

PRACTICE

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Cross-sectoral approach: linking to city strategies

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Summary

The chapter identifies the role of a cross-sectoral approach in the co-design and implementation of innovative projects for integrated territorial development in European cities. To do so, the definition of cross-sectoral is provided in relation to the focus of the study and then the experience carried out in UIA cities provides an in-depth analysis of the practical implementation of such a principle. To conclude, a series of recommendations are provided in order to strengthen the use of cross-sectoral approaches towards integrated territorial development in European cities.



Definition and interpretations

Integrated territorial development brings together policies and programme plans to support economic, social and environmental change. The new [New Leipzig Charter](#) refers to the need for an integrated approach that coordinates in a “spatial, sectoral and temporal manner”.

The JRC handbook sets this out clearly (pp10) “The cross-sectoral approach to urban strategies refers to the need to overcome the ‘siloes’ structure of sectorally divided functions which characterises public organisations, in order to tackle multi-dimensional challenges. The goal of the approach is to ensure coherence in policy-making principles and objectives across policy areas, and to ensure actors relating to different sectors cooperate to create policies”

Achieving such a cross sectoral approach tests the capacity of local authorities. They need to be able to convene partners from different public sector organisations to represent the relevant policy areas for the challenge that

they are addressing.

This section aims to address the following research questions:

- How did the project relate to and fit with city policy frameworks including those for Art 7 sustainable urban development (and which sectoral policies, how linked)?
 - What type of cross departmental structure was established?
 - What methodologies have cities used to measure the added value of multi sectoral approaches (e.g. composite indicators)?
 - What concrete examples can show the benefit of the multi sectoral approach in the project?
 - What are the sectoral conditions for successful scaling-up or spreading?
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Analysis of the case studies and key takeaways

As evident by the definitions provided above, the cross-sectoral approach is fundamental in ensuring the combination of social, economic, cultural and environmental elements to be effectively combined in urban projects. The experience developed within UIA shows a wide range of applications of such principles in a number of different contexts and thematic fields.

The experiences developed by the UIA cities provide a wide range of learning for both policy making at European level as well as for project implementation at city scale in order to reach an effective integrated territorial development.

#1 Capacity to work across sectors and with citizens

There is a widespread lack of capacity to do cross-sectoral work because most public officials are trained in their discipline but not in how to work between disciplines and may lack experience of working with other agencies. In this respect, the introduction of a new change agent who is able to link to different sectors can be helpful. They can be someone internal to the administration or a cooperation agreement with a trusted intermediary or in an interface organisation. Cities may need to participate in learning events for civil servants to build confidence in new ways of working.

In Portici, the Air Heritage project on air quality became an opportunity for cross-sector learning within the whole city. In fact, traffic and pollution were the main issues for the city of Portici, therefore soft solutions emerged from younger generations, such as cycling to work or pedibus to reach school, which were drivers for change, calling for pluri-disciplinary technological development and expertise from different scientific domains. In this city, the combination of bottom up and cross sector dimensions was a very important factor towards reaching a long term approach in addressing change within the administration and the whole city.

Similarly, the Cluj Future of Work project had a specific focus to combine efforts in different industrial sectors, at risk through being susceptible to automation, by adopting design thinking from creative and cultural industries to develop a cross sectoral approach along the value chain.

Focus on combining policies to make demand and offer meet sustainably

Utrecht [Plan Einstein](#) is a project which applied a set of accompanying measures alongside a government run refugee reception centre. By stressing activation from day one. The project provides training in English, entrepreneurship and business incubation for refugees who are in class alongside local people. Where possible young people are also housed adjacent to refugees (in Overvecht this was in a separate unit, in Haydn it was not possible). A wide range of indoor and outdoor social activities are animated with the young tenants and with people from the local community.

There were two policies that the project succeeded in bringing together, namely employment and refugee inclusion. The first was to attempt to reconcile the national reception centre policy run by COA with the local need to integrate migrants as fast as possible. Utrecht, therefore, provides an example of making labour market integration a priority, although in practice refugees were still moved out of the Overvecht and Haydn reception centres at short notice. What emerges is the relevance of integration amongst policies but also in relation to multi-level governance, as both employment and migration policy are of national competence with important local impacts.

Normally, a refugee cannot work in the first six months after arriving in the Netherlands. Plan Einstein managed to find ways of bringing residents of the reception centre closer to the labour market from their first day after arriving, such as through the courses mentioned above. Once inducted there were internships available in local businesses for those with adequate language and other skills.

A key aspect of the skills training was the idea that they should be future proof. This is easier in theory than in practice but the evaluation suggests that refugees valued the skills and opportunities that they had engaged with.

“Now in the national policy, everyone is convinced also on the national level that you will have to activate people locally in one way or another. And that is all due to the Plan Einstein concept we made.” stated Plan Einstein Project coordinator.

Key takeaway 1

Develop cross sectoral processes. It is fundamental to set up both in co-creation and development phases an approach that integrates different sectors relevant to the project in order to foster collaboration amongst departments of the same institution. Whilst such incentives do not need investments, they require a clear political vision, more top-down, as well as a softer cooperation structure amongst civil servants, in a more bottom-up manner.

#2 Creating new structures for cross-sectoral working

Working across sectors may require new internal and/or external structures to be developed. Complex project implementations require a high level of partnership working and clear roles for each partner with tight coordination from the lead partner. These are described in examples below.

In Ljubljana, the APPLAUSE project was working on the circular economy by developing new uses for invasive alien plants. Cross-sectoral working was not restricted to city departments but expanded to Ljubljana's '[one big city family](#)' of organisations delivering public services in the city. The concept was widely acknowledged by all public employees who are used to working together both at the technical and political levels. Similarly, the Košice 2.0 project, by coordinating all areas of urban policy (in particular the environmental, social and economic dimensions) and linking participation, data collection, data visualisation, public space design and policymaking allows the city to take into account the interdependencies between different sectors.

Positioning cultural change of the city at the heart of the project

[Cluj Future of Work](#) objective was to pilot a transdisciplinary Cultural and Creative Industries - Knowledge Intensive Business Services mix at city level. Ideas from cultural industries were incubated with business and tech know-how, with the aim of creating higher added value jobs and to explore prototypes for local added value chains that enable the transition to work 4.0. By Also mixing together competencies from sectors threatened by technological unemployment with those from the transdisciplinary pilot, while at the same time enabling underprivileged communities excluded from the labour market to use their collective knowledge, the project reshapes the ways we imagine work.

Cluj Future of Work illustrates an integrated approach across sectors in two distinct ways. At the policy level it links to City strategies including for Article 7 and specifically to the investment through ERDF in the CREIC facility. The development and kitting out of the three labs has made a significant contribution to the facilities available at CREIC. Within the project there is a clear effort to work across industrial sectors that are at risk through being susceptible to automation with new design thinking from creative and cultural industries with the intention of making the value chain more resilient in the future. It is still too early to say whether these efforts will be successful at the level of the Cluj economy, but this integrated approach shows a high degree of sophistication in attempting it.

Achieving this level of cross-sectoral integration has required a high level of partnership working in a form of cross-sectoral governance. This started through an alliance at the co-creation stage between Cluj Cultural Centre (CCC) and the city and expanded to include a wide range of organisations in a quadruple helix structure. The role of the Innovation Unit at CCC is also notable as it has enabled the city to design new approaches that have made the project a success.

“It’s obvious there that CCC has a central role because of its very structure, because it is an umbrella organisation membership based, where also the cultural institutions and the local and regional administration are members, but also these clusters. So there was already a connection before. And our role as an organisation was to somehow catalyse these types of connections. I think the difference is that this was the first opportunity to engage in all kinds of engines full-on together in a project because before when we’ve been working together.”
Project coordinator at CCC

Although there was progress in cross-sectoral integration, the project struggled to integrate the actions in Pata Rât with the rest of the project. This was perhaps inevitable given the extreme deprivation at the three of the four camps where even basic sanitation is lacking and housing conditions are lamentable. Nevertheless, the project succeeded in bringing tangible benefits with the opening of the sanitation units, the free WIFI, and the bus service. Not all of these advances are secure for the future. The free bus passes ended in November 2021 and challenges are maintaining the sanitary facilities in the face of sporadic vandalism.

Key takeaway 2

Establishing cross-sectoral structures. The creation of structures operating with competencies on different themes is key to a successful cross-sectoral approach, whether these structures may be internal to the administration, as inter-departmental offices, or external, as agencies and in-house companies. The first being more embedded in the administration but often less agile and flexible in decision-making than the second. At the basis of both models, is a political will to develop a more synergistic approach, as well as adequate processes and resources to ensure successful implementation.

#3 Policy integration to meet future needs

Cross-sectoral integration can evolve and develop over time as new policy priorities emerge, for this reason it is particularly relevant to bring together different policy and practice fields to better respond to developing needs.

In Birmingham there were several cross-sectoral policies that the project succeeded in bringing together. The USE-IT! project strove to increase the employment prospects of the residents and migrants, to generate jobs and stimulate the local economy and their ability to engage and influence the public planning, investment and strategy that took place in Greater Icknield. Most strikingly, the cross-sectoral partnership integrated the needs directly in the co-design phase, and a set of clear and tangible targets for each policy objective was communicated. This permitted investment in education, training and vocational training for skills and lifelong learning. Based on this experience, the city was able to improve its working methodology and address neighbourhood needs through different policy frameworks also after the end of the USE-IT! Project.

In Paris the OASIS project developed design workshops with teachers and children, which helped the technical partners to draw up plans for the playgrounds. Direct involvement of children in the co-creation process also proved to be an entertaining educational activity for children. There are also close collaborations with other municipalities in the conurbation, which has followed Paris in transforming schoolyards into cool islands, having an important impact on long term planning.

Focus on building on earlier initiatives and practices to meet future visions

The [Home Silk Road](#) in Lyon Metropole project provides housing solutions for vulnerable groups in a dynamically changing neighbourhood of Villeurbanne, in the metropolitan area of Lyon. The project prepares the low-waste, long-term architectural transformation of a heritage building in a former silk industry complex, to accommodate various housing forms ranging from social housing to student accommodation, public services, cultural venues, social and solidarity initiatives, and a restaurant as well as co-working spaces and incubators.

During the construction phase, the project also makes use of transitory uses of social and cultural activities to bring new communities to the site, test future uses for the building and its surroundings, as well as to engage residents in a participatory process to co-design future activities and narratives for the neighbourhood. Home Silk Road created synergies between sectors that are often disconnected: by bringing temporary housing to a construction site and by inserting cultural and social activities in a housing project, it breaks down the tradition of urban regeneration and introduces new dynamics and new synergies in Villeurbanne's Carré de Soie neighbourhood.

L'Autre Soie, this experiment that took place in the former silk factory of Villeurbanne, was at the heart of the UIA-funded project Home Silk Road. L'Autre Soie was born from the marriage of two projects: while the GIE La Ville Autrement was looking for a site to build a new emergency shelter, the cultural and social innovation laboratory CCO, with a history of half a century in Villeurbanne, was seeking a new location and a bigger concert hall. This unlikely association between a housing provider and a cultural centre was brought into being by the Municipality of Villeurbanne which was looking into the regeneration of the Carré de Soie area, with support from the Lyon Metropole.

Culture and the activities brought to L'Autre Soie by the social economy initiatives hosted in the frame of the "transitory occupation" of the heritage site are by no means ornaments in an otherwise mainstream development project. "Structures like the CCO or the social inclusion association Alynea are not used here as cultural or social washing at the end of the project," underlines CCO director. On the contrary, they act as links to connect a diversity of people and organisations. "Culture, for us, constitutes the fourth pillar of sustainability, with the economy, ecology and social services," he concludes.

More precisely, culture here is used to build heterogeneity in the midst of a housing project, turning the coexistence of residents and people from the neighbourhood into lively connections. On the other hand, CCO's cultural activities and the organisation's involvement in citizen participation and various forms of emancipatory actions serve to build a collective imaginary, a shared narrative about the neighbourhood.

Key takeaway 3

Developing a strategic vision through policy integration. Bringing together different policies and practices in order to develop a strategic vision will allow us to foresee future challenges and opportunities. This could be a guidance approach that would produce strategic documents, developed by the cross sectoral structure of the public administration. Policy integration requires skills, competences, time and political and administrative will for being implemented, all necessary to ensure a long-term impact.

#4 A transversal approach: linking with mainstream ERDF and other programmes

Finally, efforts to link with investments made under ERDF operational programmes, especially Integrated Sustainable Urban Development adds value in both directions and may help ensure financial sustainability.

In Prato Urban Jungle the cross-sectoral approach aimed at overcoming the political silos that fail to take into account co-dependencies or interdependencies with other sectors. The Prato Urban Jungle project brought together different professional disciplines, including among others social scientists, architects, urban planners, designers, environmental researchers and botanists, in a multi-stakeholder partnership in order to use urban forestry as a means for the environmental, social and economic regeneration of a former industrial city. The city was able to cluster around its cross-sectoral approach a number of European funds, starting from structural funds of the Toscana Region as well as other direct funds of Horizon Europe and other programmes. Recently the City of Prato was recognised under the [EU Mission for Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities](#). Similarly this has been developed by other cities, such as Cluj, Paris and Ljubljana.

Building cross-sectoral partnerships

The partnership in Ravenna's [DARE](#) project combined strategic management and design experiences with technological and research know-how as well as participatory processes, community finance and communication. The management role of the Ravenna Municipality is complemented by strong competencies in strategic design, technology, crowd-funding, participation and community engagement.

DARE's participatory logic prompts the municipality to act as a process enabler, helping its partners and communities to use their best competencies in co-designing the future of the Darsena. Such shared leadership requires the creation of a governance structure, the Process OrganizerS Team (POST) that monitors processes and connects strategy, opportunities and needs in the form of policymaking bodies, economic initiatives and citizens.

The DARE consortium developed a working model for the project that included a variety of working groups as well as a well-defined governance model to assure the participation of all partners and actors in all decision-making and operational steps of the projects. DARE involved several policy areas within the Ravenna Municipality, in particular, Human Resources and Quality Services, European Policies and Territorial Information Systems. The departments of European Policies, Urban Regeneration and Smart City were directly represented in the project. DARE is an experiment to bring together these departments with a new methodological approach that connected urban regeneration with a horizontal approach to participation. The various working groups ensured the engagement of all departments in different phases and tasks of the project.

With participation and communication at the core of the DARE project, many of the project's working processes were not pre-defined: instead, they were co-designed with consortium partners and a broader group of stakeholders. With certain governance, communication and data management structures in place, innovation within the project was ongoing: DARE's in-built incremental logic and agile methodology assured that certain decisions are revisited, and directions were adjusted according to recurrent feedback cycles.

Key takeaway 4

Develop a strategy for the project priorities in relation to available European financial resources. Make contact with programme managers at regional/national level to understand how programme priorities and

financial resources could be mobilised for the continuation of the project at greater scale, or in more locations.

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