
PROJECT SUMMARY OF THE URBAN – RURAL PARTNERSHIPS IN METROPOLITAN AREAS (URMA)

Financed under INTERREG IV C Operational Programme

Acronym:	URMA
Title of the project:	Urban-rural partnerships in metropolitan areas
Type of intervention:	Type 1. „Regional Initiative Project”
Duration:	01.2012 – 12.2014 (36 months)
Sub-theme selected:	
Priority:	<u>Priority 1: Innovation and the knowledge economy</u>
Sub-theme:	Innovation, research and technology development

Brief summary of the project

The URMA-project promotes urban-rural partnerships as a tool to strengthen the potential for generation and transfer of innovation in European metropolitan areas and their surrounding hinterlands.

The basis was laid during a preceding project, integrated in the action programme “Pilot Project of Spatial Planning” sponsored by the German Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Development. In this project regional disparities were tackled and the effectiveness of regional development policies was improved by new governance structures for large-scale urban-rural partnerships (triple helix approach). Balancing regional disparities and being competitive at the same time are challenges for all regions in Europe and therefore the project theme is of high interest to many other metropolitan areas.

The project’s objective is therefore to utilize the urban-rural cooperation schemes developed and tested in the above-named project and in other partner regions in the field of innovation generation and transfer within metropolitan areas and regional urban-rural networks.

The Project Partners (PP) will identify different types of regional innovation systems, exchange experiences on urban-rural cooperation and finally help to improve the effectiveness of regional and local policies in the field of innovation. This objective enables an establishment of a regional, national and European policy agenda for a sustainable development of metropolitan areas. Moreover, it will result in lasting and balanced positive effects on the competitiveness of metropolitan areas, also in global terms. The key advantage to this approach is that urban and rural areas will benefit on equal terms and that cities will not gain competitiveness on the expense of urban areas and vice-versa.

The participating nine Project Partners from six EU member states (BG, DE, ES, IT, NL, PL) cover a wide EU area and are directly involved in the improvement of regional policies. The consortium is homogenous and diverse at the same time, comprising differently shaped urban-rural regions, from strong interconnected metropolitan areas to smaller city regions. The mix of larger and smaller, well-

experienced and less experienced PP will open up new possibilities of learning and knowledge transfer and creates an added value for all regions.

URMA is mainly focused on the exchange of experiences through an array of conferences, public and project internal workshops, study visits in all regions and 3 pilot implementations. The cooperation will be supported by a common toolkit to identify and describe best practices, a concise dictionary and a Good Practice Guide.

Furthermore recommendations for the whole project partnership with regard to regional innovation systems and for the future European cohesion policy regarding urban-rural partnerships will be developed. All in all, the project will raise the awareness for the need and potential of urban-rural partnerships – a new approach to strengthen innovation in European metropolitan areas.

Partnership information

The total number of partners is nine from six European Union member states.

- 1 **Lead Partner** HafenCity University Hamburg – **Germany**
- 2 **Partner** State Ministry of Urban Development and Environment, Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg – **Germany**
- 3 **Partner** Westpomeranian Voivodeship – **Poland**
- 4 **Partner** Tuscany Region – **Italy**
- 5 **Partner** Lombardia Region – **Italy**
- 6 **Partner** Department for Town Planning and Territorial Strategies Madrid – **Spain**
- 7 **Partner** Institute of Urban Development Krakow – **Poland**
- 8 **Partner** Municipality of Borne - **Netherlands**
- 9 **Partner** Pleven Regional Administration - **Bulgaria**

Project budget (€)

- **ERDF funding** – 1 506 430, 68 €
- **National public Co-financing** - 433 097,76 €
- **Total budget** - 1 939 528,44 €

Detailed Description of the Project

- Problem description/issue addressed

Globalization compels cities and regions to position themselves in international competition. As most European cities are relatively small in global terms, in order to maintain or gain global visibility they organize metropolitan regions and start cooperating in new ways with their surrounding non -metropolitan and rural hinterlands. Such urban-rural partnerships have to take place at eye level and on the basis of mutual benefit.

The urban-rural partnership approach, which was developed in Hamburg Metropolitan Region within the German model project, is based on the idea that different partners from various sub-regions are involved in the cooperation. Industrial companies, research institutes, company-oriented service providers, economy and technology funding institutions as well as public (local) authorities work together theme-based (implemented by different pilot projects). At the heart of the models is the interaction between knowledge, businesses and the public sector.

The geographic proximity of these stakeholders and the intensity and quality of their networking brings together the region's capacity for innovation. Individual companies continue to specialize and at the same time innovation becomes more complex and multi-layered. Thus, the networking of knowledge, businesses as well as the public sector and the embedding of stakeholders into these regional systems have particular relevance for the development of innovative milieus and innovation processes in the whole region. For this reason regional innovation systems help to improve business related cooperation and provide positive effects for competitiveness and growth, as the European Council demands in the Treaty of

Lisbon and the Strategy Europe 2020. A collective generation of innovation is therefore becoming increasingly important. And the urban-rural partnership approach enables to handle this complex innovation process by “good structures” and “good governance”.

The aim is to strengthen the interaction of knowledge, businesses and the public sector in a region by using urban-rural partnerships and unlocking potentials for growth within large-scale metropolitan areas.

Within the framework of an official Government backed three year model project, in Germany a number of metropolitan regions have successfully tested this new approach to cohesion and will now continue the urban-rural cooperation. The rural areas involved see their benefit in becoming equal partners in innovation networks and joint projects aimed at improving rural competitiveness or, at least, stabilizing rural economic structures. Hamburg Metropolitan Region has involved the network of European Metropolitan Regions, METREX, the PURPLE network as well as DG Regio and its Director General Dr. Ahner throughout this German model project. Hamburg roused considerable interest in the approach, bridging traditionally separate European and national urban and rural policies.

For this reason, URMA was developed in order to collect new ideas and practical experience.

The interregional approach puts the idea urban-rural partnerships on a European level, bringing together different levels and several varying experiences in urban-rural partnerships and thus creating added value for Europe as well as for the project regions.

The project complies with the EU’s demand for “new types of relationships and political cooperation between urban and rural areas” (see territorial priorities of spatial development measures, TAEU).

The project complies with the EU that values this networked cooperation as an important instrument to bundle regional strengths and to foster synergies (TAEU [14]).

Furthermore it makes a contribution to the study “Territorial initial position and perspectives of the EU”(background document commissioned to support the TAEU, BMVBS 2007) which refers to the need for a better integration of innovation policies with regional development policies.

Objectives of the project

The overall objective of URMA is to promote urban-rural partnerships as a tool to strengthen the potential for innovation in European metropolitan areas. The project aims at determining and exchanging good practice urban-rural cooperation schemes among the partners to identify models, which can serve as a new deal redefining the century old symbiosis of large cities and rural areas under the conditions of the 21st century. The overall objectives are:

- Interregional exchange of experiences on urban-rural cooperation/partnerships ;
- Identification of different types of urban-rural partnerships as well as regional innovation systems (taking into account Project Partners good practices) ;
- Improving the effectiveness of regional and local policies in the field of innovation generation within urban-rural partnerships ;

To achieve these overall objectives, the URMA project has the following sub-objectives:

- Developing recommendations for the regional policies in the field of urban-rural cooperation ;
- Contributing to a better integration of innovation policies with regional development policies ;
- Strengthening interaction in the knowledge - businesses - public sector triangle ;
- Fostering a collective generation of innovation ;
- Strengthening regional economic circuits ;

- Contributing to the economic modernization and increased competitiveness of Europe;
- With regard to the new EU funding period, contributing to a new understanding of regional cooperation.

All together these objectives should help to establish a regional, national and European policy agenda for an equal development of metropolitan areas, which contributes the long-term ambitions of the URMA-project.

Additionally this project aims to have a lasting effect on the competitiveness of metropolitan areas, including their respective rural parts, within Europe.

Together with a strong and broad European network among European regions, it can contribute to develop a clear vision for the future of Europe's metropolitan and rural areas and give them a strong position in the world.

Intensity of cooperation

URMA intends to achieve a medium level of intensity of cooperation. In the first place the project's objective is to exchange and spread experiences. In addition to the normal networking activities the project will develop good practices into a transferable model to run pilot implementations among a limited number of partners (maximum three).

During the URMA project there will be:

- Thematic seminars, workshops and study visits to exchange, discuss and develop
- Conferences for a wide audience
- Website, newsletters, brochures and press releases
- Production of Good Practice Guide, small concise dictionary and common toolkit
- Pilot implementations (in the context of the identified model, developed on the good practices)
- Development of regional policy tools (methodologies, declaration).

The URMA project is created to enable partners to optimize the current situation in their regions through sharing and comparing their experiences and through advising each other on the possibilities for improving their policies and instruments. It is important for the URMA project to disseminate the good practices useful to all partners and to develop regional policy recommendations feeding into national and European policy documents. URMA has already developed a strong involvement of all partners during the preparation period.

The cooperation on a medium level of intensity will result in new knowledge, skills and pilot implementations in several regions to jointly share experiences on the identified model. In each region the project partners are in contact with a stakeholder network of knowledge, businesses and the public sector to ensure a sustainable improvement of the effectiveness of regional and local policies in the field of urban-rural partnerships and generating innovation.

Components of the project.

Component 1: Management and coordination

- Responsible partner: Lead Partner.
- Planned results: A well managed project reaching its objectives, ensuring financial management and coordination among project partners, all reporting procedures, time plans, allocation of duties and responsibilities of each Project Partner.
- Output indicators: 6 Steering Committee meeting with all Project Partners

Component 2: Communication and dissemination

- **Responsible partner:** Municipality of Borne (Project Partner 8);
- **Planned results:** Good internal and external communication and dissemination of outcomes and results of the project.
- **Output:**

- 96 Press releases disseminated (16 releases per six months)
- 2 brochures
- 3600 copies of brochures disseminated (200 per PP per brochure)
- 6 newsletters created
- 5400 copies of newsletters disseminated
- 2 dissemination events organized (The estimated number of participants is 200 (PP + approx. in all 150 guests))
- Participation in 19 other events (e.g. UNICREDS, Open Days, EUREGIA, METREX)

Results:

- 96 articles/appearances published
- 300 visits per month on project's website

In Component 2 unissued communication potential will be mobilized in order to ensure an effective and target-group oriented internal and external communication. Also this component guarantees the dissemination of project activities and results. To these belong European policymakers at a local, regional, national and European level.

Component 3: Exchange of experiences dedicated to the identification and analysis of good practices (core component within the project)

- **Responsible partner:** Westpomeranian Voivodeship (Partner 3)

General description of Component 3

The partner regions have tried different approaches to create and strengthen urban-rural cooperation within metropolitan areas or other regional networks. In URMA

these experiences will be exchanged and evaluated in order to identify success factors and obstacles and highlight good practices. Being able to draw upon these manifold experiences will help the partners in their endeavours to utilize urban-rural cooperation structures and foster the generation and spreading of innovation in scientific and private sectors of their respective regions.

The activities are defined as follows:

3.1. Sharing experiences in new types of relationships and political cooperation between urban and rural areas.

3.2. Organization of joint thematic events

3.3. Organization of joint study visits

3.4. Development of Implementation Plans

3.5. Development of Recommendations

Within 3.1 a common Toolkit (e.g. common templates, questionnaires etc.) will be prepared to identify, assess and describe good practices.

The analysis of good practices will follow a jointly developed methodology for data collection and criteria selection and will highlight the success factors of different approaches and experiences. A model of interactions between scientific institutions, governmental organizations and the private sector will be developed.

The output of this activity will be a concise Dictionary, which includes definitions of terms as well as a Good Practice Guide for the partners as a basis for the further project process.

Thematic events and study visits (3.2/3.3) will occur throughout the whole process and give the partners a chance to share views and experiences in person.

A scientifically monitored Pilot experience (3.4) about the development of urban-rural partnerships and the implementation of the identified model will be realised in 3 regions (Partners 2,5,8) in order to validate the feasibility of the best practices exchanged. It aims at a learning effect for all partners, how to develop an urban-rural-partnership to strengthen the potential for innovation in metropolitan areas and their

further hinterland. Those regions that are not hosting a pilot implementation, will also initiate first steps within activity 3.4, necessary for the development of Implementation Plans (3.5).

Recommendations (3.6) will be developed at the project level with regard to urban-rural partnerships and regional innovation systems. It is expected that the results will have repercussions also for the future European Cohesion Policy and the place that urban-rural partnerships will have in it.

Expected results

- Raised knowledge among project partners and relevant stakeholders about different urban-rural partnership approaches and regional innovation systems
- New approaches for developing effective urban-rural cooperation
- Contribution to a better integration of innovation policies in regional development policies

Description of Activities

January to June 2012

Activities

Joint review and refinement of the work plan including responsibilities and timeframe

3.1. A common Toolkit will be prepared by the Lead Partner to identify and describe best practices (incl. common templates, interview guides, questionnaires, drafts for the Good Practice Guide)

3.1. Inventory of policy frameworks and state of affairs in participating regions and on European level, analysis of existing national and European data, identification of needs for own data collection, common definition of urban-rural partnerships will be developed

3.3. 1st joint Study Visit in 04/2012 to Szczecin (topic - Spatial development of Szczecin and Świnoujście cities with regard to Szczecin-Świnoujście waterway, incl. a ship trip with seminar aboard).

Preparatory work for **1st Public Seminar in 09/2012**

Outputs

- 1 common Toolkit (e.g. common templates, questionnaires) prepared and sent out to all Study Visit with 18 participant
- Study visit Report will be prepared and included into a draft document with good practices and policy recommendations (as a basis for the final documents)

July to December 2012

Activities

3.1. Good practices will be identified and described data collection will be finalized with input of all

3.2. 1st Public Seminar will be organized and hosted in 09/2012 in Madrid - combined with 2nd Steering Group Meeting and 2nd Study Visit. Presentation and discussion about identified good practices of urban-rural cooperation plus input by fellow project INNOHUBS

3.3. 2nd joint Study Visit (combined with 2nd Steering Group Meeting and 1st Public Seminar). Topic - Coordination and participation of agents from local administration and single stakeholders to enhance economical growth and territorial development

Results of 2nd Study Visit and Seminars will be included into a Working Paper

3.2. 2nd Public Seminar will be organized and hosted 12/2012 in Szczecin. Focus - Models to redefine the century old symbiosis of large cities and rural areas under the conditions of the 21st century.

Outputs

- 1 Data Collection (analysis result of existing national and European data concerning the inventory of policy frameworks and the state of affairs in participating regions and on European level) developed.
- 2 thematic Public Seminars with 56 participants

- 1 Study Visit with 18 participants
- 16 good practices identified
- 1 small concise Dictionary developed (incl. definitions and further related terms)
- 1 Good Practice Guide (incl. analysis of success factors of the different approaches and experiences)
- 1 Working Paper

January to June 2013

Activities

3.2. 1st Workshop in 03/2013 in Tuscany Region. Good practices will be developed into a transferable model in this project internal workshop. The identified model will be implemented in three regions (see below).

3.3. 3rd joint Study Visit in 05/2013 in Hamburg. Topic - "Aus de Region - für der Region" as an example for strengthening regional economic cycles through an urban-rural partnership. The results of the 3rd Study Visit and the 1st Workshop will be included into a Working Paper with good practices and policy recommendations (as a basis for the final documents)

3.4. From March 2013 the 3 Pilot implementations will run in 3 regions, accompanied, analysed and examined by all partners, monitored by the Lead Partner (incl. joint interregional "training sessions", joint workshops and joint thematic surveys)

Outputs

- 1 project internal Workshop with 18 participants
- 1 transferable Model developed (based on good practices)
- 3 fields of action for the Pilot implementations concreted
- 1 Study Visit with at least 18 participants

- 1 Working Paper (as a basis for the final documents)

July to December 2013

Activities

3.2. 2nd Workshop in 09/2013 in Lombardia Region. Combined with 4th Study Visit. Topic-Sharing the experience in the management of the fundamental relationship between rural-urban territories in a metropolitan area within the Milan EXPO 2015 (3.3)). The project internal Workshop will contribute to a new understanding of regional cooperation with regard to the new EU funding period.

The results of the 4th Study Visit and the workshops will be included into a Working Paper.

3.2. The Analysis Workshop in 12/2013 in the Pleven Region. A joint analysis of the results of the limited pilot experience carried out will be done during this internal Workshop.

3.4. The 3 Pilot implementations will run within the chosen regions until 12/2013 (incl. joint interregional ‘training sessions’, joint workshops and joint thematic surveys)

Outputs

- 1 Workshop on regional cooperation - 18 participants in the workshop
- 1 Analysis Workshop on the limited pilot experience - 18 participants in the analyse workshop
- 1 Study Visit - 18 participants in the study visit
- 3 Pilot implementations carried out
- 1 Study on the Pilot implementation process
- 1 draft Document (as a basis for the final documents)

January to June 2014

Activities

3.4. Pilot partners will summarize their experiences in Field Reports and present it to and discuss it with relevant regional stakeholders. The LP will compile an overall Study on the Pilot implementations.

3.5. Each partner region will develop a draft version of its Implementation Plan until 06/2014. The regions can hold local Workshops among stakeholders for the development, if necessary.

3.2. The Project internal final Meeting will be in 06/2014 in the Twente Region. The regional Implementation Plans of each partner will be presented and jointly discussed.

The results of the Meeting will be included into a Working Paper with good practices and policy recommendations (as a basis for the final documents)

3.6. In 06/2014 the Lead Partner will start to develop Recommendations in cooperation with all partners with regard to the urban-rural partnership approach as a tool to strengthen innovation in metropolitan areas.

Outputs

- 3 Field Reports on pilot implementation prepared with assistance of LP
- 1 Study on the Pilot implementation process
- 1 project internal final Meeting with 18 participants
- 8 draft versions of Implementation Plans developed
- 1 Working Paper (as a basis for the final documents in 3.5 and 3.6)

July to December 2014

Activities

3.5. Each partner region will develop a revised version of its Implementation Plan until 09/2014. The regions can hold local/regional meetings among relevant stakeholders for the development if necessary.

3.6. The Lead Partner will draw up Recommendations for the whole project partnership with regard to urban-rural partnerships and regional innovation systems, until 09/2014. The Recommendations will be developed in cooperation with all partner, based on the previously prepared Working Papers (with results of the study visits, seminars and workshops).

The Lead Partner will also develop Recommendations for the future European Cohesion Policy with regard to the urban-rural partnership approach. The Recommendations will be developed in cooperation with all partners, based on the previously Working Papers (with results of the study visits, seminars and workshops).

Outputs

- 8 Implementation Plans and recommendations developed and disseminated to regional advisory boards and policy maker
- 1 transferable Model developed (based on the experiences shared and good practices identified), which can be used as starting point for other regions facing similar problems
- 1 Declaration addressed to politicians and decision-makers prepared contributing to a new understanding of regional cooperation (based on the pilot experiences developed and the lessons learned during the events)

Component 4: Pilot implementation on urban-rural partnerships.

- **Responsible partner:** HafenCity University Hamburg (Lead Partner);
- **Planned results:** New approaches for initiating urban-rural cooperation.

Component general description

In this component a scientifically monitored pilot experience about the application of urban-rural partnerships will be realized in 3 regions (PP2,5,8) in order to validate the feasibility of the best practices exchanged. It aims at a learning effect for all PP,

giving hints how to develop an urban-rural-partnership to strengthen the potential for innovation in metropolitan areas and their further hinterland.

Pilot A: At the moment several different approaches to developing space-orientated regional development scenarios and building up new urban-rural cooperation schemes are being discussed for the wider surrounding of PP2. The axes under discussion stretch through different other federal states to Denmark, Sweden and Poland. These discussions are often unstructured and uncoordinated, however, which makes it necessary to gather the different concepts and expressions of interest and transfer them into a harmonised long-term spatial development perspective. One of the focal points should be to identify potentials and specific strategies for the rural areas.

Pilot B: In partner region 5 the idea is to test the urban-rural partnership approach with regard to the EXPO 2015 (close to Milan metropolitan area) in order to develop its own politics in managing cooperation between rural and urban areas involved in the EXPO 2015.

Pilot C: PP8 would like to develop the regional food chain as a means for innovating urban-rural relationships. As the pilot is similar in its objectives to the already tested model project “Aus der Region für die Region” (LP), the partner expects to learn from these approaches. In addition, also the LP expects new input and knowledge for the still on-going project “Aus der Region für die Region” which can be transferred. All in all, this Component intends to test different aspects of urban-rural partnerships and the interaction between knowledge, government organizations and the private sector in different settings.

Although there are different subject areas of the proposed pilot implementation projects, the project aims at developing a transferable model with partly common, partly subject area-specific content which can be used as guideline/baseline for initiating further urban-rural partnerships. Within three interregional workshops the partnership will exchange experiences and PP2,5 and 8 will report about their progress.

The LP will monitor the pilot implementations e.g. by conduction regular (virtual) meetings with the PP responsible for the pilot implementation, preparing an

evaluation of the pilot implementations following a common methodology, compiling an overview study of all three pilots and comparing the results with the findings in C3. Lessons learnt can also be used by the PP when developing the implementation plans (3.5).

Output:

- 3 interregional workshops organised by the project
- 5 (virtual) meetings held between LP and each PP directly involved in pilot implementation
- 84 participants in all these interregional workshops/meetings
- 1 interim reports prepared
- 1 overview studies on the pilot implementation process
- 1 developed educational programme to strengthen urban-rural understanding (Pilot C)

Results indicators

- 3 pilot implementations conducted
- 24 organisations involved in new urban-rural partnership approaches