DIFFERENTLY AT CITY LEVEL

As part of the conversations with the 17 City Case Studies, we asked directly that if we were transposed back to April 2018 and the start of phase 1 of the transfer networks, what they would do differently. The majority said they would do nothing differently, apart from remove the challenges associated with Covid-19. However, two key themes emerged from the cities that said they would do things differently.

HAVE COMMUNICATION EXPERTISE

The cities of Loures (RU:RBAN), Forlì (Come in!), and Aveiro (CARD4ALL) suggested that they would look to utilise resource associated with the network to invest in more communications expertise locally. Whilst feeling that they had sufficient capacity to deliver on the basic communications requirements, they felt that specific expertise would enable them to develop a more sophisticated approach to communication and better outputs.

For Loures, they would have a direct communications expert as part of the team. Forlì would launch more of a visual communications campaign about the project locally. Aveiro would seek to use the existing communications outputs more effectively to create more visibility.

INVOLVE MORE STAKEHOLDERS AND EARLIER

For Loures, they would have a direct communications expert as part of the team. Forlì would The cities of Melgaço (Re-GrowCity, Mantova (C-Change), Cork (Playful Paradigm) and Rotterdam (Innovato-R) suggested that they would involve more stakeholders in their ULG and involve those stakeholders at a much earlier stage in the transfer process. They felt that this would enable a wider understanding of the project at the local level and more effective linkages to the bigger picture associated with the project at the local level including wider plans and strategies.

For Melgaço, which is a very small city, they would look to engage more municipality employees and human resources in the project. Mantova would look to involve decision-makers more in the project and wider services associated with the theme of the network including waste services. Rotterdam would try and get the energy and motivation of people at the local level a lot earlier in the process and subsequently stay inspiring throughout. In Cork, they would have engaged with some specific stakeholders differently and at an earlier stage – for example, the EU funding team within the Council. They would also have been more insistent that ULG members take time out to participate in transnational meetings, to spread the experience.

OTHER THINGS

In addition to the above, the following things were identified by cities as to things they would do differently.

- ⬟ The city of Melgaço (Re-GrowCity) suggested that they would set their objectives and ambitions higher within their Transfer Plan;

- ⬟ The city of Ghent (Civic eState) suggested that they would look to learn more about the URBACT methodology, as there have been a few changes in the staff team since the project commenced, particularly in terms of the engagement of the Legal Department;

- ⬟ The City of Mataró (BluAct) suggested that they would look to document things more coherently and consistently.

4. PROGRAMME LEVEL FINDINGS AND IMPROVEMENTS

This section of the report identifies potential Programme level improvements in relation to transfer networks, from the perspective of networks and cities. The findings have been largely drawn from the network and city case study interviews, where a direct question was asked of 'If you were URBACT, how would you improve the transfer networks?', with the findings as follows:

⬟ The overwhelming identified improvement was around the required deliverables such as Vox Pops and Transfer Stories. Both networks and cities felt that the nature and volume of these have in many cases 'distracted' from the transfer process; so, networks and cities **would encourage the Programme to either reduce the number of requirements or make these deliverables more flexible.**

⬟ Networks and cities **would encourage the Programme to mandate the involvement of relevant departmental city level practitioners in transfer networks and their participation in transnational meetings**. This was felt to be important as these are the individuals that are responsible for the delivery and adaptation of transfers. This could be undertaken through requiring local coordinator CV's as part of the transfer city section process.

⬟ Networks and cities **would encourage programme flexiblity around network timeframes for different aspects of transfer activity**. This is because those networks which moved through the initial phase more quickly than others wanted to move to adaptation sooner, for example. So rather than stating a phase 1 of 6 months, a transfer period of 18 months, and a sharing period of 6 months, networks would have greater flexibility to identify how they would use the overarching time, dependent upon their network activities.

⬟ Networks and cities **would encourage the Programme to place greater emphasis upon the importance of encouraging ULG sustainability at the outset of networks**. This is important as it would enable networks and cities to start early on identifying what (if anything) they will do after the completion of the transfer.

⬟ Networks and cities **would encourage the Programme to develop more support around the selection of ULG Coordinators**. This would include the development of selection criteria, and the provision of specific training for ULG Coordinators.

⬠   Networks and cities **would encourage the Programme to provide further clarity as to the role of the Good Practice City/Lead Partner**. This differs from action planning networks, as does the role of the Lead Expert – it would be helpful to clarify both.

⬠   Networks and cities **would encourage the programme to identify some more tangible outputs at the end of the transfer network that networks, and cities should produce**. This is not about creating more deliverables, but rather about redefining them, for example through the introduction of a Transfer Continuation Plan. This would set out what each partner plans to do next after the completion of the network.

⬠   Networks in particular **would encourage the Programme to provide greater support around the development of Lead Partner Improvement Plans and make them mandatory**. This links to the earlier point around clarity over the role of the Good Practice City/Lead Partner and is important because it details clearly what the Good Practice City gets out of the process of transfer networks.

⬠   Cities in particular **would encourage the Programme to provide direct training around URBACT processes and financial systems**. This would be particularly helpful for URBACT 'newcomers' as they seek to understand what being involved in an URBACT Network means. This could link to work already being undertaken in the new action planning networks.

⬠   Cities in particular **would encourage the Programme to provide more resource as part of transfer networks**. This would be specifically for pilot projects relating to the transfer.

⬠   Networks and cities **would encourage the Programme to build on its growing resources and reputation as being a forerunner around online meetings to promote a blend of face to face and online meetings**. This was happening prior to Covid-19 and should continue into the future regardless.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section of the report provides conclusions and recommendations from this Transfer Network Study. It details 10 key concluding statements about the transfer network process and its success or otherwise. It also offers recommendations for URBACT to support the development of transfer activities in the forthcoming URBACT IV.

10 CONCLUDING STATEMENTS

1 Overall, **Transfer Networks have been a huge success**. At both network and city level, there has been success in transferring good practices both directly from the Good Practice City and from other partners. There are a range of reasons detailed throughout this report as to why they have been successful.

2 **Transfer has been shaped by simplicity**. The transfer networks have evolved from a wider process of identifying good practices, with none of the subsequent networks having good practices that were massively complicated. This has meant that on the whole, transfer cities have been able to identify with the good practice and adapt it in some way to their local contexts and circumstances.

3 **The logic deployed at the beginning of Transfer Networks** (understand, adapt, re-use) whilst not directly referred to by all networks, **has been effective** in stimulating transfer. Networks and cities have recognised the importance of understanding the good practice, and particularly adapting it in a way that is relevant to their local contexts and cultures.

4 **The bottom-up approach (advocated by URBACT) and used by networks to develop methods and identify the ambition of partners has been effective**. Networks and cities have utilised a range of network and city developed tools and techniques within the broad parameters of transnational meetings and ULGs to transfer the good practices.

5 The Transfer Networks have been proven to be **suitably different to other types of URBACT Networks, as have their tools, and factors of success**. This has been particularly evident in the practical aspects of the transfer and the mantra adopted by many networks of 'learning by doing'.

36

6 **Transfer has happened at different speeds and in different ways dependent on the type of Good Practice and network**. On the whole, in networks where the good practice was practical (a competition or a festival or a pop-up shop or a tool), the transfer has been quicker to realise. In networks where the Good Practice was more of a process, it has taken longer, continuing after completion of this network activity.

7 Transfer Networks are **about people and the dynamic that exists between them**. The most successful networks have been framed by strong Lead Partner leadership, the animation skills of the Lead Expert, the willingness of partners to learn, effective ULGs, and a positive relationship with the wider Programme.

8 On the whole, **the number and diversity of deliverables expected of networks and cities has not been met with approval**. Networks and cities have in many cases struggled to see the value added of such deliverables to the transfer process.

9 The **URBACT Programme has responded successfully to the unexpected challenge of Covid-19 with activities and processes that have enabled transfer cities to continue their transfer journey.** This highlights the flexibility, adaptability and leadership of the Programme as a whole and which sets it ahead of others when it comes to online learning.

10 There is an **open consensus amongst the URBACT Secretariat, the networks and cities that the transfer network process can improve further** (as detailed in the following recommendations). However, networks and cities welcome the opportunity presented by transfer networks to experiment and make mistakes and learn along the way.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE URBACT PROGRAMME

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE DESIGN OF URBACT IV

Using the above conclusions and material derived from the desk review and conversations with networks, the following sets out some high-level recommendations or things for URBACT to bear in mind in the design of forthcoming URBACT IV activities associated with transfer and transfer networks:

- ♦ Roll-out the transfer network approach through a further round of identification of good practices and transfer networks;

- ♦ Provide training for URBACT 'newcomer cities' at the outset on the URBACT method, and the process management requirements from URBACT Networks;

- ♦ Adapt the transfer network approach by making the following practical changes to transfer networks:

  - Join phase 1 and 2 of transfer networks together, so that there are no breaks in activity over the duration and to enable partner chemistry to be developed across all partners;

  - Be more flexible as to when networks undertake transfer activities. Let networks and cities decide upon how they use the allocated time for understanding, adapting, and re-using;

  - Provide further support in the recruitment process for ULG Coordinators, and more generally in the development of ULGs for transfer networks;

  - Continue to expect partners to produce and update Transfer Plans and also mandate that Lead Partners produce an Improvement Plan;

  - Encourage Lead Partners in particular to learn from other 'lighthouse' cities that are not part of the network, but which are exemplary in the theme of the network;

  - Introduce a singular network and city deliverable for completion at the end, which would focus upon learning and what happens next;

  - Encourage a blend of face-to-face and online tools and activities as part of transfer network engagement activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE REMAINDER OF URBACT III

In addition to the specific recommendations outlined above to bear in mind when designing URBACT IV, there are also two overarching recommendations for the remaining time in URBACT III.

- ♦ To promote the findings of this study widely and focusing specifically on the value and success of transfer networks. This should be used as a way of promoting the method to other Programmes;

- ♦ To identify a small number of existing Lead Partners to continue on their transfer activities with a new set of cities and testing the lessons learnt from this study.

ANNEX FICHES TO BE ADDED!