2020 Citizen Summary

Where does cooperation stand when cities cannot meet?

2020 was characterised by a global pandemic which, by Spring time, had brought Europe to a halt. It raised a fundamental question for the programme: when the basis of URBACT is so firmly built on bringing people together, within cities, across countries, to create a trusting environment where challenges and weakness can be shared in a safe and nurturing space… what happens when that essential need to meet is suddenly taken away?

At URBACT, it spurred us into action:

- Network timelines were revised to give extra time to modify and complete activities
- Testing a variety of online tools and platforms for meetings, events and collaboration
- Providing digital support to cities to adapt to fully online environment
- Developing the first large scale online programme event, the e-University

For our cities, in many cases they were able to direct the attention of URBACT Local Groups where it was most needed and adapt some of their activities to the emergency. Our interactive map gathers many of these welcome initiatives.

NETWORKS AND TRANSNATIONAL EXCHANGE

23 Transfer Networks and 23 Action Planning Networks were in full swing in 2020, as far as the pandemic allowed…

Action Planning Networks started their activities in Phase 2, assisted by the URBACT e-University.

Transfer Networks shifted into the last phase of the Understand - Adapt - Reuse methodology, although this phase was extended by 6 months – need we say Covid again?!

Still on the transfer process, building on the successes and hiccups from the networks, together with Urban Innovative Actions, URBACT launched a call for EU cities to pilot the adaptation of innovative solutions.

CAPACITY BUILDING

435 people from 27 countries and 175 cities took part in the first URBACT e-University for Action Planning Networks. Eight sessions, each lasting 2 hours, were delivered over 4 weeks in September 2020. Following up the evaluation survey overall, 73.3% respondents declared they increased their knowledge of:

- Designing and encouraging participative dynamics
- Working across departments with relevant local stakeholders
- Developing project management skills

This online programme coincided with the launch of the URBACT Toolbox for urban practitioners. The tools are tailored to respond to the **different stages of the public action-planning cycle**, from the analysis of a challenge to the measurement of the impact achieved through the actions implemented.

KNOWLEDGE SHARING

2020 just gave us enough time to wrap up our knowledge capitalisation on the URBACT principles of integrated, participatory, sustainable urban development. We published the fourth and final publication in our series of City Labs, and developed a dedicated section of the website to share them all.

As a result of this work, we were able to feed into and influence the development of the **New Leipzig Charter**, under the German Presidency.

We kicked off a new partnership with Urban Innovative Actions, to pool our knowledge on **'Cities engaged in the Right to Housing'**. A series of three webinars – miraculously planned online from the beginning – brought together the experiences of URBACT and UIA cities on aspects such as collaborative housing, homelessness and fair financing of the housing market.

More than 600 attendees from all over the world benefitted from this knowledge sharing, which also involved widely European partners such as the Urban Agensa Partnership, Eurocities, Feantsa, Housing Europe and more