

Connecting cities
Building successes



URBACT II OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME

(2007-2013)

GUIDE TO URBACT THEMATIC NETWORKS

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Foreword

This guide has been conceived as a complement to the Terms of Reference of the 3rd Call for Proposals for the creation of 19 URBACT Thematic Networks. It will allow you to benefit from the experience of 1st call and 2nd call projects and should assist you in preparing a quality project proposal

The present guide aims also to introduce potential partners into the world of URBACT thematic networks. It will allow you to have a better understanding of what you can expect joining an URBACT network, in terms of resources, outcomes and added-value. It also outlines what is expected from you, in terms of commitment and contributions.

Building on the experience of networks from the previous calls, it draws lessons and recommendations on how to design a network proposal, how to define a work plan, deliverables, budget, and how to manage a thematic network. It outlines the main rules and procedures to be respected as well as references to good practices related to the implementation of network activities.

Use the Guide as much as possible; it contains the basic principles for a successful development of your project and, at the end of the day, for a positive impact on your local actions.

This guide is not only a tool for learning but also a tool for action.

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Table of Content

- Part 1 – Being An Urbact Partner 5**
 - 1.1. What you can expect joining an URBACT network..... 6
 - 1.1.1. The URBACT method 6
 - 1.1.2. Financial resources 8
 - 1.2. What is requested from you..... 9
 - 1.3. Expert support..... 11
 - 1.4. Working with Managing Authorities of Operational Programmes 15
- Part 2 – Managing an URBACT Network 17**
 - 2.1. Lead Partners’ responsibilities 18
 - 2.2. Project partners’ responsibilities..... 19
 - 2.3. Administrative requirements for all partners..... 20
- Part 3 – Setting Up an Urbact Network 24**
 - 3.1. A two-step process..... 25
 - 3.2. The Declaration of Interest for the Development phase..... 26
 - 3.2.1. Stage 1 - Creation and submission of the Declaration of Interest . 26
 - 3.2.2. Stage 2 - Eligibility check of the DOI 28
 - 3.2.3. Stage 3 - Assessment of the DOI 31
 - 3.2.4. Stage 4 - Decision of the URBACT Monitoring Committee 31
 - 3.3. The Final Application for the Implementation phase 32
 - 3.3.1. Stage 5 - Creation and submission of the Final Application 32
 - 3.3.2. Stage 6 - Eligibility check of the Final Applications..... 32
 - 3.3.3. Stage 7 - Assessment of the Final Application 34
 - 3.3.4. Stage 8 - Decision of the Monitoring Committee..... 35
- Part 4 – The Development Phase 36**
 - 4.1. Work Package 1 – Project Management 37
 - 4.1.1. Activities..... 37
 - 4.1.2. Deliverables 38
 - 4.2. Work Package 2 – Project Development..... 39
 - 4.2.1. Activities..... 39
 - 4.2.2. Deliverables 43
 - 4.3. Budgetary elements for Development phase..... 46
 - 4.4. Expertise for Development phase..... 49
 - 4.4.1. Tasks to be performed by the Lead expert..... 49
 - 4.4.2. Allocation of days..... 50
 - 4.4.3. Contracting with the Lead expert 50

Part 5 – The Implementation Phase 52

- 5.1. Work Package 1 – Project Management 53
- 5.2. Work Package 2 – Transnational exchange and learning activities..... 56
 - 5.2.1. Activities 56
 - 5.2.2. Deliverables 59
- 5.3. Work package 3 - Impact on Local Governance and Urban Policies 62
 - 5.3.1. Activities 62
 - 5.3.2. Deliverables 66
- 5.4. Work Package 4 – Communication and Dissemination 68
 - 5.4.1. Activities 68
 - 5.4.2. Deliverables 71
- 5.5. Budget for Implementation phase..... 72
- 5.6. Expertise for Implementation phase..... 75
 - 5.6.1. Tasks to be performed by Lead expert and ad hoc experts 75
 - 5.6.2. Allocation of days 76
 - 5.6.3. Contracting with the experts..... 76

PART 1 – BEING AN URBACT PARTNER

- 1.1. What you can expect joining an URBACT network**
- 1.2. What is requested from you**
- 1.3. Expert support in URBACT**
- 1.4. Working with Managing Authorities of Operational Programmes**

Before moving on to the next chapters, think about why you are interested in the URBACT programme and why you would join a thematic network. A good starting point is to check where you stand regarding the following statements:

- ✓ You wish to improve or change local policies
- ✓ You want to share and exchange knowledge with other European cities working on the same problems/ challenges as your city does
- ✓ Your city wants to develop a Local Action Plan to tackle a local problem or face a challenge
- ✓ You want to involve inhabitants and relevant key stakeholders in the development of your local policies

If you feel in line with the above objectives, we invite you to move on to the next chapters and learn more about what to expect as a partner city, the requirements and commitments, the creation of networks, the different phases in the life of an URBACT thematic network, etc.

1.1. What you can expect joining an URBACT network

Joining an URBACT network will allow you to benefit from a structured and organised process of exchange and learning with peers across Europe, in the perspective of improving your local policies through concrete action-planning. You will benefit from the support of other urban practitioners, experts on urban issues, as well as from the URBACT Secretariat. Last but not least, financial support for exchange and learning activities is also significant, with a co-financing rate of between 70 and 80% depending on your location.

1.1.1. The URBACT method

- **Transnational exchange and learning**

Networking with other European cities within URBACT will allow you to exchange and share your experiences, challenges, problems, possible solutions with peers all across Europe. The URBACT requirement that all partnerships be balanced with partners from Competitiveness and Convergence regions breaks up the usual networking patterns and widens the scope of shared experiences and approaches.

Transnational exchange and learning seminars usually include site visits during which partner cities have the opportunity to learn about how other cities are concretely dealing with their local challenges and problems. While exchanging with the host city and questioning their approach, partner cities are also led to reconsider their own approaches to similar issues they may be confronted with.

While exchanging and working with peers across Europe, with different political and cultural backgrounds, you will generate new ideas for your own city as well as support other cities in building better solutions to their local problems.

- **Action-oriented**

Within URBACT, exchange and learning is conceived as a tool for European cities to design and implement better policies. Joining an URBACT network, you will have the opportunity to work on a specific challenge or problem and to build new solutions to improve urban development in your city. As a partner, you will commit to produce a Local Action Plan. Network activities at transnational level will provide you with practical knowledge, experience from peers and experts, which will feed into the design of an integrated and sustainable Local Action Plan.

- **Capacity-building**

Being an active partner in a thematic network will allow you to strengthen your competences in the field of integrated and sustainable urban development. This exchange programme is also a learning programme. Through the exchanges, you will develop a better understanding and knowledge on the topic addressed by the network. You will also build up professional skills in participative action-planning, while working with local stakeholders on your Local Action Plan.

In addition to the activities implemented by the networks themselves, the URBACT programme offers regular training and capacity-building schemes for partners and local stakeholders involved in networks. Doing so, URBACT intends to go beyond individual learning and to allow local authorities to improve the way they are working with their communities.

- **Support of experts**

The programme provides to each thematic network a specific budget for the appointment of experts. These experts support partners in implementing their transnational activities with both thematic content and methods for exchange and learning. They are in charge of drawing lessons from the exchanges, identifying good practices and producing outputs that can be used not only by the network partners (especially when developing their Local Action Plans), but also by urban practitioners across Europe.

In each network, a Lead expert will be appointed, who will support the partnership throughout the whole life-cycle of the network. Ad hoc thematic experts may also be recruited, to provide support for specific seminars or sub-themes.

At programme level, networks are grouped in thematic clusters depending on the issues they are addressing. These clusters operate as platforms where networks working on similar or complementary issues can exchange on their activities, findings, etc. The experts in charge of managing these clusters are also in charge of supporting projects and their partners to achieve quality results, both at network level and at local level. They can thus provide useful tools and resources in addition to the support provided by the Lead expert and thematic experts working for the network.

- **Support from the Secretariat**

The URBACT Secretariat is in charge of implementing and managing the programme in the name of Member and Partner States. The Secretariat also plays an important role in monitoring and supporting networks, and setting the conditions for quality results. It produces guidelines for Lead partners and project partners on various dimensions of network activities, from management and finance to communication, production of outputs, methods for exchange and learning, etc.

Beyond guidance and templates, the Secretariat also organises training sessions for Lead partners and Lead experts, holds regular meetings with them in order to review progress in implementation, provide support, facilitate the exchange of experience and good practices between networks, etc.

The Programme actively contributes to the communication on network activities and to the dissemination of their findings. It provides a web site on which each network has its own dedicated space (minisite), publishes a Newsletter, develops agreements with national websites in order to foster communication and dissemination on the networks' results in different languages, etc. The URBACT Annual conference also provides networks and their partners with a unique opportunity for communication and dissemination.

1.1.2. Financial resources

The URBACT Programme provides significant financial resource to assist you in your project delivery. The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) will finance between 70 and 80% of your costs depending on your location. The total eligible cost of a Thematic Network can be up to 800.000€, this budget is split between Phase I and II (see details in parts 4 and 5 of this Guide).

Beneficiaries from Norway and Switzerland are also eligible to participate in URBACT networks and shall be financed up to 50% by the national funds of the respective countries.

The Programme also provides each network with an additional expertise budget of up to 166.000€, that is 166 days of expertise to support networks and their partners in implementing their activities (see section 1.3. of this guide).

1.2. What is requested from you

While providing cities with a unique opportunity to exchange and learn from one another, to build more efficient urban policies and stronger partnerships with local stakeholders, the URBACT programme is also demanding. In order to ensure that cities will actually make the most of their participation in URBACT, they have to commit to deliver on the core objectives of the programme. This commitment applies to the following activities.

- **To actively take part in transnational project activities**

When becoming an URBACT, you commit to take an active part in transnational exchange and learning activities, and not only by attending meetings but also in contributing to the preparation and delivery of these meetings (e.g. providing material as requested from the Lead expert, hosting meetings, etc.).

This requires time. On average, a network organises 8-10 meetings over its 33-month duration. Transnational exchange and learning seminars usually last for 2-3 days and not all partners will benefit from easy access with international airport, etc.

It also requires human resources, and not any human resources. You are expected to appoint the "right person", who will be in a position not only to contribute to the exchange and learning process but also to take the learning back to your city, to use it for policy-making purposes and to disseminate it within the local administration and more widely. This means sending delegates with good language skills (if translation is sometimes provided, English remains the working language) and good practical knowledge on the issues addressed. Officers in charge of European projects or International affairs usually speak good English. Yet they cannot always bring concrete experience and ideas in discussions or peer-review exercises on the active inclusion of migrants, energy-efficiency in building refurbishment, financial engineering for social housing, etc.

It is also important to ensure some continuity in terms of participation to transnational meetings. These are conceived as a logical sequence of exchange and learning moments that will feed into partner level activities, and more especially to the production of the Local Action Plan. While you may consider bringing in new delegates in accordance with the themes being dealt with during the meeting, it is recommended that the officer in charge of the URBACT project ("project coordinator") always be on board.

- **To produce a Local Action Plan**

Each partner of an URBACT network is required to produce a Local Action Plan as a result of taking part to the transnational exchange and learning process. Beyond being a requirement, this action plan should be conceived primarily as a concrete and useful tool for the city to solve a local problem and improve a local situation. As such, the content and format of the local action plans will vary from one city to the other, depending on the issue addressed by the network, on local situations, etc. Subsequently, there is no formal template to be used. But guidelines are provided by the Programme in order to support partners in developing quality action plans, both in terms of process and in terms of output.

While Local Action Plans are required outputs to be delivered by each partner city, you should bear in mind that the process leading to the action plan is as important as the result. This process should be developed in the perspective of designing integrated and sustainable policies. Building on the "URBAN Acquis", URBACT supports an integrated approach to solving urban issues, which combines the social, the economic and the environmental dimensions of urban development. URBACT also fosters a participative approach to policy making, requiring partner cities to involve local stakeholders when developing and implementing their local policies (see below). The Local Action Plans shall be the drivers to new ways of building policies and working with local communities.

Last but not least, it is important to bear in mind that URBACT finances exchange and learning activities. It does not finance the implementation of the Local Action Plans nor any concrete pilot projects. As a consequence, you are also expected to work on identifying funding opportunities and finding funds for the implementation of the Local Action Plan developed within the framework of the network activities.

- **To set up and run a Local Support Group**

Each partner joining an URBACT network is requested to involve relevant local stakeholders in the design of the Local Action Plan to be produced in the framework of the project.

You will thus commit to set up and run a URBACT Local Support Group that will gather representatives of different departments within the local administration, as well as elected representatives in charge of the policy areas concerned by your Local Action Plan. This participative process shall of course include representatives of communities, residents, beneficiaries of the policy you intend to deal with, as well as representatives of the 3rd sector and private interests.

The programme will provide financial resources, tools and methods to support you in developing this participative action-planning. The ULSG members should also take an active part in transnational exchange and learning activities, in order to benefit from the learning that will take place and bring it back to the local stakeholders. As a local coordinator of the URBACT network, you will be in charge of ensuring that the ULSG is set up and performs on the co-production of the Local Action Plan. You will have to report on these activities, both at local level and at network level. This commitment is essential for a sustainable impact of the network on local practices and policies.

- **To ensure communication and dissemination of project results**

Joining an URBACT network, you will learn a lot and have the opportunity to build up your capacities, improve your local policies and projects. Nevertheless, you should bear in mind that you will not be working only for yourself or for the benefit of your own city. Networks and their partners are expected to draw lessons from their exchanges and to share these with urban practitioners in cities all over Europe, who could not take part to the network activities. While exchanging, learning and working on their Local Action Plans, URBACT partners

should foresee actions to communicate on their activities and disseminate their findings, practical knowledge, policy recommendations, good practices identified through the exchanges to a wide audience outside of their network.

- **To fulfil administrative and financial duties**

Managing an URBACT Thematic Network requires considerable time and resources. You will be expected to ensure that sufficient resources are made available for the management tasks outlined in Part 2 of this Guide. This is especially true for the city endorsing the responsibilities of the Lead partner, but a number of responsibilities and duties are also to be performed by project partners.

The URBACT programme finances on average 75% of a network budget through ERDF. Each partner is thus expected to bring a local contribution to complete the network funding:

- up to 30% for partners from Competitiveness and Phasing in regions
- up to 20% for partners from Convergence and Phasing out regions

Beneficiaries from Norway and Switzerland cannot benefit from ERDF but they shall be financed up to 50% by the national funds of their respective countries.

Cities wishing to participate in an URBACT Thematic Network will need to confirm their match funding contribution in writing (see details in section 2.2 of this guide).

1.3. Expert support

- **Resources available**

The URBACT programme provides to each thematic network a specific budget for the appointment of experts to support the partnership in developing and implementing the network activities. This budget is additional to the network budget and amounts to 125.000 euros for the whole lifetime of the network.

As the daily fee for URBACT thematic expert is fixed at 750 euros per day, all taxes included, this budget corresponds to an envelope of 166 days.

Expert support will be made available to the URBACT thematic networks as follows:

- one "Lead expert" will assist the Lead Partner of each network over the entire duration of the project in the development and implementation of a work programme and the production of outputs;
- a limited number of other thematic experts will be available to provide assistance on an ad hoc basis on specific issues related to implementation of each project's work programme.

- **The Lead expert**

The Lead expert will support the Lead partner and project partners in designing and implementing the network work plan (definition of project's focus/ work plan/ outputs, etc. and delivery of the foreseen work plan and outputs) over its entire duration. The Lead expert should support the project for both the Development phase and the Implementation phase.

→ Development phase

The Lead expert shall support the project during the Development phase especially with the following tasks:

- engaging additional partners;
- producing the baseline study to be used as a key input for the Final Application;
- defining the issues to be addressed by the network;
- defining the project work programme;
- defining the expected outputs and related methodology;
- supporting partners in setting up the URBACT Local Support Groups;
- supporting partners in organising and delivering transnational meetings.

During the Development phase, the Lead expert shall visit all partners to meet with local coordinator, elected representative, civil servants, potential members of the Local Support Groups, etc. to present the URBACT objectives and framework, to identify the local challenges/ issues the partner intends to work on through the network and through the Local Action Plan. These visits shall also allow the Lead expert to collect material for the production of the Baseline study.

The Lead expert shall also be in charge of producing the Baseline study of the project (see section 4.2.).

→ Implementation phase

Once the project Final Application has been approved, the Lead expert shall support the Lead partner and project partners during the Implementation phase, in relation with the different work packages (see Part 5 of this guide). More especially, the Lead expert will contribute to the delivery of these work packages ensuring the following tasks:

- implementing the transnational exchange and learning activities (preparation and delivery of meetings, including reporting on meetings);
- drawing lessons from these activities and producing, with the contributions of partners, interim and final outputs aiming to capture and disseminate lessons learnt, good practices, etc. both to project partners and to the external world;
- supporting partners in setting up and running their Local Support Groups, and in producing their Local Action Plans;

- coordinating the intervention of other thematic experts working for the project;
- taking an active part in the Mid-term review to be completed 12-14 months after the approval of the network for Implementation phase.

- **Thematic experts**

A number of thematic experts may be recruited by the Lead partner, during the Implementation phase only, using the envelope provided by the programme. These ad hoc experts can be called in for thematic support on a specific topic addressed by partners and the production of related material.

More especially, they should contribute with the following:

- Implementation of transnational exchange and learning activities: preparation of seminars (inputs, organisation, methods); assistance to cities for the preparation of their contributions to exchange activities; facilitation during seminars organised by the network; drafting of minutes, reports and other products emerging from seminars, etc.
- Support to partner cities for the production of Local Action Plans.
- Dissemination: assistance to partner cities in defining dissemination targets and objectives as well as the actual dissemination activities within each city.

- **Recruiting experts on the Programme budget for expertise**

Lead experts and Thematic Experts shall be selected from the pool of validated URBACT Thematic experts. The list of validated experts is available on the URBACT website, with individual profiles and CVs:

<http://urbact.eu/en/header-main/documents-and-resources/find-a-thematic-expert/>

Projects wishing to appoint an expert not included in the pool of validated URBACT experts may ask the person to apply in the framework of the Call for Applicants for URBACT Thematic Experts. The Call for Applicants is open until 31st December 2013. Experts wishing to apply for the validation as URBACT Thematic Expert shall submit their applications according to the procedure described on the website:

<http://urbact.eu/en/header-main/get-involved/become-a-thematic-expert/>

The validation of all applications received is performed by an external body. The process normally takes 3 weeks.

Once their proposal has been approved by the Monitoring Committee (whether for the Development phase or the Implementation phase), the Lead partner will have to submit to the Secretariat an "Expertise request form" which defines the main tasks of the expert, the deliverables expected, the work plan of the expert and the number of days to be allocated. These components shall be discussed

with project partners as they should also benefit from the assistance of the appointed experts.

Once validated by the Secretariat, this request form shall be signed and sent to the Secretariat. It is then used as a basis to establish the contract with the Lead expert or thematic expert. The contractual agreement will be established between the Lead expert and the URBACT Managing Authority. Nevertheless, each time the expert will issue an invoice for service provided to the network, the Lead partner will be responsible for certifying the service provided, the outputs delivered and the number of days spent by the expert on the activities reported with the invoice.

- **Other expertise**

Partners also have the possibility to foresee additional expertise resources on the network budget, using the "External expertise" budget line. Refer to sections 4.3. and 5.5. for more details on network budgets.

1.4. Working with Managing Authorities of Operational Programmes

- **Why associate Managing Authorities?**

The URBACT programme stresses the importance of developing cooperation between cities and Managing Authorities of Operational programmes of ERDF and/or ESF. The basis for this cooperation between partners and their Managing Authorities will be considered when assessing the Final Application Form.

At national or regional level depending on the Member States, Managing Authorities of Operational programmes are in charge of delivering the European Cohesion policy with European funding. A list of Managing Authorities of Operational Programmes in the 27 EU Countries is available on DG Regio website:

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/manage/authority/authority_en.cfm

The duration of your thematic network will cover two funding periods of structural funds (2007-2013 and 2014-2020).

For the present period, (2007-2013), each partner should explore the possibilities of the existing Operational programme: is there a budget line corresponding to the topic your network is addressing? if such a budget line exists, is there still funding available and can it be used to finance parts or the whole Local Action Plan you are developing within URBACT?

For the next programming period (2013-2020), Managing Authorities will be busy preparing their future Operational programme over the next 2 years. Developing cooperation with them while they are designing their future OP may contribute to raise awareness about the concrete needs of cities and on how to possibly finance Local Action Plans.

Finally, the participation of representatives of Managing Authorities in the network activities will offer them the opportunity to meet other Managing Authorities from all over Europe. Through networking, they can share experiences and strategies related to the design and the management of actions for sustainable urban development within the Operational Programmes

- **How to associate a Managing Authority?**

Managing Authorities can be involved in the activities of a thematic Network at two different levels:

- At transnational level

Representatives of Managing Authorities should be invited to attend dedicated sessions during the transnational exchange and learning seminars or to participate in stand-alone meetings specifically targeted at Managing Authorities. Network meetings may represent an opportunity for the Managing Authorities to better understand the process cities are

implementing as well as to exchange with other Managing Authorities. Travel and accommodation costs for representatives of Managing Authorities to attend transnational meetings can be covered by the budget of the thematic network.

- At local level

Representatives of the Managing Authorities should be, as much as possible, involved in the activities of the Urbact Support Groups, and more especially in the process of elaboration of the Local Action Plan. Within the ULSG, Managing Authorities will also be informed about the lessons learnt at transnational level.

Each partner of a thematic network should contact its Managing Authority, and convince its representative to accept being associated to the activities of the network. To formalize this cooperation, a letter of intent shall be signed by the Managing Authority and attached to the Final Application form.

One should consider that the availability of the staff of Managing Authorities is limited. In any case, partners should keep the Managing Authorities informed about the ongoing activities of the network and about the progress made in the development of the Local Action Plan at partner level.

For examples of thematic networks having successfully involved Managing Authorities in their activities, applicants are invited to check the following experiences:

- MILE:
http://urbact.eu/fileadmin/Projects/MILE/outputs_media/mile_handbook_eng.pdf
- Reg Gov:
http://urbact.eu/fileadmin/Projects/Reg_Gov/outputs_media/MA_SemReport.pdf

PART 2 – MANAGING AN URBACT NETWORK

2.1. Lead partners' responsibilities

2.2. Project partners' responsibilities

2.3. Administrative requirements for all partners

2.1. Lead Partners' responsibilities

The Lead Partner represents a key element in the management of the URBACT II projects. It bears overall financial and legal responsibility and its role is therefore critical to the success of a project. This responsibility is outlined in Regulation (EC) 1080/2006 on the European Regional Development Fund.

The Lead Partner acts as an administrative link between the project and the programme, and some of its tasks are summarised below:

- To complete, sign and submit the Declaration of Interest and Final Application to the URBACT II Secretariat within the deadline fixed in the call for proposals on behalf of the project partnership;
- To set up an efficient project management system (see Work Package 1);
- To be responsible for the work of the project during both phases;
- To be responsible for the definition of tasks and deliverables expected from the Lead expert.
- To ensure the implementation of the work programme and the production of outputs, in line with the work packages defined for the URBACT projects and as defined in the final application for Implementation Phase;
- To be responsible for the division of tasks among the partners involved in the project;
- To ensure the coherence between activities defined in the work programme and the allocated budget;
- To request and receive payments of programme funding according to the procedures outlined in Factsheet 6b of the Programme Manual;
- To transfer programme funding to the partners in compliance with the amounts reported;
- To ensure participation to activities at Programme level (i.e. Thematic Pole meetings, annual Lead Partner meetings, annual conference of URBACT cities, Thematic Conferences, etc.);
- To deliver, within the deadlines, progress reports and all other required documentation to the Secretariat on behalf of the project;
- To develop and implement a communication and dissemination plan (see Work Package 2 Development Phase and Work Package 4 of the Implementation Phase);

- To use the URBACT website as the main internet tool to communicate on the project and to regularly update the space dedicated to the project (once every 2 month minimum);
- To promote the project to the wider public ensuring that the support of URBACT and the European Union is mentioned;

In order to deliver all these actions, the Lead Partner shall be supported by a team consisting of project coordinator, finance officer and communication officer:

- Project coordinator shall be responsible for the organisation of the project's work, of the implementation of the work programme, of the production of all expected outputs. The coordinator should be able to act as a driving force in the partnership and to mobilise the partners in order to achieve the objectives laid down in the application within the given time.
- Finance officer is responsible for the accounts, financial reporting, the internal handling of ERDF funds and national co-financing. The finance officer should be familiar with accounting rules, international transactions, EU and national legislation for the management of ERDF, public procurement and financial control. He/ she shall deal with the on-line monitoring and accounting system PRESAGE-CTE.
- Communication Officer shall be responsible for the project communication and dissemination strategy, tools and activities in relation with project partners and the Secretariat. He/ she shall be in charge of the project mini-site, producing relevant communication materials, applying the URBACT graphic charter and publicity rules, promoting the project activities and results at European, national and local levels.

It is strongly recommended that these responsibilities are led internally by the Lead Partner city.

For the project coordination and administrative/financial management, the level of human resources mobilised by the Lead Partner should correspond to 2 full-time equivalent posts.

2.2. Project partners' responsibilities

The Lead Partner shall be administratively, legally and financially responsible for the project vis-à-vis the Secretariat/ Managing Authority. Nevertheless, each partner shall commit to the success of the project and contribute to its implementation and completion. Moreover, each partner remains liable for the sound financial management of its own expenditure.

Roles and responsibilities of the project partners are outlined in the mandatory Joint Convention.

Being a project partner in URBACT II implies a strong commitment with regard to a series of functions. These relate to:

- To provide all requested documents for the completion of the Declaration of Interest and Final Application;
- To sign the documents related to the creation and implementation of the project such as the Joint Convention and the letter of commitment;
- To provide the Lead Partner with the required information for the Progress reports;
- To account in PRESAGE-CTE the expenditure incurred by the Partner's institution;
- To set up and implement the first level control;
- To contribute to the implementation of the project activities by attending project meetings and setting up a local support group
- To contribute to the realisation of the baseline study and the final outputs including a Local Action plan
- To promote the project activities and results at local level

2.3. Administrative requirements for all partners

In this chapter we aim to outline some of the important elements involved in managing or participating in an URBACT Thematic Network. These 'administrative' issues are crucial for the sound management of your project and should not be underestimated in importance.

- **Contractual Arrangements**

The Lead Partner is the legal entity and final beneficiary as far as the URBACT Programme is concerned. The Lead Partner will sign a **Subsidy Contract** which forms the basis of this legal agreement. Within the framework of URBACT II, the Lead Partner shall represent all project Partners towards the Managing Authority.

The Managing Authority shall sign a Subsidy Contract with the Lead Partner. This agreement stipulates the rights and obligations of the Lead Partner and serves as a basis for the checks carried out and for possible amicable and contentious disputes. The subsidy contract defines, among others, the amount of the subsidy (i.e. ERDF funding), the deadlines for the submission of progress reports, the rules and procedures established for a correct implementation of the project.

Following the approval of the Declaration of Interest by the Monitoring Committee, a first Subsidy Contract shall be signed between the Lead Partner and the Managing Authority for the implementation of the development phase (phase I). This contract shall be the legal basis for the subsidy of the

development phase and shall define the duties, responsibilities and obligations of Lead Partner and Managing Authority.

A second Subsidy Contract shall be signed between the Lead Partner and the Managing Authority after the approval of the Final Application by the Monitoring Committee, at the beginning of the implementation phase.

In addition to the Subsidy Contract, each project partner shall complete and sign a **Joint Convention**.

The Joint Convention is a mandatory document in which the legal agreements between project partners in order to define their mutual cooperation are established formally. It is important that sound agreements are made between the Lead Partner and other partners, since the Lead Partner is ultimately responsible for the management of the project. Such contracts are an important basis for a successful cooperation between all partners and form a solid foundation for the project implementation and financial management.

A standard model of Joint Convention shall be provided by the URBACT II Secretariat to the Lead Partner. It is highly important that the Lead Partner, in accordance with the project partners, adapts the document on the basis of the project structure and peculiarities.

The Joint Convention signed by all partners shall be submitted by the Lead Partner to the Secretariat within 1 month of approval of the Final Application.

- **Partners audit trail**

Each project partner is required to keep records concerning activity and costs. These records consist of all kinds of supporting documents, proof of payments, invoices, project activity reports etc. Such information needs to be kept until three years after the formal closure of the programme (i.e. until 31 December 2020, if there are not national rules that require an even longer archiving period) as it is still possible for European audit bodies to carry out checks until then.

In order to assist Lead Partners and Project Partners in setting up a project audit trail, the URBACT II Secretariat shall provide a template to be filled in with some basic information concerning financial management, separation of functions, archive and storing of supporting documents. This document shall be filled in and signed by each Lead Partner and Project Partner participating to an URBACT II project.

The audit trail template shall include information concerning the type of management system selected for the project. It will also include information about the VAT status of the partner and the entities in charge of different functions such as project management, ordering payments, first level control, archiving documents.

The audit trail document must be signed by the partner's responsible person in the project (e.g. the project coordinator / project manager) and must be updated when changes occur. The Lead Partner is responsible for informing the URBACT Secretariat of all audit trail amendments and supplying a revised original where necessary.

An audit trail document for each project partner is required and in order to ensure sound project management a signed copy of this document is required within 1 month of project approval.

- **First Level Control**

Each partner shall propose a first level controller. The First Level Controller must be approved by the Member States concerned following the procedures outlined in the description of the control system set up according to Article 16 of Regulation (EC) 1080/2006. For those Member States which have a centralised system the controllers are already designated. We strongly recommend that you contact the URBACT Secretariat to have advice on identifying your First Level Controllers. You may also refer to the Description of First Level Control systems in Member and Partner States available on the URBACT website on the page of the 3rd call for proposals.

Each Member and Partner State has appointed a Central Approbation Body to approve First Level Controllers. Approval request must be completed in writing and sent to these bodies for all new controllers. Once a thematic network is approved you will be provided with the appropriate documentation to proceed with this approval.

The first level controllers' task is to verify that:

- the costs are eligible;
- the conditions of the Operational Programme, the approved Declaration of Interest and Final Application, the Subsidy Contract and Joint Convention have been observed and followed;
- the invoices and payments are correctly recorded and sufficiently supported;
- the activities have actually taken place;
- the national and community rules have been respected especially with regards to information and publicity, public procurement, equal opportunities and protection of environment.

For this purpose, each first level controller has to certify costs, produce a certificate and fill in a checklist in annex to the certificate and statement of expenditure, using the official model available in PRESAGE-CTE.

In order to ensure that there are no delays in the implementation of your project all First Level Controllers must be approved within 1 month of project approval.

- **Reporting your costs and activity**

Each project must undertake an official reporting every 6 months using the URBACT on line management tool Presage -CTE. The system is secure and access will be restricted by log-in and password. The project Lead Partner is responsible for submitting (on behalf of the whole partnership) a package of documents including:

- i) Progress Report – the LP is responsible for the submission of the Progress report in Presage CTE. This report outlines the activity undertaken in the period concerned.
- ii) First Level Control certificate – each partner shall input all the costs incurred during the period into the Presage-CTE system, once these costs have been validated by the Lead Partner they can be certified by the First Level Controller. The FLC must produce a certificate which should be included in the package of reporting documents.
- iii) Payment Claim – the LP shall produce a payment claim in the Presage-CTE system. This document will accumulate all the FLC certificates produced during the period and summarise them into one claim for ERDF.
- iv) Financial Contribution Summary – this document is an excel sheet which reports the shared costs for the project in the case that project has selected a mixed management system. A template will be provided by the URBACT Secretariat.

For the Development Phase, there will be one reporting round at the end of the 6 months. The deadline for submission of these documents is fixed at 3 months after the end of the development phase.

More information on official reporting can be found in the Programme Manual Factsheet 6b section 9.

Conclusion

It is strongly requested that the administrative and financial management be led internally by the Lead Partner. In case of an externalisation, the External Assessment Panel will check the liability and the proximity of the external body with the Lead Partner administration. Yet the Lead Partner can in no way delegate the financial and legal responsibility for the project. All cases of externalisation of Lead Partner responsibilities should be informed directly to the URBACT Secretariat in order to ensure proper procedures have been established to avoid potential problems at time of audit.

In all cases of externalisation a detailed contract should be established between the entities involved. This contract should clearly outline the responsibilities of each party and should also note the procedure for paying costs incurred for the project management. For the project coordination and administrative/financial management, the level of human resources mobilised by the Lead Partner should correspond to 2 full-time posts.

PART 3 – SETTING UP AN URBACT NETWORK

3.1. A two-step process

3.2. Declaration of Interest for the Development phase

3.3. Final Application Form for the Implementation phase

3.1. A two-step process

In order to improve the quality of the projects approved for funding, the URBACT Monitoring Committee has introduced a two-step process for the creation of thematic networks including:

- a 6-month period for the development of a complete project proposal: the Development phase¹
- a 27-month period for the implementation of the activities foreseen by the network: the Implementation phase²

Within the framework of each call, the URBACT Programme thus provides a core group of 5 candidate cities with time and financial resources to prepare a full proposal, building on a larger partnership of 8 to 12 partners.

Each phase is subject to eligibility check by the Secretariat, assessment by an external panel of experts, and approval by the Monitoring Committee. Cities willing to set up a thematic network are thus requested to submit a 1st proposal to get funding for the Development phase, in the form of a Declaration of Interest. If their proposal is approved for Development phase, they will have 6 months to prepare and submit a complete project proposal in the form of a Final Application.

The procedure for the creation of a thematic network can be summarized as follows:

1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST	
Stage 1	Submission by the Lead Partner of the Declaration of Interest and all requested additional documents to the URBACT Secretariat
Stage 2	Eligibility check of the Declaration of Interest by the URBACT Secretariat
Stage 3	Assessment of the Declaration of Interest by the External Assessment Panel (EAP)
Stage 4	Decision of the URBACT Monitoring Committee on the basis of the proposal for approval submitted by the URBACT Managing Authority. Projects are approved for 6-months Development Phase
2. FINAL APPLICATION	
Stage 5	6 months after the approval for Development phase, submission of the Final Application and all additional documents to the URBACT Secretariat
Stage 6	Eligibility check of the Final Application by the URBACT Secretariat
Stage 7	Assessment of the Final Application by the External Assessment

¹ More details on the work packages to be delivered during the Development phase are available in Part 4 of the present guide.

² More details on the work packages to be delivered during the Implementation phase are available in Part 5 of the present guide.

	Panel (EAP) Interviews of candidate Lead partners and Lead experts by the EAP, leading to recommendations for possible improvements of applications if relevant. Applicants have 3 weeks to adjust their Final Applications accordingly
Stage 8	Approval by the URBACT Monitoring Committee on the basis of the proposal submitted by the URBACT Managing Authority Approved projects are fully operational and can start working on Implementation Phase

3.2. The Declaration of Interest for the Development phase

3.2.1. Stage 1 - Creation and submission of the Declaration of Interest

- **Creation of the DOI**

Projects wishing to apply within the frame of this Call for proposals are invited to fill in English and submit the Declaration of Interest.

The Declaration of Interest shall include information related to the initial partnership, the project's thematic focus, the general objectives, the description of the main activities to be implemented as well as the related budget for the 6-months Development Phase.

The Declaration of Interest shall be created online through PRESAGE-CTE at the following link:

<https://urbact.presage-cte.org>

Applicants are requested to create their own profile and to complete in English all the sections of the Declaration of Interest.

A description of the main actions to be implemented under the 2 work packages for the Development Phase is available in the Part 4 of the present Guide.

Applicants will find additional guidance regarding the information to be provided and for the practical creation and submission of their Declaration of Interest in the *Practical Guide to PRESAGE – DOI* published along with the present Guide. An *Example version of the Declaration of Interest* is also available.

Along with the Declaration of Interest, Lead Partners are requested to collect and submit **the following additional required documents:**

- **5 Letters of Commitments:** Each City involved in the initial partnership (5 cities including the Lead Partner) shall attach to the Declaration of Interest a signed Letter of Commitment with the indication of the amount of local contribution committed for the Development Phase. Along with the financial commitment, the Letters guarantee the full involvement of each Partner to the implementation of the activities. The Letter shall be signed by an elected representative of the institution involved.

Be aware that the signatory process is time-consuming. Partners should start the process as soon as possible. In order to send the application by email, the letters shall be scanned in PDF (other formats are too heavy).

- **CV of the project coordinator at the Lead Partner:** A coordinator shall be designated at Lead Partner's level. He/she will be responsible for the organization of the project's work, for the implementation of the work programme and the production of all expected outputs as defined in the Application Form. The coordinator should be able to act as a driving force in the partnership and to mobilize the partners and the thematic experts. He/ she shall ensure representation of the project in the Capitalization and Dissemination activities as well as in related communication/ dissemination events.
- **CV of the proposed Lead Expert:** The CV has to be downloaded from the online database of validated URBACT Thematic Experts and printed. The CV is attached to the individual expert's profile. For more information on the procedure for the selection and appointment of the Lead Expert please refer to the section 1.5 of the present Guide.

- **Submission of the Declaration of Interest**

To submit project proposals, applicants shall complete the 3 following steps:

A) To submit their Declaration of Interest through PRESAGE

When all sections are correctly filled in, the Declaration of Interest shall be submitted online through the PRESAGE-CTE system. The deadline for the online submission of the Declaration of Interest is 15 March 2012, 02.00 pm GMT. After this deadline, the PRESAGE-CTE system will be closed.

B) To send the following documents by email:

- Scanned version of the last page of the Declaration of Interest signed by an elected representative and the local coordinator at Lead Partner's level. *(The PDF version of the Declaration of Interest can be generated in PRESAGE CTE only after the online submission)*
- Scanned versions of the 5 letters of commitment signed by elected representatives of the 5 initial partners (one letter for the Lead partner plus one letter for each project partner) using the template annexed to the Call for Proposals

- The CV of the project coordinator at the Lead partner
- The CV of the proposed Lead expert

**Email shall be sent to r.barbato@urbact.eu
no later than 15 March 2012.**

C) To send by post the original paper versions of the following documents:

- The PDF of the Declaration of Interest created through PRESAGE-CTE duly signed and stamped (The PDF version of the Declaration of Interest can be generated in PRESAGE CTE only after the online submission)
- 5 letters of commitment signed by elected representatives of the 5 initial partners (one letter for the Lead partner plus one letter for each project partner) using the template annexed to Third Call for Proposals;
- the CV of the project coordinator at the Lead partner
- the CV of the proposed Lead expert

All documents shall be sent via registered mail to the following address:

**URBACT Secretariat
5, Rue Pleyel
93283 St. Denis Cedex - France**

Mailings must be postmarked no later than 15 March 2012.

3.2.2. Stage 2 - Eligibility check of the DOI

The URBACT Secretariat will check all received applications against the eligibility criteria. Eligibility criteria are minimum requirements, all of which must be fulfilled before a project can be declared eligible. Only eligible projects can be submitted by the Managing Authority to the Monitoring Committee for approval.

The proposals submitted within the deadline and respecting the procedure outlined above will be checked for compliance with the eligibility criteria listed below:

- The proposal is submitted respecting the procedure outlined in the call for proposals and within the deadline set in the call.
- The proposal is complete in terms of number of documents required and includes the Declaration of Interest, 5 letters of commitment (one letter for the candidate lead partner and 4 letters for the candidate partners), the CV of the project coordinator and the CV of the proposed Lead Expert

- The proposal is complete in terms of information and data required in the documents (all sections in the DOI and letters of commitment have been properly filled in according to the instructions)
- All the documents required are signed, dated and stamped by the candidate partners
- The proposal refers to a project bringing together 5 cities from at least 3 Member/ Partner States, which have designated one of the authorities as candidate lead partner.
- The proposed partnership respects a strict balance between partners from Competitiveness regions and partners from Convergence regions, with 50% +1 partners from one or the other type of regions. Partners from Norway and Switzerland will not be taken into account when considering this balance.
- The candidate Lead partner is candidate Lead partner in one URBACT proposal only.
- The candidate Lead partner is not already Lead partner in an existing URBACT project.
- The topic addressed by the proposal corresponds to the requirements outlined in the call for proposals in terms of thematic coverage.

Frequent Eligibility Problems:

- **The initial partnership for the Development Phase includes Non-city partners.** At the stage of Development Phase, 5 cities (including the Lead Partner) shall compose the initial partnership. Local development agencies, public owned companies and any other Equivalent Public Body³ are considered as Non-city partners. Non-City partners can join the network during the Development Phase, in the perspective of the final partnership.

³ . *Based on EU Public Procurement Law, public equivalent body refers to any legal body governed by public or private law:*

1. *established for the specific purpose of meeting needs in the general interest, not having an industrial or commercial character (which does not exclude bodies partly having an industrial or commercial character), and*
2. *having legal personality, and*
3. *a) either financed, for the most part, by the State, or regional or local authorities, or other bodies governed by public law,
b) or subject to management supervision by those bodies,
c) or having an administrative, managerial or supervisory board, more than half of whose members are appointed by the State, regional or local authorities or by other bodies governed by public law."*

- **The composition of the initial partnership does not respect a strict balance between partners from Competitiveness regions and partners from Convergence regions.** The request is to have 50% +1 partners from one or the other type of regions (2-3). Partners from Norway and Switzerland will not be taken into account when considering this balance. For the detailed map of eligible areas under the Convergence and Competitiveness Objectives please refer to: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/atlas2007/index_en.htm. Partners from "Phasing in" Regions are considered as Competitiveness, partners from "Phasing out" Regions are to be considered as Convergence.
- **One of the partners included in the initial partnership is already involved in 2 ongoing projects.** A list of institutions already involved in an ongoing URBACT thematic networks is annexed (Annex 1) to the Call for Proposals. Additionally, Lead Partners shall verify that the proposed partners are not applying for more than 2 projects simultaneously.
- **The letter of Commitment is not signed by an elected representative of the Partner's institution.** The local political commitment and support are crucial for the city partner in the perspective of the activities to be implemented in the Thematic Network. Other signatures will not be accepted.
- **The Declaration of Interest is not submitted in PRESAGE-CTE within the deadline.** After the deadline, the online system will be definitively closed.
- **The additional required documents (see Stage 1) are totally or partially missing.**
- **The signed paper PDF version of the Declaration of Interest and the attached required document are postmarked after the fixed deadline:** The URBACT Secretariat will check the postmarks of the parcels received. The postmarks will be kept in the URBACT archives for audit purposes. Applicants wishing to use private postal companies should ensure that the date of collection corresponds to the fixed deadline.

3.2.3. Stage 3 - Assessment of the DOI by the External Assessment Panel

Eligible project proposals will be assessed and ranked by the External Assessment Panel. The External Assessment Panel (EAP) is composed of 7 independent European experts in the field of urban development and transnational cooperation, recruited through a call for applicants.

The EAP will especially check that the proposals are in line with the spirit and objectives of the programme and of the call for proposals, will assess the quality and consistency of the proposed partnership, work plan, deliverables, focussing on what is foreseen for the Implementation phase. The assessment criteria for project proposals are provided in Annex 2 of the Third Call for Proposals.

The EAP will proceed to a ranking of projects and produce assessment notes for each eligible proposal. Based on this input, the URBACT Managing Authority will submit a proposal of projects to be approved to the Monitoring Committee.

3.2.4. Stage 4 - Decision of the URBACT Monitoring Committee

The URBACT Monitoring Committee is the policy-making body and decision-making body of the Programme. It is composed of two representatives from each Member and Partner State and the European Commission.

The URBACT Monitoring Committee will decide on projects to be approved for Development phase during a meeting foreseen on the 23rd of April 2012. The URBACT Managing Authority will submit to the Monitoring Committee a list of 19 network proposals maximum, ensuring the balance between the 2 Priority Axes of the programme is respected.

3.3. The Final Application for the Implementation phase

3.3.1. Stage 5 - Creation and submission of the Final Application

At the end of the Development phase, the Lead Partner and partners, with the support of the Lead expert, shall complete and submit the Final Application for the project to go to Implementation phase.

The Final Application shall include, amongst other things, a detailed definition of the project objectives and expected outputs, a description of the main actions to be implemented under the 4 work packages for Implementation Phase (see Part 5 of this guide for a detailed description of these work packages) and a budget.

At the beginning of the Development Phase, the URBACT Secretariat will organize a Training Session (23-24-25 May 2012) in order to provide projects with an intensive support and advice on how to define and build effective work packages for the Implementation Phase. A second meeting with the URBACT Secretariat and the Lead Partners and Lead Experts of approved projects is foreseen on 11-12 September 2012. This meeting will be dedicated to a last review of draft Final applications.

For the creation of the Final Application, the URBACT Secretariat will provide Lead Partners with an access to the online form in PRESAGE-CTE, to be filled in English with all requested information. When all sections are correctly filled in, the Final Application shall be submitted online through the PRESAGE-CTE system.

The PDF of the Final Application shall then be generated through PRESAGE-CTE, printed, signed and sent to the URBACT Secretariat along with all additional required documents. The list of additional required documents to be submitted along with the Final Application form will be provided to Lead Partners during the Development Phase.

3.3.2. Stage 6 - Eligibility check of the Final Applications

The URBACT Secretariat will check all submitted applications against the eligibility criteria for Final Applications listed below. Only eligible projects can be considered for approval for the Implementation phase.

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The proposal is submitted respecting the procedure outlined in the call for proposals and within 6 months from approval by the Monitoring Committee for Thematic networks. |
|--|

- The proposal is complete in terms of number of documents required and includes the Final Application. The list of required documents will be provided to approved projects, along with the practical guidelines for Final Application.
- The proposal is complete in terms of information and data required in the documents (all sections in the Final Application, letters of commitment and other documents have been properly filled in according to the instructions).
- All the documents required are signed, dated and stamped by the candidate partners.
- The proposal refers to a project bringing together a minimum of 8 and a maximum of 12 public authorities, from at least 3 Member and Partner States, which have designated one of the authorities as candidate lead partner.
- The proposed partnership is balanced in terms of geographical origin with candidate partners from both Convergence objective regions and Competitiveness objective regions. The balance is set at 50% Convergence – 50 % Competitiveness in the case of an even number of partners; 50% +1 Convergence or 50%+1 Competitiveness in the case of an odd number of partners. Partners from Norway and Switzerland shall not be taken into account when setting this balance.
- The proposed partnership does not include more than 3 non-city partners.
- All candidate partners are beneficiaries of the programme as defined in the Operational Programme.
- The candidate partners are not partners in more than one existing URBACT II project.
- The candidate lead partner is not Lead partner in an existing URBACT II project.
- The proposal addresses one of the topics defined for this call for proposals in terms of thematic coverage.
- Regarding the budget, the sum between the maximum amount of expenditure that will be claimed for phase I and the proposed budget for the implementation phase (phase II) does not exceed the ceiling established for the maximum budget of a thematic network.

- **Frequent Eligibility Problems**

- **The partnership for the Implementation Phase includes more than 3 Non-city partners.** For the list of the beneficiaries please refer to the Fact Sheet 6b of the Programme Manual. Local development agencies, public owned companies and any other Equivalent Public Body are considered as Non-city partners.

- **The composition of the final partnership does not respect a strict balance between partners from Competitiveness regions and partners from Convergence regions.** For the detailed map of eligible areas under the Convergence and Competitiveness Objectives please refer to: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/atlas2007/index_en.htm. Partners from *Phasing in* Regions are considered as Competitiveness, partners from *Phasing out* Regions are to be considered as Convergence.
- **One of the partners included in the final partnership is already involved in 2 ongoing projects**
- **The letter of Commitment is not signed by an elected representative of the Partner's institution.**

3.3.3. Stage 7 - Assessment of the Final Application by the External Assessment Panel

The External Assessment Panel will assess the eligible Final Applications. The EAP will particularly check that the proposed work programme is likely to lead to delivery of expected activities and outputs as defined in the work packages, and that the foreseen budget is realistic, clearly presented and in line with the proposed activities.

Whereas the assessment of Declarations of Interest is aimed at selecting a number of proposals out of all eligible proposals received (competitive process), the assessment of Final Applications shall aim to check and improve the quality of the proposals (supportive process). As a matter of fact, at the stage of the Declaration of Interest, the URBACT Secretariat receives more proposals than what can be financed (up to 19 new networks in the case of the 3rd call). Once the projects are approved for Development phase, the objective shall be that they develop quality proposals and all get funding for the Implementation phase. Nevertheless, it can happen that a project fails in entering Implementation phase because of eligibility problems or insufficient quality of the proposal.

In the perspective of ensuring good proposals get funded for implementation, the EAP will seek clarification from the candidate Lead partners and Lead experts by means of interviews and provide recommendations for improvements if necessary. The interviews should take place in the last 2 weeks of November 2012.

Applicants will have a 3-week period to adjust their Final Application if requested, before it is submitted to the Monitoring Committee for approval.

3.3.4. Stage 8 - Decision of the Monitoring Committee

Based on the final assessment by the External Assessment Panel, the URBACT Managing Authority shall submit to the Monitoring Committee a proposal of projects to be approved for Implementation phase. The Monitoring Committee shall decide on the approval of projects to enter Implementation phase.

Decisions by the Monitoring Committee shall be final.

Lead partners of approved projects shall receive and sign a subsidy contract, which marks the final stage of approval of the project. Additional information on the subsidy contract are available in section 2.3.of the present guide. The project shall then be fully operational and start working on Implementation Phase.

PART 4 – THE DEVELOPMENT PHASE

- 4.1. Work Package 1 – Project management & coordination**
- 4.2. Work Package 2 – Project development**
- 4.3. Budget**
- 4.4. Expertise**

The Development Phase aims to provide initial partners with time and resources to finalise their application for the creation of a thematic network. During this 6-month period, and once their Declaration of Interest has been approved, the 5 initial partners, with the support of the Lead expert, will work on consolidating their partnership, developing their project (issues to be addressed, work plan, expected deliverables, etc.) and submitting their Final Application.

Two work packages are to be delivered during this phase. This chapter provides a detailed description of each work package, including recommendations and examples of good practices from previous networks, as well as detailed information on the budget available and on how to organise expertise support.

4.1. Work Package 1 – Project Management

The activities to be developed under Work package 1 aim to ensure a sound management and coordination of the project concerning both the overall project management and all aspects linked to the financial management.

The work package also aims to organise the work between the partners by building a strong collaborative relationship. The organisation of the partner's responsibilities should result in the successful submission of all required documents for the final application.

4.1.1. Activities

Activities to be implemented under Work package 1 are compulsory to ensure the correct functioning of the project. Some examples and recommendations on how to undertake these activities are outlined below:

- To recruit appropriate staff to ensure efficient project management – each project partner should identify a qualified project coordinator who, wherever possible, shall remain the same person for the whole project duration. During the Development Phase the project coordinator should participate in activity at transnational level and set up the Local Support Group (see details in Work package 2). The project coordinator must speak English.

For the Lead Partner, the staff required for the project will be significantly more than for a project partner. The Lead partner shall appoint a project coordinator, a finance officer and a communication officer – these activities will require the equivalent of 2 full time posts.

Staff costs should be limited to Lead partner for the development phase (with only a very minimum amount of staff time for project partners if absolutely necessary). Staff costs should not represent more than 30% of the total budget.

- To hold regular management meetings to ensure strong communication between partners concerning project coordination – it is important to allow time during your meetings to discuss common issues linked to the project management, reporting of activity and budget provisions. A session on administrative questions could be organised during the transnational meetings so that all partners have the opportunity to be involved. The

URBACT Secretariat has a large number of guidance notes at your disposal and can also participate in your meetings to assist if necessary.

- To ensure proper management of the expertise resources (Lead expert) and monitoring of the Lead expert's work programme – Each project has access to an additional budget for project expertise (see section 1.5 of this Guide). The Lead Partner should manage this resource and ensure that suitable records are kept concerning the work of the expert. While contractual arrangements are established directly between the expert and the URBACT Managing Authority, the Lead partner is responsible for certification of the service provided and outputs delivered by the expert. This certification will be needed for the payment of the invoices issued by the expert.
- To assist project partners in 6 monthly reporting review of documents before submission – for each project there is a compulsory reporting session every 6 months. This session allows you to present an update on progress towards your objectives and to declare your incurred expenditure for refund. More detail on the schedule for reporting and the documents required can be found in Factsheet 6b of the URBACT II Programme Manual.
- To attend organised training sessions and other programme level events – the URBACT Secretariat organises several training sessions on subjects which can help you to deliver your project successfully. Examples include general project management, reporting costs, developing a ULSG and a LAP.
- To receive and transfer ERDF funds to partners – the Lead Partner is responsible for receiving the ERDF refunds for all partners. A single payment claim is prepared for the whole project based on the costs declared for each partner using their approved intervention rate. The Lead Partner must transfer the correct ERDF to the project partners in accordance with the Joint Convention as soon as possible after receipt.

4.1.2. Deliverables

Outputs to be delivered as a result of the actions under Work package 1 are the following:

- Contractual documents to be signed at the beginning of the Development phase – see details in Part 2 of this guide
- Lead expert request form at the beginning of the Development phase – see details in section 1.3 of this guide
- Final reporting and closure documents at the end of the Development phase – see details in Part 2 of this guide
- Approval documents for the First Level Controllers of all project partners – see details in Part 2 of this guide

4.2. Work Package 2 – Project Development

The activities to be developed under this work package will be designed to achieve the following aims:

- To complete the initial partnership (5 cities) with up to 7 additional partners and have all partners committed to the URBACT framework
- To identify the challenges and issues to be addressed by all partners within the framework of the project (including partners' expectations and potential contributions to the project, provisional focus of the Local Action Plan to be produced, provisional composition of their Local Support Group)
- To agree on a project proposal and to submit a Final Application to be approved for Implementation phase

4.2.1. Activities

Activities to be implemented under Work package 2 shall include the following actions:

- To organise 2 transnational project meetings: a) a kick-off meeting at the beginning of the Development phase to commit initial partners in the project; b) a final meeting with all partners at the end of the Development phase, to validate the Baseline study and agree on the Final Application
- To complete the baseline study, building on visits of the Lead Expert to all partners involved in the final partnership
- To complete and submit the final application for the project to go to Implementation Phase
- For the 5 initial partners involved in the Declaration of Interest: to set up their core Local Support Group and hold a first ULSG meeting
- To complete the project mini-site on the URBACT web-site and to produce a logo for the project

Building on the experiences of the Thematic Networks approved in the previous calls, hereafter are some recommendations for efficient delivery of these actions.

- **To organise 2 transnational meetings**

a) Kick-off meeting: The kick-off represents the first occasion for the 5 initial partners to consolidate their commitment and a common understanding of the project's objectives.

- ❖ *This first meeting should be organised as soon as possible after the official approval for Development Phase in order to allow partners to start the discussion on a common set of challenges and issues to be addressed by the project, in the perspective of the Implementation Phase.*
- ❖ *The initial discussion among the initial partners should facilitate the definition of common criteria for the selection of additional partners to be included during the Development Phase in the final partnership.*
- ❖ *During the first meeting, the partners should agree on the calendar for the visits of the Lead Expert.*
- ❖ *The kick off will be the moment to introduce to the partners the URBACT contractual and administrative requirements, and should include a presentation of the online accounting tool PRESAGE-CTE. The URBACT Secretariat will attend the meeting in order to present the general methodological framework of the URBACT Programme and to assist the Lead Partner with the presentation of the administrative and financial framework of URBACT networks.*

b) Final project meeting: At the end of the Development Phase, a final meeting shall be organised with the participation of all partners included in the final partnership.

- ❖ *All partners included in the final partnership should attend the final meeting.*
- ❖ *The new partners should have the possibility to introduce themselves, highlighting their expectations and introducing the main contribution they can bring in the network.*
- ❖ *The whole partnership should agree on the final details related to the project's focus and work plan for the Implementation Phase. The discussion should be supported by the presentation, by the Lead Expert, of the main findings of the Baseline study*
- ❖ *The Lead Partner will verify that each partner is finalising the required contractual documents (letter of Commitment, Joint Convention, Audit Trail) providing the necessary support.*
- ❖ *Be aware that additional partners will be considered as legally involved in the project only after the official approval for the Implementation Phase. As a consequence, the costs for the participation of the additional partners to the final meeting shall be covered by the budget for Development Phase.*

- **To complete the baseline study**

The baseline study is a compulsory output to be produced during the Development Phase. The production of the baseline is the main responsibility of the Lead expert, but requires the input of all partners joining the network. More details on the components of the baseline can be found below under the Deliverables section (4.2.2.).

The production of the baseline will build on different contributions provided by the partners (local data, etc.) as well as on the visits of the Lead expert in each partner city.

The Lead Expert should visit all partner involved in the final partnership in order to present the URBACT objectives and framework to the partner, to review the local situation in relation with the topic to be addressed by the network, to identify the challenges/ issues the partner intends to address in priority through the network activities and more especially in the Local Action Plan.

The visits should be organised in close cooperation with the partners and include as much as possible meetings with the local project coordinator, elected representative(s), civil servants concerned by the challenges/ issues, and the members of the initial Local Support Group.

Guidelines for the production of the baseline study and partner visits will be available in January 2012 on the URBACT website. Specific guidance will also be provided to approved projects during the Training session organised by the Secretariat on 23-24-25 May 2012.

- **To complete and submit the Final Application**

Following the two-step process for the creation of URBACT thematic networks, projects approved for the Development Phase shall complete and submit, at the end of the 6-month period, their complete proposal in the form of a Final Application Form. This should be submitted to the Secretariat along with the additional required documents. For more information on the creation and submission of the Final Application please refer to Part 3 of the present guide.

- **To set up core Local Support Group and hold a first ULSG meeting (action to be implemented by the 5 initial partners only)**

During the Development Phase, the partners involved in the initial partnership shall set up a first version of their Local Support Group (focussing on core members). They should also organise a meeting of this core group during the Development phase, to discuss on the issues to be addressed in priority in the network, the possible focus of the Local Action Plan to be developed, etc. This step is crucial in laying sound foundations for the project and in involving local stakeholders in the development of the network from the beginning.

Experience of previous networks allows us to make the following recommendations:

- ❖ *The stakeholders committed in the core ULSG should be informed, through the Local Coordinator, about the objectives of the URBACT programme, the added-value for partners as well as requirements from them when taking part to an URBACT network (see Part 1 of the present guide).*

- ❖ *The 1st meeting of the core ULSG during the Development phase can be organised back to back with the Lead expert visit to the partner city.*

Additional information on how to set up and run a ULSG is available below in section 4.3.).

- **To complete the project mini-site on the URBACT website and to produce a logo for the project**

a) The project mini-site: The URBACT website is the most central and widely accessible media at the disposal of URBACT projects. Projects form the very heart of the URBACT website. Each URBACT II project has its own dedicated pages on the URBACT website called 'project mini-sites' with its specific URL (www.urbact.eu/nameofyourproject).

Each project mini-site includes different sections:

- a homepage which presents the main points of the project at a glance,
- a 'Our project' page displaying a more comprehensive presentation of the project,
- a 'Our partners' page to introduce each project partner,
- a 'Our activities' page including the latest news and events announcements,
- a 'Our Outputs' page to display the main output documents of the project.

Some general recommendation related to the project mini-site:

- ❖ *Particular attention should be paid when filling in project mini-sites with information as communicating on the project is essential*
- ❖ *URBACT editorial strategy should be applied with a journalistic style and with informative, jargon-free and clear information.*
- ❖ *The project mini-site has to be regularly updated so as to remain attractive for an external audience interested in the topic*

Project mini-sites shall be put online for approved projects at the beginning of the Development Phase. Lead Partners will be trained on how to update their project mini-site during the Training Session to be held on 23-24-25 May, 2012. All project mini-sites will have to be completed by 1 July, 2012.

Lead Partners will be provided with a Web handbook and URBACT Key message Guide at the beginning of the Development phase.

Mini-sites Examples:

- RegGov (www.urbact.eu/reg_gov),
- HerO (www.urbact.eu/hero),
- CTUR (www.urbact.eu/ctur).

b) A logo for the project: URBACT projects approved for Development Phase shall create a logo for the project. This logo will be used in all communication materials and on the project minisite.

c) The URBACT graphic charter: In order to foster the impact of the URBACT programme communication strategy, an URBACT visual identity has been created. It is crucial that all URBACT networks contribute to the image and visibility of the programme. As a consequence, networks are requested to apply the URBACT graphic charter in all their documents.

URBACT Graphic Charter including guidelines and templates for publication, leaflet, newsletters etc. is available on the URBACT Graphic Charter platform at: http://urbact.eu/fileadmin/graphic_charter/

URBACT projects approved for Development Phase will be trained on how to apply the URBACT graphic Charter during the Training Session in May 2012.

d) Make a clear distinction between Internal Communication tools and External Communication: Projects are invited to distinguish communication actions targeted to the project partners, internal communication, and communications actions targeted to an external audience. It is of primary importance that project partners define their target groups so as to adapt their communication strategy and their dissemination plan as the tools, the format and content of the outputs aimed at sharing project's results will need to be defined accordingly.

- *Take the time to create a coherent contact list. It will be very useful during all the lifecycle of your project.*
- *Don't loose your time and money creating tools that already exist: mini-site, graphic charter, newsletter templates etc.*
- *Think of using a journalist or an agency to write articles on your project activities, your partners' challenges, make interviews.*
- *Bear in mind that communicating takes time!*

4.2.2. Deliverables

Outputs to be delivered as a result of the actions under Work package 2 shall include:

- 2 project meetings (one with the 5 initial partners and one with all the partners involved in the Final Application)
- 5 ULSG meetings (one for each of the 5 partners involved in the Declaration of Interest)
- The baseline study
- The final application form
- The completed project mini-site

The baseline study and the Final Application are the main outputs to be produced over the period.

The Final Application is a form to fill in on-line and will be presented to approved projects during the Training Session in May 2012.

There is no template as such for the Baseline study. Nevertheless, the terms of reference for the 3rd call for proposals sets out specific requirements in terms of format, content and delivery schedule.

The Baseline is defined as a compilation of 3 elements which should feed in the design of the project proposal and in the Final Application. This implies that the Lead expert is expected to deliver these components not at the very end of the Development phase, as a final output, but during the lifecycle of the project development.

1. **The "state of the art"** of the existing knowledge, tools, programmes, etc. related to the project focus, to be delivered one month following the approval of the project for Development phase.

Recommendations based on previous network experiences

- ❖ *The "state of the art" (about 20 pages) should be ideally ready for the 1st meeting of the partners in the Development phase, at least in draft version, to inform thinking among partners about the nature of the theme problematic and to ensure that the network builds on and take into account already existing knowledge.*
- ❖ *The "state of the art" should be illustrated with some examples of good practice in the theme from beyond the network*
- ❖ *The "state of the art" should help the partners to focus discussions about future actions beyond the Development phase and provide a shared vocabulary on the theme*
- ❖ *The "state of the art" is dedicated to partners, so produced for an internal audience. But it can be very useful and interesting for an external audience as well, so it is important that it is produced in a stand alone format in a format which will allow easy external dissemination.*

→ See the "state of the art" of the Creative Clusters baseline

http://urbact.eu/fileadmin/Projects/Creative_Clusters/State_of_the_art_EUlevel.pdf

2. **The partner profiles**, presenting the local situation, challenges/problems, existing policies, expectations vis-à-vis the network, etc. of all partners involved in the Final Application

Recommendations based on previous network experiences

- ❖ *The partner profiles (5-6 pages each) shall be completed for all partners involved in the Final Application.*

- ❖ *The partner profiles should be mostly aimed at an internal audience, particularly useful for Local Support Group members as starting point for the Local Action Plan but also useful for partners and others to act as briefing when they visit the city.*
- ❖ *There should be some comparative analysis of profiles to provide some comparison of the situation in different partner cities*

→ See the partner profiles of the SURE baseline

http://urbact.eu/fileadmin/Projects/SURE/outputs_media/SURE_baseline_study_FINAL.pdf

3. **The synthesis of the issues to be addressed** by the project in Implementation phase, resulting from the confrontation of the state of the art and the partners' challenges and expectations (to feed into the final application form and the design of the work programme)

Recommendations based on previous network experiences

- ❖ *The synthesis (5-10 pages) should be conceived for an internal audience in order to support city partners in making decisions about the organisation of the work programme.*
- ❖ *Applicants are invited to check the URBACT website in January 2012 for an updated version of the guidelines for the production of the Baseline study (section Programme Documents of the URBACT website).*

4.3. Budgetary elements for Development phase

The total eligible budget for a Thematic Network is fixed at 800.000€. This budget is split between the Development and Implementation Phase with a maximum of 100.000€ for the Development Phase and the remaining resource can be used for the Implementation Phase if approved.

A Thematic Network budget must be presented in line with the budget categories outlined in the Presage-CTE system. An example of the kinds of costs which can be funded in each budget category can be found in the summary table below:

1) Project coordination (incl. Overheads)	General costs, administrative costs, overheads, etc.
2) Personnel	Costs for the personnel employed by the partner/lead partner's institutions officially listed in the Application Form
3) Meeting organisation	Costs for the organisation of meetings, conferences and seminars (venue, interpretation, catering, etc.) both at project level for transnational activities and at partner level for ULSG activities
4) Travel and accommodation	Costs for travel and accommodation for transnational exchange and learning activities (costs for personnel, ULSG members, experts involved in project activities, representatives of MA of OP, and other invited participants); Costs for travel and accommodation for core ULSG members to attend national ULSG capacity-building schemes; Costs for travel and accommodation for Dissemination activities (costs for personnel, ULSG members, experts involved in project activities, representatives of MAs of OPs, and other invited participants)
5) Communication and dissemination	Costs for newsletter, brochures, other communication and dissemination tools, costs for printing and translation
6) External expertise	Costs for external experts (excluding thematic experts financed at programme level) contributing to the implementation of the different work packages. Expertise linked to project management, control or communication if necessary.
7) Equipment	Small scale investments in equipment that is strictly necessary for the implementation of the project

8) ULSG	For Third Call projects, it is recommended that this budget category be left empty. Costs linked to ULSG should be included in the other relevant categories like travel, meetings and external expertise.
9) Managing Authorities	For Third Call projects, it is recommended that this budget category be left empty. Costs linked to the participation of MAs of OPs should be included in the other relevant categories like travel, meetings.

The total eligible cost for the Development Phase of a project will be set at a maximum of 100.000€. The candidate partner will need to confirm their match funding contribution by letter (see template provided in Annexes 3 and 4 to the call). For cities from the Competitiveness and Phasing in regions, the maximum ERDF intervention rate is fixed at 70%. For Convergence and phasing out regions, it is fixed at 80%.

The activities in the Development Phase are rather limited and as such the budget categories used will be less than for the Final Application.

In the Practical Guide to Presage - DOI and the PDF 'Example DOI' project accompanying this document you can see some further details about how this budget can be presented. Below you will find details of the kinds of costs you should consider in your DOI, hence helping you to avoid forgetting any important aspects. You will also find information about some average costs for the kinds of activities you will be undertaking based on the experience of the already approved Thematic Networks.

Project Coordination costs

Costs for project co-ordination comprise administrative costs that are incurred in relation to the overall management of the network project. During the development phase these will be minimal and on the whole such costs are difficult to justify as they need to be evidenced. It is strongly recommended that such costs are not reported in the development phase.

Personnel

Personnel costs can only be reported in this category for staff employed by the partner listed in the Declaration of Interest. If personnel are external employees they must be reported in the budget category Expertise. Staff costs should not represent more than 30% of the total budget as a general rule.

For the Development Phase it is strongly encouraged that only Lead Partner personnel costs be budgeted as there is a limited budget and the main staff tasks will be carried out by the Lead Partner in this Phase of the project.

If budgeting staff costs for other partners, consideration should be given to the varying salary levels across Europe to ensure the most accurate budget estimation possible.

In Presage it is advisable to group together personnel costs for the Lead Partner into one budget line. If project partner costs are to be included these should also be grouped into one line 'project partner personnel'.

Meetings Organisation

Typical costs in this category include room and equipment hire, interpretation and catering. It is often possible to minimize room hire costs by using venues in project partner's premises. Costs for interpretation can also vary based on the country and the languages needed. On average a 2 day transnational meeting with between 30 and 40 people present costs approx. 3000€.

Local ULSG meetings are often not budgeted as they are hosted in the local offices, catering for these meetings can be included in the budget if required.

In Presage for the Development Phase it is advisable to group meeting costs together to simplify the reporting. Details of each kind and number of meetings will be presented in the description of activities and the outputs.

Travel and Accommodation

For an URBACT Thematic Network the travel budget is, not surprisingly, one of the highest representing about a third of the total costs. As a general rule the most economic way of travel must be used. On average a trip to a transnational seminar usually consists of a flight / train journey and 2-3 nights accommodation. On average such a journey costs approx. 750€ per person.

When budgeting travel costs you should consider the number of participants from each city to be invited and also consideration should be given to the travel of the Lead Expert or other experts as this must be included in the project budget.

Travel for local ULSG meetings is often limited but can also be budgeted if required.

Travel for the expert to visit all cities for the Baseline Study should also be budgeted.

The costs for travel to the final transnational meetings should also be carefully considered. The new project partners presented for Implementation Phase are not official partners and as such will need to be covered by the Development Phase budget.

In Presage for the Development Phase these costs can be grouped together into one or two budget lines with details outlined in the description of your activities. For example one budget line for general travel for all partners and one for the Lead Expert.

Communication and Dissemination

The costs for Communication and Dissemination in the development Phase are usually quite limited in the Development Phase. In this category you will find costs linked to newsletters, brochures, other tools, printing and translation. For the Development Phase costs for designing a logo and project identity should be budgeted as well as costs for printing of the baseline study if necessary and possibly translation of a basic project flyer. On average Phase I projects have

budgeted approx. 6000 € for this budget category. In our example we have additional costs as for projects approved in this call we require additional communication (see Work Package 2)

External Expertise

This budget category varies considerably between projects based on the need for external support for project management and or ULSG. It is recommended to review the needs of project partners in terms of possible costs for expertise in Communication or website, control of expenditure or ULSG animation before estimating the budget needed for the development phase. The cost of expertise can vary in each Member State so this should also be taken into consideration.

Equipment

In the Development Phase normally no equipment costs should be presented.

ULSG and Managing Authorities

For projects financed in the Third Call for proposals no costs should be included in these budget categories. Costs linked to these activities shall be presented in the other budget categories.

All the cost categories above are outlined in further detail in the URBACT Programme Manual, Factsheet 6b.

4.4. Expertise for Development phase

The URBACT programme provides to each thematic network a specific budget (additional to the network budget) for the appointment of experts.

4.4.1. Tasks to be performed by the Lead expert

During the Development phase, the Lead expert shall support network partners with the following tasks:

- engaging additional partners;
- producing the baseline study to be used as a key input for the Final Application;
- defining the project work programme, the expected outputs and related methodology;
- supporting initial partners in setting up the URBACT Local Support Groups;
- supporting the Lead partner and project partners in organising and delivering the 2 transnational meetings to be held by each network during the Development Phase (see section 4.2. above).

During the Development phase, the Lead expert shall visit all partners to meet with local coordinator, elected representative, civil servants, potential members of the Local Support Groups, etc. to present the URBACT objectives and framework, to identify the local challenges/ issues the partner intends to work on

through the network and through the Local Action Plan. These visits shall also allow the Lead expert to collect material for the production of the Baseline study.

The Lead expert shall also be in charge of producing the Baseline study of the project (see section 4.2.).

4.4.2. Allocation of days

Taking into account their important role during the Development phase, Lead experts should be allocated an **average of 40 days** (out of the 166 days available for the whole duration of the network) for the services to be provided.

The expert's work plan will be agreed between the expert and the Lead partner, in consultation with the project partners. It is expected that the Lead expert spends:

- on visiting all partners: 15 days on average
- on the baseline: 15 days on average (on the basis of 6 days for the state of the art, 5 days on the partner profiles, 4 days on the synthesis)
- on the 2 project meetings: 6 days (including preparation of agenda and input, participation and moderation, reporting on meeting)
- on support to partners in completing the Final Application: 4 days

4.4.3. Contracting with the Lead expert

When submitting their Declaration of Interest, applicants are requested to designate the Lead expert they intend to work with if the project is approved for Development phase.

This expert shall be proposed from the list of experts validated for URBACT. This list is available on the URBACT website, with a search engine (per theme, countries, etc.). In the cases when the partners do not find the relevant expertise in the URBACT pool of validated experts, they may invite experts to apply for validation following the procedure available on the URBACT website.

See Section 1.3. for more detailed information.

Contracting with the Lead expert will occur once the project has been approved for Development phase. Lead partners will be invited to submit, within one month after the approval of the network, a Lead expert request form for Development phase. Using a template provided by the Secretariat, Lead partners will have to define, in agreement with the network initial partners, the main tasks to be performed (see section 4.4.1. above), the foreseen deliverables, the number of days to be allocated, etc. After validation by the Secretariat, the request form shall be signed and sent to the Secretariat. The information included in the request form will be used to establish the contract between the Lead expert and the URBACT Managing Authority.

For each invoice issued by the Lead expert, the Lead partner will be requested to officially certify (using a template provided by the Secretariat) the accuracy of the services reported by the expert, in terms of tasks completed, outputs delivered and number of days claimed.

If the Programme provides for an additional envelope for expertise, it is important to bear in mind that this envelope will cover days of expertise only. Travel and accommodation costs for the Lead expert will have to be covered by the network budget.

PART 5 – THE IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

- 5.1. Work package 1 – Project management and coordination**
- 5.2. Work package 2 – Transnational exchange and learning**
- 5.3. Work package 3 – Impact on local governance and urban policies**
- 5.4. Work package 4 – Communication and dissemination**

The Implementation phase shall be structured around 4 work packages:

- Work package 1 – Project management and coordination
- Work package 2 – Transnational exchange and learning
- Work package 3 – Impact on local governance and urban policies
- Work package 4 – Communication and dissemination

In developing their Final Application during the Development phase, project applicants are requested to present how they will implement these 4 work packages in order to reach the objectives defined for each work package, and to deliver the actions and outputs expected for each work package. These elements are defined in the sections below.

In addition to the detailed presentation of each work package with guidance, recommendations, reference to good practices, etc., additional information is provided focusing on budget issues on the one hand and expertise management on the other hand.

5.1. Work Package 1 – Project Management

The activities to be developed under Work package 1 aim to ensure a sound management and coordination of the project concerning both the overall project management and all aspects linked to the financial management.

The work package also aims to organise the work between the partners by building a strong collaborative relationship. This strong partnership will allow the project to progress according to its work plan respecting the approved final application form and other contractual documents.

5.1.1 Activities

Activities to be implemented under Work Package 1 are compulsory to ensure the correct functioning of the project. Some examples and recommendations on how to undertake these activities are outlined below:

- To recruit appropriate staff to ensure efficient project management, and communication and dissemination tasks - each project partner should identify a qualified project coordinator who, wherever possible, shall remain the same person for the whole project duration. During the Development Phase the project coordinator should participate in activity at transnational level and set up the Local Support Group (see details in Work package 2). The project coordinator must speak English.

For the Lead Partner, the staff required for the project will be significantly more than for a project partner. The Lead partner shall appoint a project coordinator, a finance officer and a communication officer – these activities will require the equivalent of 2 full time posts.

Staff costs should be limited to Lead partner for the development phase (with only a very minimum amount of staff time for project partners if absolutely necessary). Staff costs should not represent more than 30% of the total budget.

- To hold regular management meetings to ensure strong communication between partners concerning project coordination – it is important to allow time during your meetings to discuss common issues linked to the project management, reporting of activity and budget provisions. A session on administrative questions could be organised during the transnational meetings so that all partners have the opportunity to be involved. The URBACT Secretariat has a large number of guidance notes at your disposal and can also participate in your meetings to assist if necessary.
- To ensure proper management of the expertise resources (Lead expert) and monitoring of the Lead expert's work programme – Each project has access to an additional budget for project expertise (see section 1.5 of this Guide). The Lead Partner should manage this resource and ensure that suitable records are kept concerning the work of the expert. While contractual arrangements are established directly between the expert and the URBACT Managing Authority, the Lead partner is responsible for certification of the service provided and outputs delivered by the expert. This certification will be needed for the payment of the invoices issued by the expert.
- To assist project partners in 6 monthly reporting review of documents before submission – for each project there is a compulsory reporting session every 6 months. This session allows you to present an update on progress towards your objectives and to declare your incurred expenditure for refund. More detail on the schedule for reporting and the documents required can be found in Factsheet 6b of the URBACT II Programme Manual.
- To complete a mid term review 12-14 months after project approval - All project proposals shall include a mid-term review in their work-plan for Implementation phase. This mid-term review shall be planned 12-14 months after the beginning of the Implementation phase and shall lead to the submission of a mid-term review report to the URBACT Secretariat and to possible adjustments in the Final Application (e.g. regarding the work programme, the expected outputs, the budget, etc.). The review will concern all 4 work packages. More specifically, it will be crucial to check the functioning of ULSGs, the progress in the production of the Local Action Plans and other expected outputs. The mid-term review shall also lead to the elaboration of a Dissemination plan targeted to the dissemination of project's results and outputs. This Dissemination plan will be submitted to the URBACT Secretariat for validation. The review shall be completed with the active contribution of the Thematic Pole Manager and in association with the URBACT Secretariat. Project partners will be provided with the necessary terms of reference and guidelines in the course of the Development phase.
- To attend organised training sessions and other programme level events – the URBACT Secretariat organises several training sessions on subjects

which can help you to deliver your project successfully. Examples include general project management, reporting costs, developing a ULSG and a LAP.

- To receive and transfer ERDF funds to partners – the Lead Partner is responsible for receiving the ERDF refunds for all partners. A payment claim is prepared for the whole project every 6 months based on the costs declared for each partner using their approved intervention rate. The Lead Partner must transfer the correct ERDF to the project partners in accordance with the Joint Convention as soon as possible after receipt.

4.1.2 Deliverables

Outputs to be delivered as a result of the actions under Work package are:

- Contractual documents (e.g. subsidy contract, joint convention, etc.) at the beginning of Implementation phase
- Expertise request forms for the Lead expert at the beginning of Implementation phase
- Expertise request forms for other ad hoc expertise recruited in the course of project implementation
- Approval documents for the First Level Controllers of all project partners
- Mid-term review report, to be submitted to the URBACT Secretariat between 12 and 14 months after project approval
- Official reporting documents – every 6 months
- Final closure documents at the end of the project

5.2. Work Package 2 – Transnational exchange and learning activities

The activities to be developed under this work package will be designed to achieve the following aims:

- **Sharing:** To foster the exchange of experiences among project partners and identify good practices
- **Learning:** To strengthen the practical knowledge and skills of partners in the policy area related to the issues addressed by the network
- **Mainstreaming:** To draw lessons from the exchanges on an ongoing basis and to apply them at local level, especially through the production of the Local Action Plans
- **Supporting:** To support partners in improving their local policies and producing their Local Action Plans

5.2.1. Activities

Transnational exchange and learning seminars are the core actions to be implemented in this work package during the Implementation phase. They are to be conceived as the milestones of an URBACT project as they allow the exchange of experience among partners and their ULSG members, the consolidation of knowledge on a specific policy issue, the mutual support between partners (peer support), etc.

European policy-makers and practitioners, involved in the network and outside the network, shall benefit from the lessons learnt and good practices identified by partner cities, especially when looking for concrete answers and solutions to the issues they face in terms of urban development.

Building on the experiences of the Thematic Networks approved in the previous calls, hereafter are some recommendations for efficient delivery of these actions.

- ❖ *The methodological approaches as well as the format of the transnational meetings can be linked to the specific issues addressed by the project as well as to the composition of the partnership. Nevertheless, two main approaches have been developed for the organisation and the implementation of the exchange and learning activities:*
 - a) Projects can deal with the main topic in a progressive way, addressing sequentially the different dimensions of the main theme. Each dimension will be deeply explored and analysed during one or two transnational exchange and learning seminars with all partners providing inputs and knowledge to the general discussion. The sequence of seminars should be conceived as to ensure the coherence in the way the main topic is addressed.*
 - b) Projects can decide to organise the main theme around different sub-thematic clusters. In that case each sub-theme*

will be dealt within smaller groups to allow a more focused ex-change and co-production process between a limited numbers of members with a special interest in this field. Different clusters meetings can be organised simultaneously as it is not requested the participation of all partners.

→ Interesting examples of clusters approaches are provided by the Reg Gov and Roma-Net thematic networks.

- ❖ *Projects should try to organize a transnational meeting in each partner city, with an average of 7/8 events organised during the Implementation Phase (not including the Final conference). This is the best way to ensure a strong commitment of all partners involved, and allow a real contribution of the local stakeholders to the network.*
- ❖ *The host city should be selected having in mind the relation between the local situation and experiences and the specific theme to be analysed during the event. It is important to build on what the city has "to offer" to the discussion on the theme of the meeting. Simultaneously, the host city should benefit from the input of the other partners while they are on the spot.*
- ❖ *A transnational exchange and learning seminar should be a combination of several components:*

***a) Learning sessions**, focussed on a specific topic related to the theme addressed by the network, during which partners will learn, thanks to the input of the Lead expert or other experts. These "thematic workshops" can take the form of master classes, key note speeches, presentation of case-studies, etc. Project can decide to invite external speakers as far as they can provide with a wider perspective on the theme addressed and an added value for the general exchange process.*

***b) Interactive working sessions**, during which partners will work on a specific issue, on the draft Local Action Plan of a partner, on a case study, etc. These sessions should be output-oriented, leading to the production of conclusions, lessons learnt, good practice case. Peer review exercises should be a major component of working among partners during the transnational seminars or bilateral visits. More especially, each transnational seminar should foresee a peer review of the main steps undertaken by each city in running their Local Support Groups and producing their Local Action Plans.*

→ For an example of exchange and learning based on peer-review focussed on host city, refer to the Implementation Labs organised by the REDIS Thematic Network.

c) Focus on the host city including a well structured initial presentation of the local challenges, a relevant field visit and a real involvement of the members of the local ULSG in the preparation and the animation of the session.

d) Sessions dedicated to the Managing Authorities: projects should foresee specific sessions for Managing Authorities of Operational Programmes. These sessions should be linked to the advancement of Local Action Plans being produced in the different cities, and aim to explore the possibility of funding within the Operational Programmes. In addition, the session will offer to the Managing Authorities the opportunity to meet and share with other Managing Authorities from other Member States on how they implement their OP (current period) or how they design their OP (future period).

e) Project management sessions, for partners to go over administrative and financial issues: a session should be dedicated to the general project management as to allow all partners to discuss and clarify the different issues related to the financial and administrative management. This could be done in the form of a Steering Committee involving only the Local Coordinators of each partner at the end of the seminar.

❖ Exchange and learning seminar should last between 2 days and 2 and half days.

❖ It is strongly recommended to reach, reasonably in advance, an agreement concerning the calendar of the transnational activities in order to ensure the availability of all partners for the different events.

❖ Projects can decide to organise bilateral meetings between 2 partners that have highlighted a common interest for a specific topic. Bilateral meetings can also be the occasion for an additional peer review and support in the production of the Local Action Plans.

→ Please refer to the My Generation network for examples of bilateral visits

❖ Projects can agree on the organisation of partners' field trip to a city outside the partnership with specific expertise or experience in the issue addressed by the network in order to explore a specific policy or practice.

→ Examples of external field trip are provided by the Creative Clusters and the REDIS projects.

❖ Different online communication tools (webex, SKYPE, and other teleconferencing tools) can be used in order to organise virtual

meetings among the partners. This could be very useful in order to maintain the contacts with all partners in between the transnational activities scheduled.

5.2.2. Deliverables

Activities developed under Work package 2 should lead to the production of outputs presenting the lessons drawn from the exchanges, good practices identified, policy recommendations, project's conclusions, etc. targeting the wider audience.

In addition to the transnational exchange and learning seminars, outputs to be delivered as a result of the actions under Work package 2 shall be proposed from the list below.

- **Seminar reports** produced following each transnational event in order to consolidate and disseminate seminar's results not only to the partners but also to an external audience.
 - ❖ *Different than the minutes of the meeting (which, if produced, should be conceived as an internal working document), the Seminar Reports should provide a synthesis of the main topics/ issues addressed, and highlight the learning points and conclusions of the seminar. For some examples, please refer to:*
 - Building Healthy Communities:
http://urbact.eu/fileadmin/Projects/Building_Healthy_Communities_BHC_/outputs_media/BHC_Lodz_report.pdf
 - Hero:
http://urbact.eu/fileadmin/Projects/HERO/projects_media/Vilnius_Visual_integrity_report.pdf
- **Thematic reports** presenting the project's interim results (lessons learnt, policy recommendations, tools, good practices, etc.) relating to a specific sub-theme addressed by the network.
 - ❖ *The thematic reports are not necessarily linked to a specific seminar; they can be the results of a cycle of seminars dealing with a common sub-theme. For some examples, please refer to:*
 - Active Age:
http://urbact.eu/fileadmin/Projects/Active_A_G_E_/outputs_media/URBACT_Subtheme_report_Age_and_Care_2.pdf
 - CTUR:
http://urbact.eu/fileadmin/Projects/CTUR/outputs_media/CTUR-TJ_1_web.pdf
- **Peer-review reports** presenting the objectives and content of the peer-review exercise, the conclusions and lessons learnt.

- ❖ *Attention should be given to the added value of the peer exercise in terms of transfer of knowledge among partners. Peer reviews reports can be produced as part of the seminar reports if the peer session is organised within a project's seminar or as a stand alone document in case of separate event. For some examples, please refer to:*
 - REDIS:
http://urbact.eu/fileadmin/Projects/REDIS/outputs_media/Report_Bialystok.pdf
 - Co-Net:
http://urbact.eu/fileadmin/Projects/CoNet/documents_media/Post-review_report_Malm%C3%B6.pdf
- **Site visit reports** presenting the objectives and content of the site visit, the learning points both for the host partner and for the visiting partners, the possible transfer of ideas/ practices to other partners, etc.
 - ❖ *For some examples, please refer to:*
 - REDIS:
http://urbact.eu/fileadmin/Projects/REDIS/outputs_media/Report_Willem_A_new_campus_in_Aachen_01.pdf
 - Run Up:
http://urbact.eu/fileadmin/Projects/RunUp/Lead_Expert_Report.pdf
- **Case studies** are to be produced using the URBACT template.
 - ❖ *They can be elaborated as stand alone documents related to a specific theme or seminar, or consolidated in a compendium of case studies around one sub-theme. The project can develop a guide addressed to all partners with information on how to produce a Case-Study. For some examples, please refer to*
 - Developing an Innovation Plan in the Ripoll River Basin
http://urbact.eu/fileadmin/general_library/Sabadell.pdf
 - TENUM (Technology, Entrepreneurship, Natural science, Outdoor education and Mathematics) – Gävle
http://urbact.eu/fileadmin/general_library/TENUM.pdf
- **Final report** gathering all the lessons learnt throughout the project life cycle, both from the transnational exchange and learning activities and from the partners' activities (more especially in relation to the production and implementation of Local Action Plans – see work package 3)
 - ❖ *For some examples, please refer to:*
 - HerO: Guidebook - The Road to Success - Integrated Management of Historic Towns
http://urbact.eu/fileadmin/Projects/HERO/projects_media/her_o_guidebook_FINAL_01.pdf
 - CoNet': Guide to Social Cohesion

General recommendations:

- ❖ *Internal versus External: These outputs are to be conceived as vehicles to consolidate and disseminate project's results not only to the partners but also to an external audience of urban practitioners not involved in the network activities. Minutes of the meetings will not be considered as outputs. PPT presentations from partners are normally produced as inputs for project meetings. They are not suitable for dissemination outside of the network and will not be considered as case studies.*

- ❖ *Intermediate versus Final Projects will be expected to produce these outputs on an ongoing basis, designing a set of interim outputs that will lead to the production of the final project outputs. Project proposals shall define a consistent range of outputs that will allow building, managing and sharing knowledge among partners on the one side and with the « outside world » on the other side. In this perspective, the definition of outputs in terms of content and format shall be target-oriented to the different audiences identified by partners.*

5.3. Work package 3 - Impact on Local Governance and Urban Policies

The activities to be developed under this work package are designed to achieve the following aims:

- To foster the impact of transnational exchange and learning activities on local policies and practices
- To strengthen the capacity of local stakeholders in integrated urban policies and participative action-planning
- To develop participative action planning processes
- To develop integrated approaches to local issues related to urban development
- To ensure dissemination of lessons learnt (good practices, policy recommendations, etc.) to local stakeholders involved in urban development
- To support transnational exchange and learning activities through the preparation of input for the project meetings (e.g. case studies, site visits, etc.)

5.3.1. Activities

As outlined in the 3rd call for proposals, activities to be implemented under Work package 3 shall include 2 main actions:

- Setting up and running a Local Support Group in each partner city;
- Taking part to the national capacity-building schemes for core ULSG members.

Both sets of activities are primarily dedicated to allow thematic networks to have an impact on local policies and practices through the production of Local Action Plans by each partner. Under the 3rd call for proposals, it was decided to increase resources for ULSG, at both project and programme levels:

- at project level, with increased financial means for partners to run their ULSG (e.g. using local experts)
- at programme level, with capacity-building schemes dedicated to core ULSG members and organised in the different Member and Partner States (see Programme Manual, fact sheet 3d).

A toolkit is available in all EU languages, providing guidance and tools to support partners in setting up their Local Support Groups (e.g. stakeholder analysis) and work on the production of the Local Action Plan (e.g. problem tree, activity table, etc.). More guidance will be provided to approved projects at the beginning of Development phase and during the Training session organised in May 2012⁴.

⁴ Further details on how to set up and run an URBACT Local Support Group can be found in the [ULSG toolkit](#) and on the [URBACT website](#). Also available in all EU languages at: <http://urbact.eu/en/header-main/documents-and-resources/documents/>

Building on the experiences of the Thematic Networks approved in the previous calls, hereafter are some recommendations for efficient delivery of these actions.

- **Setting up and running an URBACT Local Support Group (ULSG)**

As outlined in the URBACT Operational programme and Programme Manual, each partner in a thematic network commits to set up and run a **Local Support Group**. The URBACT Local Support Groups gather the local key stakeholders, concerned by the issues addressed within the network, who should work on co-producing a Local Action Plan (LAP) while contributing to and benefiting from the network activities.

- ❖ **Setting up the Local Support Group**

There is no pre-defined list of who must be involved in the URBACT Local Support Group. The ULSG should include relevant stakeholders coming from public and third sector organisations as well as the private sector and concerned by the policy area covered by the network.

If an effective structure already exists there is no need to set up a new group but you may need to enlarge it if necessary. If there is no existing group aim for quality rather than quantity and go for a core group of 10 motivated people rather than a large number of passive listeners.

Special attention should be given to the participation of local elected representatives and the private sector in order to ensure that the initiatives and actions identified in the LAP are 'on the radar' of the strategic decision makers at city (and also regional) level.

Along the same line, the involvement of Managing Authorities of Operational Programmes in the ULSG activities is an effective means to engage with the MA, be it in the perspective of securing funding for the Local Action Plan or more widely in the perspective of building cooperation relationships (see section 1.4. of this Guide).

- ❖ **Running a Local Support Group**

The ULSG coordinator

Situations vary considerably regarding who, at partner level, is in charge of coordinating the ULSG, depending on the partner's resources, capacities, etc. In most cases, the local coordinator in charge of the URBACT network for the

partner city is also the ULSG coordinator. This allows strong connections between the network activities and the ULSG activities.

In cases where the partner lacks capacities, especially due to insufficient experience in running participative processes, the city may consider hiring a local expert to assist the network coordinator with the tasks to be achieved by the ULSG (e.g. organisation and facilitation of meetings, reporting, etc.). This should be discussed with the Lead partner and all project partners when setting up the budget of the network for Implementation phase.

A roadmap

Once all relevant stakeholders are on board, the challenge is to keep their interest alive during the whole process. To ensure long-term commitment in your ULSG, it is important to have all members be aware of the objectives of the group, the links with the transnational networking activities, what is expected from the group, the resources available, the schedule, etc. It is recommended to establish a road map outlining the main tasks to be performed and a work plan.

This road map should build on the following elements:

- ULSG meetings at local level: Regular meetings should be organised to allow the group to work on the different tasks they are entrusted with, among which the production of the Local Action Plan, the contribution to the transnational network activities, feeding back the group on lessons learnt from the transnational seminars, etc.
- Co-production of the Local Action Plan using participative action-planning methods (tools are provided by the Programme).

The Local Action Plan should bring concrete answers and sustainable solutions to the issues addressed by the partner when joining the network. From the outset the LAP should be rooted in the city profiles described in the Baseline Study.

ULSG members should start developing their Local Action Plan as soon as their network has been approved for the Implementation Phase. As requested under Work package 1 – Project management (see section 5.1. above), city partners shall complete a mid-term review 12- 14 months after the beginning of the implementation phase in order to assess, among other items, the advancement of the Local Action Plans. Under this work package, city partners are requested to complete the Local Action Plans within 14-16 months after the approval of the project and then work on funding schemes and implementation with the support of network partners.

- Participation in transnational network seminars: it is important to foresee that some members of the ULSG do take part to the network seminars and be directly involved in the learning process. Each partner will have to identify the most relevant stakeholders depending

on the topic of the seminar. The number of ULSG members travelling to network seminar will have to be agreed with the Lead partner and all project partners, in order to foresee the necessary budget for travel and accommodation expenses (see Work Package 2 in session 5.2. of the present guide, as well as budget issues in session 5.5 below).

The ULSG delegates taking part to transnational seminars will represent the whole group and be responsible for bringing input from the group as well as providing feedback to the group after the event. To ensure proper links between activities at local level and transnational seminars, it is recommended to foresee ULSG meetings before the transnational seminar in order to prepare the contribution of the ULSG, and one after the seminar to share lessons learnt and follow-up on activities.

- Dissemination and communication on the network activities and on the ULSG activities: partners should communicate on ULSG activities as well as on the network activities. They should build on the latter to put forward the way the city is working within the URBACT network, the participative approach, etc. This communication should be organised as an ongoing process, throughout the life of the network, while the Local Action Plan is being developed, once the Local Action Plan is completed and validated at political level, and hopefully, when the Local Action Plan is being implemented. Communicating on the ULSG activities is also a way of showing that decision-making process is transparent and involves different voices. This can help fostering the interest from citizens and strengthening trust towards local authorities. Network level communication tools such as the minisite or the newsletter should also put forward the ULSG operating in the network.
→ See the [newsletters](#) of the BHC network for example

Reporting

Regular reporting on ULSG activities in between meetings is crucial both for the ULSG members (to keep track of progress made in the implementation of their activities and ensure follow-up of activities) and for the network partners to share experiences and common understanding of participative action planning in the context of the network.

As it is a requirement that each partner sets up and runs a ULSG, these reports shall also stand as evidence of the ULSG activities developed by the partners, justifying the corresponding expenses under this work package.

- **Attending the ULSG capacity–building seminars organised at national level for the ULSG coordinator and 2 additional core members**

Lack of capacities in developing and running participative action-planning and integrated approach to urban development was put forward as a major challenge related to ULSG activities by partners of networks from the previous calls. The URBACT programme will organise capacity-building sessions at national level in national languages, for core ULSG members of projects approved for Implementation phase in the third call for proposals. This scheme aims at strengthening the capacity of local stakeholders in developing and running a participative action-planning process in the field of integrated and sustainable urban policies.

Increasing the capacities of local urban practitioners and stakeholders providing methods and tools, training sessions, allowing ULSG members to exchange and learn from their peers' experience is the basis for higher quality outcomes (e.g. Local action plans) and a more sustainable impact of networks, beyond the life of an URBACT thematic network.

For each partner involved in an URBACT network, it is expected that the local coordinator of the ULSG as well as 2 other core members active in the group, will take part to training sessions organised in their respective countries, in the national language, 3-4 times in the course of the Implementation phase.

These sessions will provide local actors with methods and skills for participative action-planning, as well as opportunities to network with other national cities involved in URBACT, with the national authorities and possibly with Managing Authorities of the Operational programmes. More detailed information will be provided to partners once their proposal has been approved for Development phase. Applicants are also invited to refer to the URBACT Programme manual (fact sheet 3d – Training and capacity-building for ULSG members).

5.3.2. Deliverables

Outputs to be delivered as a result of the activities under Work package 3 shall include the following:

- **ULSG meetings in all partner cities**

It is up to each city partner to define the number and the frequency of ULSG meetings. For an effective ULSG, URBACT strongly encourages cities to take into account the recommendations described above and to organise an average of 5 ULSG meetings per year.

- **A Local Action Plan per partner city**

The Local Action Plan shall be conceived as an instrument for partner cities to improve their local policies, taking into account the local context, challenges and resources. As a consequence, the content, length, format of the Local Action Plan

will differ according to the type of partner, the existing local situation and policies, the problems/challenges identified by each partner. Some LAPs may be more strategic, others may be project-based, some relatively academic, whilst others can be more akin to funding applications. A LAP may also be a 'Neighbourhood Action Plan' or a 'Regional Action Plan' rather than a 'Local Action Plan' depending on the territorial scale concerned.

Whatever the case, early in the process the Lead Expert of the project should be in a position to propose a framework for the LAP in relation to the project, taking into account the different situations in the different city partners (see for example the [template](#) for LAPs used in the CASH thematic network).

For examples of completed LAPs, see for instance:

- [The City of Venice](#) (*MILE project*)
- [The City of Limoges](#) (*UNIC project*)
- [The City of Edinburgh](#) (*ACTIVE AGE project*)

- **Contributions to the transnational exchange and learning activities**

As stated above, city partners will be invited to contribute to the exchange and learning activities of their network. It is up to them to define their potential contributions (case studies, thematic or technical reports, etc.).

- **Other outputs aiming to achieve the aims defined for this work package**

Based on their contributions, ULSG members may also work together to produce contributions for project level outputs such as policy recommendations, lessons learnt from exchange and learning activities, etc.

5.4. Work Package 4 – Communication and Dissemination

URBACT projects have to share their results and outputs with their partner cities but also with urban stakeholders, policy and decision makers and practitioners across Europe possibly facing the same challenges or interested in the project topic. Therefore, communication and dissemination shall be key activities for the project.

The activities to be developed under this work package will be designed to achieve the following aims:

- To ensure communication on the project's activities on an ongoing basis, both to network partners and to urban practitioners outside the network
- To ensure dissemination of the project's results and findings, both among project partners and beyond, to the wider community of urban practitioners outside the network
- To implement the Dissemination plan produced as part of the Mid-term review to ensure dissemination of project's results on an ongoing basis (interim outputs and final outputs), both at project level and partner level

5.4.1. Activities

Activities to be implemented under Work package 4 should lead to the implementation of the Communication plan defined as part of the Final Application and to the implementation of the Dissemination plan elaborated within the framework of the Mid-term review (see work package 1). These activities should include the following:

- **To regularly update the project mini-site on the URBACT website**

URBACT website is the most central and widely accessible media at the disposal of URBACT projects. Each URBACT II project has its own dedicated pages on the URBACT website called 'project mini-sites' with its specific URL (www.urbact.eu/nameofyourproject). It is a showcase for the project and the partners.

The network Communication Officer, on behalf of the Lead partner, shall regularly update the project mini-site. It is requested that Lead partners ensure that the minisite is updated at least once every two month.

Communication officers should follow the guidelines of the web handbook and the URBACT key message guide at their disposal. He or she must in particular publish the news and events announcements of the project in the 'Our activities' page and regularly publish in the 'Our outputs' page the main outputs produced by the project.

Particular attention must be paid when filling in project mini-sites. The URBACT website and the mini-sites are communication spaces, broadcasting content which has been processed and validated, focussing on a basic range of topics and avoiding technical and internal documents. Content has to be legible, written in good English and lively. URBACT editorial strategy has to be applied with a journalistic style and with informative, jargon-free and clear information. Bear in mind that if communication on the project mini-site is bad, visitors will consider that the project is bad.

Mini-sites Examples:

RegGov (www.urbact.eu/reg_gov)

HerO (www.urbact.eu/hero)

CTUR (www.urbact.eu/ctur)

- **To produce and disseminate communication materials – newsletters, brochures, exhibition stands etc. applying the URBACT Graphic Charter**

Lead Partners must promote the activities and the results of the project. You are strongly encouraged to produce communication materials as outlined below.

→ A printed brochure introducing the project topic, challenges, partners etc. This publication shall be distributed to your partners and target groups during meeting, conferences etc.

Examples:

HerO brochure

(http://urbact.eu/fileadmin/Projects/HERO/projects_media/HerO_Brochure_A4.pdf)

Together brochure

(http://urbact.eu/fileadmin/Projects/Together/outputs_media/TOGETHER_English-web.pdf)

→ An E-Newsletter: You can consider issuing an electronic newsletter to inform partners and a target audience outside the network about the network activities and findings (normally in English but possibly translated in partners' languages). Sending a newsletter is an easy way of informing your target groups on what is going on in your project. An updated contact list including URBACT Secretariat, project partners and targets groups (both at local, national and European levels) is necessary. The content of the Newsletter must be well targeted. You may also consider targeting existing newsletter and providing content on a regular basis.

Examples:

CTUR Newsletters (each issue focussed on one of the project partners)

(http://urbact.eu/fileadmin/Projects/CTUR/outputs_media/CTUR_News_10-2011_Naples.pdf)

Reg Gov Newsletter

(http://urbact.eu/fileadmin/Projects/Reg_Gov/documents_media/7th_RegGov_Newsletter.pdf)

→ Promotional materials: You are encouraged to produce an exhibition stand to be displayed during meetings, conferences etc. and other promotional flyers and goodies to be distributed during those events.

→ The URBACT Graphic Charter shall be applied in all project communication materials. You are asked to apply the graphic guidelines of the URBACT Graphic Charter Guide and to use the available templates (Word Document, Powerpoints etc.) for all your documents. The URBACT Graphic Charter including guidelines and templates for publication, leaflet, newsletters etc. is available on the URBACT Graphic Charter platform at: http://urbact.eu/fileadmin/graphic_charter/.

- **To promote the URBACT project activities and results through press releases**

Generating positive editorial media coverage at local, national and European levels for the project is a challenge. The project Communication officer shall take every communication opportunity to promote the project and the partners as well as highlight the people involved (events, interviews, project results etc.). The project Communication officer has to identify the key media at the different levels, regularly inform the targeted media and create and disseminate the relevant messages at the right time. We encourage you to produce a press kit, with press releases, fact sheets, possibly photos, etc. in compliance with the URBACT graphic and editorial charter.

Partners shall be involved in this process in particularly regarding the local media.

The URBACT Secretariat will provide you with a PR Guidebook, a practical and intuitive document to help you manage your media relations (tips, tools, methods etc.).

For an example of interesting use of broadcast on Euronews, see the EVUE project http://www.commentvisions.com/video-share/?dr_v_id=4290

- **To organise a final event open to all target groups and dissemination events at partners' level**

At the end of the project, networks must organise a final event open to all project target groups to present their final results and outputs. You are advised to organise this conference in an accessible European city as you want as many participants as possible to attend.

Each partner must also organise dissemination events at local level, in national languages, to promote the results of the project (project conclusions, policy recommendations, tools, etc.) and to present the Local Action Plan.

The project Communication Officer shall promote these events using all the existing tools (project mini-site, press releases, newsletter etc.) and use the event as an opportunity to distribute brochures and final publications.

You will be provided with an Event guidebook, a practical and intuitive document to help you organise your events (tips, tools, methods etc.).

- **Participate in external events to promote the network**

You are encouraged to take part in conferences and 'networking' events as well as present project activities and results at conferences dealing with your issue at local, national and European levels. Meetings and conferences are great opportunities to disseminate the results of your project, distribute communication materials and introduce the project activities during debates.

5.4.2. Deliverables

Outputs to be delivered as a result of the actions under Work package 4 shall include the following elements:

- Promotional material such as brochures, newsletters, etc.
- An active project mini-site within the URBACT website, updated at least once every two months
- Press releases
- A Dissemination Plan, to be submitted to the URBACT Secretariat, as an output of the Mid-term review (see work package 1)
- Final conference for the dissemination of project results to a wide audience
- Local dissemination events, to be organised in each partner city at the end of the project to disseminate the results of the project (project conclusions, policy recommendations, tools, etc.) and to present the Local Action Plan.

5.5. Budget for Implementation phase

The total eligible cost for a Phase II project will be set at a maximum of 700.000€. The candidate partner will need to confirm their match funding contribution by letter. For cities from the Competitiveness and Phasing in regions, the maximum ERDF intervention rate is fixed at 70%. For Convergence and Phasing out regions, it is fixed at 80%.

The activities in the Implementation Phase are more consequent than those requested in the Development Phase and the duration of the project is clearly not the same. As a result the budget for the Implementation Phase will be more detailed with more budget lines spreading out the different kinds of activity. There will also be a need to outline costs of Lead Partner and the Project partner separately in some cases.

During the Development Phase, the URBACT team will have the opportunity to work with you to develop the work plan and the budget for your Implementation Phase. A separate Guide to completing the Final Application in PRESAGE-CTE will be published along with an example Final Application detailing further how the costs can be presented.

Your project is built on the 4 Work Packages presented previously, it is important to understand that the budget for each work package will include costs in a variety of budget categories. The budget categories along with the kind of costs covered can be found in the table in section 4.3.

Below are some ideas on the kind of costs to be found in each Work Package:

- Work Package 1 – costs for personnel to manage and participate in the project will be the main cost for this work package.
- Work Package 2 – costs for meetings, travel for partners, experts, ULSG members and Managing Authorities, costs for communication and printing are also likely in this work package.
- Work Package 3 – costs for meetings at local level, including a dissemination meeting to promote the project results should be considered. There will also be costs for travel for ULSG members to attend the national capacity building sessions. There is likely to be some expertise costs for a local coordinator or expert and communication costs for printing and translating the Local Action Plans.
- Work Package 4 – this work package focuses on communication and dissemination but there are also likely to be costs for expertise to assist with the dissemination plan.

The Presage budget is presented using 9 budget categories and it is important to consider what should be included in each of these. It is also necessary to split these categories into budget lines which regroup certain types of activity within a category.

Below you will find some ideas for presenting the budget for your Final Application. You will also find information about some average costs for the kinds of activities you will be required to undertake in the Implementation Phase based on the experience of the already approved Thematic Networks.

Project Coordination costs

Costs for project co-ordination comprise administrative costs that are incurred in relation to the overall management of the network project. On the whole such costs are difficult to justify as they need to be evidenced they are frequently rejected during audit due to lack of justification. It is strongly recommended that such costs are not reported in the implementation phase. For information very few completed projects reported costs for project coordination and of those that did the average was around 5000€.

Personnel

Personnel costs can only be reported in this category for staff employed by the partner listed in the Final Application. If personnel are external employees they must be reported in the budget category Expertise. Staff costs should not represent more than 30% of the total budget as a general rule.

For the Implementation Phase it is likely that staff costs for Lead Partner and Project Partner will be reported. If budgeting staff costs for other partners, consideration should be given to the varying salary levels across Europe and to national rules where some Member States do not allow staff costs to be reported to ensure the most accurate budget estimation possible.

In Presage it is advisable to group together personnel costs for the Lead Partner into one budget line. Project partner costs should be grouped into another single budget line 'project partner personnel'. For information completed projects reported on average 200.000€ of personnel costs.

Meetings organisation

Typical costs in this category include room and equipment hire, interpretation and catering. It is often possible to minimize room hire costs by using venues in project partner's premises. Costs for interpretation can also vary based on the country and the languages needed. On average a 2 day transnational meeting with between 30 and 40 people present costs approx. 3000€.

Local ULSG meetings are often not budgeted as they are hosted in the local offices, catering for these meetings can be included in the budget if required.

You will also be required to budget for the Local Dissemination event in each partner city to ensure dissemination of the final results at local level.

In Presage for the Implementation Phase, it is advisable to group meeting costs together by type to simplify the reporting. Details of each kind and number of meetings will be presented in the description of activities and the outputs. For information completed projects reported on average 45.000€ of meeting costs. For 3rd call projects, we are requesting that more meetings be organized (in particular a dissemination meeting in each partner city) so this average will be higher.

Travel and Accommodation

For an URBACT Thematic Network the travel budget is, not surprisingly, one of the highest representing about a quarter of the total costs. As a general rule the most economic way of travel must be used. On average a trip to a transnational seminar usually consists of a flight and 2-3 nights accommodation. On average such a journey costs approx. 750€ per person.

Please keep in mind the EU regulations on travel, limited to economy class, and the constraints of the financial crisis: choose an appropriate accommodation.

When budgeting travel costs you should consider the number of participants from each city to be invited and also consideration should be given to the travel of the Lead Expert or other experts, the ULSG members and Managing Authorities as this must be included in the project budget.

Travel for local ULSG meetings is often limited but can also be budgeted if required.

Travel for the ULSG coordinator to attend the national training sessions should also be included in this category.

Ad hoc travel should also be counted – some partners may require a visit to help their involvement or a representative may be invited to represent the project at an external event. Such costs can be budgeted in this category.

The costs for travel to the final transnational meetings should also be carefully considered as external invitees may need to be funded.

In Presage for the Implementation Phase these costs can be grouped together into a small number of budget lines regrouping different types of travel. For information completed projects reported on average 110.000€ of travel and accommodation costs. As we are requesting more activity for attending capacity building events at national level it is likely that this average will be higher for the 3rd call.

Communication and Dissemination

The costs for Communication and Dissemination can be considerable in the Implementation Phase. In this category you will find costs linked to newsletters, brochures, communication tools, printing and translation. For the Implementation Phase costs for a newsletter, a project brochure in all partner languages, exhibition stands, press coverage, printing and translation should be considered.

For information completed projects reported on average 35.000€ of communication costs. Considerably more activity is expected for the 3rd call in relation to communication and in particular dissemination. The programmed budget should reflect this for 3rd call projects.

External Expertise

This budget category varies considerably between projects based on the need for external support for project management and or ULSG. It is recommended to review the needs of project partners in terms of possible costs for expertise in

Communication for the dissemination plan or website, control of expenditure or ULSG animation before estimating the budget needed for the Implementation phase.

The cost of expertise can vary in each Member State so this should also be taken into consideration. For information completed projects reported on average 70.000€ of external expertise costs.

Equipment

In the Implementation Phase equipment costs can be presented, however, such costs should be limited and justified. For information completed projects reported on average 5000€ of equipment costs.

ULSG and Managing Authorities

For projects financed in the Third Call for proposals no costs should be included in these budget categories. Costs linked to related activities (e.g. travel and accommodation costs for participation in meetings) shall be presented in the other budget categories.

All the cost categories above are outlined in further detail in the URBACT Programme Manual, Factsheet 6b.

5.6. Expertise for Implementation phase

5.6.1. Tasks to be performed by the Lead expert and ad hoc thematic experts

During the Implementation phase, the Lead expert will contribute to the delivery of the 4 work packages ensuring the following tasks:

- implementing the transnational exchange and learning activities (preparation and delivery of meetings, including provision of input and reporting on meetings);
- drawing lessons from these activities and producing, with the contributions of partners, interim and final outputs aiming to capture and disseminate lessons learnt, good practices, etc. both to project partners and to the external world;
- supporting partners in setting up and running their Local Support Groups, and in producing their Local Action Plans;
- coordinating the intervention of other thematic experts working for the project;
- taking an active part in the Mid-term review to be completed 12-14 months after the approval of the network for Implementation phase.

In addition to the Lead expert, projects are invited to consider hiring ad hoc/thematic experts who may provide ad hoc support to partners (e.g. on a specific sub-theme not completely covered by the Lead expert).

5.6.2. Allocation of days

Depending on the number of days used for the Lead expert during the Development phase (see section 3.4.), an average of 120 days should remain available on the expertise envelope provided by the Programme.

The work plan for the Lead expert and potential ad hoc thematic experts will be agreed between the expert and the Lead partner, in consultation with the project partners.

The majority of these days shall be allocated to the Lead expert who will be a key player in the project during the Implementation phase. Building on the experience of networks created under the previous calls, it is strongly recommended to foresee an average of 90-100 days for the Lead expert at that stage.

5.6.3. Contracting with the experts

It is expected that the Lead Expert appointed for Development phase will also support the network for the Implementation phase. When submitting their Final Application form, applicants are requested to mention the Lead expert they intend to appoint if the project is approved and to attach the expert's CV to the Final Application.

Contracting for the Lead expert and other ad hoc thematic experts will occur once the project has been approved for Implementation phase. Following the same procedure used in the Development phase, Lead partners will be expected to submit, within one month after the approval of the network, the Lead expert request form for Implementation phase.

For what concerns ad hoc thematic experts, it will be possible to launch the contracting procedure over the entire period of the Implementation phase. As a matter of fact, while it is important to manage expertise resources from the start, with a view on the whole Implementation phase, specific needs for expertise may occur at later stages in this phase. Providing that there are days available in the project's envelop of expert days allocated by the Programme, the Lead partner can submit a request for the use of a thematic expert any time during the Implementation phase, following the same procedure as the one outlined above for the Lead expert (Expert request form to be submitted to the Secretariat using the template provided, validation by the Secretariat, contracting, etc.).