COST Action C20
Urban Knowledge Arena
2005 – 2009

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Introduction

Background

Urban Knowledge

Objectives – Activities – Deliverables


Example: Urban Laboratory Gothenburg
“We are investigating and exploring the emerging field of **integrated knowledge, experience and know-how**, which is needed in today’s highly **complex and delicate** urban development and regeneration processes.”
Q?

How can the multitude of individuals, groups, professions and academic disciplines with different educational backgrounds, working cultures and traditions, working under different sets of legal and professional instruments co-operate and collaborate in order to solve complex problems in the urban context?
Q?

How can engineers, architects, sociologists, biologists, medical doctors, historians, political scientists, politicians, stakeholders, interest groups… bring their specific experience, know-how and knowledge to a joint platform for problem-solving and learning
Dynamic and Contradictory trends -
- Great challenges for cities

• Global trends: globalisation of economy and environmental systems, migration, media mainstreaming…

• Local trends: individualisation of everyday life and politics, local history and culture, competition for inward flow of capital…
Urban Governance: Processes, Actors and Arenas for Change

• From hierarchical and sectoral government to situation and network dependant governance

• Co-operation and partnerships between politicians – officials – business actors – academia – NGO’s - citizens
Complex Urban Projects need stronger integration between

- Strategic planning
- Urban design
- Technical implementation
- Long-term management of the city
Increased demand for cross-boundary production of knowledge

- Need for new types of capacities, knowledge and know-how
- We are in a transition from sectoral and disciplinary working cultures towards more comprehensive and cross-disciplinary ways for learning and knowledge production, but… → Weak structural support for this mode of knowledge production
Urban Knowledge?
- Non-established term
- Arguable term

A new discipline? A new field of science?

or…

A way of drawing together knowledge from
• a variety of sources
• a multitude of disciplines and traditions
• science, experience and lay judgement
Urban Knowledge Arena

Urban related fields of science
H = Human Sciences (e.g. History, Philosophy)
S = Social Science (e.g. Geography, Sociology, Political science, Economy)
M = Making Disciplines (e.g. Urban design, Engineering, Urban planning)
N = Natural Science (e.g. Systems ecology, Geology, medicine)

As an individual, you can move between the UK arena and the sectorial / disciplinary arena

Research  Policy-making  Practice

Actors from policy-making and practice can be involved in corresponding ways.
-urban management
-urban politics
-urban experience (living in the urban area)
-stakeholders, interest groups, etc
Objectives

• **Urban Knowledge**: theories, methods and tools

• **Urban Knowledge Arena**: What can it be? How to set-up, support, facilitate?

• **Innovative Initiatives**: Identify, analyse, disseminate

• **Research needs**
COST C20 Urban Knowledge Arena: Objectives – Activities – Deliverables 2/4

- Workshops and WG meetings
- Thematic discussions and reports
- Direct feedback to local projects
- Individual input

1 → 2 → n → Final Conference

COST C20 Output
Activities

• Sequence of Thematic Workshops on Urban Issues (Liège, Oeiras, Gothenburg, Madrid…)

• Working Groups – Continuous seminars
  WG 1: Characterisation of existing and future urban knowledge
  WG 2: Facilitating a European Arena for Urban Knowledge
  WG 3: Innovative Initiatives

• Mid-term Conference and Final Conference
Deliverables

• Conceptual Book on urban knowledge – scientific output
• Summary report – policy paper
• Workshop reports
  + Individual papers and presentations
  + Web site
COST C20 Urban Knowledge Arena: Implementation 1/2

2005 - 2006

- 21 countries, network of 70 experts, 40-45 "regulars"
- Junior Network, 10 members
- 3 Workshops: Liége, Oeiras, Gothenburg
- 15-20 Individual papers and presentations
- Web site: http://infogeo.unige.ch/uka/

→ Terminology related to urban knowledge
→ Concepts of knowledge production – management - dissemination - use of knowledge
→ Characteristics of an Urban Knowledge Arena
2006 - 2007

Work programme:
• Analysis of interesting examples
• Check-point at mid-term conference

Meetings:
• Junior Network meeting in Barcelona, November 2006
• Meeting in Madrid in March 2007: MC + WG + Workshop
• Mid-term Conference in Vienna, September 2007
An Urban Knowledge Arena
An independent platform for innovative co-operation between policy-making, civil society, academia and professional practice

Chalmers University of Technology

Urban Laboratory Göteborg

City of Gothenburg

Business actors, civil society, other public actors at regional, national and international contexts
ULG offers an open forum for sharing of knowledge and experience, by organising seminars, debates and training courses.

ULG is a driving force for innovative processes, as initiator, facilitator and coordinator of R&D projects, studies, evaluations etc.

ULG is an interfacing actor and bridges gaps between academia, policy making, professional practice and civil society.
Politically independent, Non-for-profit

Partnership between the City of Gothenburg and Chalmers University of Technology: Strategic management and administration is funded through a cooperation agreement.

Each project/activity is managed and financed through a separate contract.

RECENT AND CURRENT ACTIVITIES

- Local action

• *DIALOG Södra Älvstranden* (Southern River Bank, Gothenburg): ULG has contributed in the organisation and setting-up of a **public dialogue process** around an inner-city urban regeneration area (2005-2006-?)

• *Urban Safety Workshop* in the urban district *Kvillestaden*, in cooperation with shop owners, real estate companies, CoG, Chalmers etc (2006)
RECENT AND CURRENT ACTIVITIES

- University output
  
  
  • Development of PhD Course: Tools and processes for sustainable urban development
  
  • Urbanity and Urban Qualities, Trainee project (2004)
  
  • Development of ideas for R&D projects
RECENT AND CURRENT ACTIVITIES
– Connecting Gothenburg to the international community

• Co-organising of two Networking Events at World Urban Forum 3, in cooperation with UN-Habitat and others (Vancouver 2006)

• Organising a dialogue seminar and a workshop on “Cultural Actors and Expressions in Urban Development and Governance Processes” (2006)

• European Cooperation in COST Action C20 Urban Knowledge Arena
Thank You!