

	<b>URBACT III Programme Manual</b>	<b>Fact Sheet 2A Action Planning Networks</b>
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### 1. Main objectives and expected results

Building on the experience of the thematic networks funded under URBACT II (2007/2013), Action Planning Networks are a key element of the Exchange activities of URBACT III (2014/2020).

The main objective of Action Planning Networks is to improve the capacity of cities to manage sustainable urban policies and more especially to strengthen the capacity to design integrated strategies for sustainable urban development.

Action Planning Networks are expected to support an organised process of exchange and learning among peers across Europe, with a view to improving local policies through concrete action planning.

By taking part in an Action Plan Network, cities exchange and share experiences, problems and possible solutions, generating new ideas to address challenges related to sustainable urban development.

As a starting point, cities willing to get involved in Action Planning Networks shall identify a policy challenge they want to address at local level. Then, they shall commit to develop an Integrated Action Plan that will address this challenge. This Integrated Action Plan will thus be both a driver of the exchange and learning activities, and a key concrete output of their participation in the Action Planning network.

Cities willing to get involved in Action Planning Networks shall also commit to work on their policy challenges using a participatory approach that is involving all relevant stakeholders (from within the local administration and also outside, civil society, private sector, associations, etc.) in the action-planning process. These key stakeholders will be gathered in an URBACT Local Group. They will be actively involved in the transnational exchange activities and in the development of the Integrated Action Plan to be produced by the city. The participatory approach shall improve the action-planning

process and the subsequent delivery of the local policies (strengthening the evidence base, ensuring ownership of the problems identified and of the solutions/ policies developed, creating the conditions for a successful delivery, etc.).

Through the transnational exchange activities at network level and the production of integrated action plans at local level, cities involved in Action Planning will draw lessons from their experience, will learn from one another and from URBACT experts. They will thus be expected to share, with the outside world (beyond the network), this wealth of practical knowledge, policy instruments/ recommendations, good practices, etc.

The URBACT programme provides each Action Planning Network and their partners with a budget for transnational and local activities, as well as with the appointment of experts who support partners in implementing their activities with thematic content and methods/ tools for exchange and learning.

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. In doing so, URBACT intends to go beyond individual learning and to support local authorities to improve the way they are working with their communities.

## 2. Network's development

In order to improve the quality of networks approved for funding, the URBACT Programme foresees a two-phase process for Action Planning Networks. The process includes:

- **First phase:** a 6-month phase for the definition of the final partnership and the development of a complete project proposal in the form of a Phase 2 Application
- **Second phase:** a 24-month phase for the implementation of the activities foreseen by the network

In the framework of Calls for Proposals, interested beneficiaries are requested to submit a Phase 1 Application including information related to network's thematic focus, the general objectives and the initial partnership to be composed by 4 to 6 partners, including a Lead Partner.

Following a first eligibility check and a qualitative assessment of Phase 1 Application, the Monitoring Committee approves the best proposals for phase 1.

The main aim of the **6-month phase** is to provide partners of Action Planning Networks with time and resources to ensure the development of a common vision of the policy challenges/issues to be addressed through the Integrated Action Plan, the definition of a coherent final partnership and the elaboration of a shared methodology for the exchange activities.

**Phase 2 Applications** developed during phase 1 are subject to a second eligibility check and qualitative assessment to get the final approval by the Monitoring Committee.

Approved networks will implement the activities foreseen in the Phase 2 Application, both at transnational and local level, during the 24 months of the phase 2.

Detailed information on the application process is provided in Fact Sheet 2D while the activities to be implemented in the framework of the two phases are described in the section 4 of the present Fact Sheet.

### 3. Partnership

The following sections describe the eligible beneficiaries that can act as Lead Partners and provides information about the composition of the initial partnership for Phase 1 and the final partnership for Phase 2 for Action Planning Networks.

#### 3.1 Lead Partner

In the context of URBACT III, for each project proposal, a Lead Partner shall be appointed by the beneficiaries among themselves.

Only cities<sup>1</sup> from the 28 EU Member States and from Switzerland and Norway (Partner States) can be Lead Partner of an Action Planning Network.

Lead Partners are key actors of approved Action Planning Networks. They are responsible for project implementation and financial management and for the coordination of the partnership.

A city may not be Lead Partner in more than one project at a time whatever the type of network.

Further information on the roles and responsibilities of Lead Partners and partner is available in Fact Sheet 2E “Network Management”.

#### 3.2 Initial Partnership for phase 1

Only cities (refer to the definition provided above) can be included in the initial partnership.

At the stage of the Phase 1 Application, the initial partnership must be composed by a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 6 cities (including the Lead Partner) coming together to exchange experiences and practices in order to develop integrated and sustainable Local Action Plans to address local challenges.

Cities shall be from minimum 3 different Member/Partner States

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<sup>1</sup> As defined in the the URBACT III Operational Programme, under URBACT III, the beneficiary “city” refers to the public local authority representing:

- cities, municipalities, towns;
- Infra-municipal tiers of government such as city districts and boroughs in cases where they are represented by a politico-administrative institution having competences for policy-making and implementation in the policy area covered by the URBACT network concerned in which they are willing to get involved;
- Metropolitan authorities and organized agglomerations in cases where they are represented by a politico-administrative institution having delegated competences for policy-making and implementation in the policy area covered by the URBACT network concerned.

The initial partnership must be balanced with cities from More Developed and Less Developed<sup>2</sup> regions. More especially, the initial partnership (regardless if it is composed by 4 or 6 cities) shall normally include a minimum of 2 cities from Less Developed regions.

Eligible beneficiaries may participate in maximum 2 URBACT networks under each call for proposals.

### 3.3 Final Partnership for phase 2

The final partnership for the phase 2 must be composed by a minimum of 8 up to a maximum of 12 partners from at least 3 different Member and Partner States.

The final partnership to be presented in the Phase 2 Application can include a maximum of 3 non-city partners.<sup>3</sup> Non city-partners included in the final partnership must be public authorities or equivalent public authorities<sup>4</sup>.

The final partnership shall be balanced with candidate partners from More Developed and Less Developed regions. More especially, the final partnership (regardless if it is composed by 8 or 12 partners) shall include a minimum of 4 partners from Less Developed regions.

Eligible beneficiaries may participate in maximum 2 URBACT networks under each call for proposals.

Detailed information on the role and responsibilities of the partners are provided in the fact sheet 2E.

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<sup>2</sup> Refer to the detailed map available in the DG Regional and Urban Policy website:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/index\\_fr.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/index_fr.cfm)

<sup>3</sup> As defined in the the URBACT III Operational Programme, under URBACT III the list on non-city partners includes:

- Local agencies defined as public or semi-public organisations set up by a city, partially or fully owned by the city authority, responsible for the design and implementation of specific policies (economic development, energy supply, health services, transport, etc.)
- Provincial, regional and national authorities, as far as urban issues are concerned;
- Universities and research centres, as far as urban issues are concerned

<sup>4</sup> 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.”

## 4. Activities of Action Planning Networks

The activities to be implemented by Action Planning Networks, in each of the 2 phases, are organized around work packages.

Each work package has specific objectives, defined actions and related expected deliverables.

The organization of the activities in work packages ensures a shared knowledge about the project's structure and objectives among all partners; it increases the capacities of Lead Partners to follow up the implementation of the expected activities and facilitates the procedures for reporting and accounting of expenditure.

The following sections introduce the 2 work packages of Phase 1 and the 4 Work Packages of Phase 2.

### 4.1 – Work plan for Phase 1

During Phase 1, the initial partners involved in approved networks will work, with the support of the Lead Expert, on the consolidation of the final partnership, the development of project final proposal (policy challenges/issues to be addressed, focus of the Integrated Action Plan, methodology for the transnational exchange activities, expected deliverables, etc) and the identification of relevant local stakeholders for the co-production of the Integrated Action Plan.

The duration of Phase 1 is 6 months, starting from the official notification of approval, following the final decision of the Monitoring Committee.

Phase 1 of Action Planning Networks shall be structured around 2 Work Packages:

- WP1 – Project Management and coordination
- WP2 – Project Development

#### - **Work Package 1 – Project management and coordination**

The activities to be developed under WP1 will be designed to achieve the following aims:

- To ensure a sound management and coordination of the project concerning both the overall project management and all aspects linked to the financial management
- To organize the work between the partners by building a strong collaborative relationship. The organization of the partners' responsibilities shall result in the successful submission of all required documents for the Final Application

Activities to be implemented under WP1 shall include the following actions:

- To recruit appropriate staff to ensure efficient project management. For the Lead Partner, the staff required will be significantly more than for a project partner. The Lead Partner shall appoint, already in Phase 1, a project coordinator, a finance officer and a communication officer – these activities will require the equivalent of 2 full time posts (see Fact Sheet 2E Network Management)
- To hold regular management meetings to ensure strong communication between partners concerning project coordination

- To submit the reporting documents requested for Phase 1
- To attend training sessions and other events organized by the URBACT Programme
- To receive and transfer ERDF funds to partners (responsibility of the Lead Partner)

- **Work Package 2 – Project development**

The activities to be developed under WP2 will be designed to achieve the following aims:

- To complete the initial partnership
- To identify the policy challenges/issues to be addressed by all partners through the Integrated Action plans (including partners' expectations and potential contribution, focus of the Integrated Action Plan, provisional composition of the URBACT Local Groups)
- To design the methodology for exchange activities both at transnational and local level

Activities to be implemented under WP2 shall include the following actions:

- To organize at least two transnational meetings gathering the initial partners and the additional partners that will join the network during the Phase 1
- To complete the Baseline study describing the policy challenge, the local situation and the objectives of the Local Action Plan in each partner, the methodology for the exchange activities.
- To complete and submit the Final Application form

#### **4.2 – Work Plan for Phase 2**

Phase 2 shall be devoted to the implementation of the activities, at transnational and local level, aiming at the co-production of Integrated Action Plan by each partner involved in approved Action Planning Networks.

The duration of Phase 2 is 24 months, starting from the official notification of approval, following the final decision of the Monitoring Committee.

Phase 2 of an Action Planning Network shall be structured around 4 Work Packages:

- WP1 – Project management and coordination
  - WP2 – Transnational exchange activities
  - WP3 – Impact on local governance and urban policies
  - WP4 – Communication and dissemination
- **WP1 – Project management and coordination**

As for Phase 1, the main aim of this work package is to ensure a sound management and coordination of the network concerning both the overall project management and all aspects linked to the financial management.

- **WP2 – Transnational exchange activities**

Transnational exchange activities are the core actions to be implemented by Action Planning Networks. They are to be conceived as milestones for the network as they allow the exchange of experience among partners and their URBACT Local Group members, the consolidation of knowledge on a specific policy issue, the mutual support between partners (peer support), etc.

The lessons learnt and good practices identified during the transnational activities of exchange are key ingredients of the Integrated Action Plan that each city commits to produce as result of the involvement in Action Planning Networks. The experiences of other cities will inspire partners that will translate and adapt this knowledge at local level to define concrete answers and solutions to the local challenges identifies.

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 Integrated Action Plans
- Supporting: To support partners in improving their local policies and producing their Integrated Action Plans

More especially, activities to be implemented under WP2 shall include the following actions:

- To organise transnational exchange seminars. Transnational seminars should be a combination of different components including learning sessions, field visits, peer review sessions, local dissemination activities, etc
- To produce thematic outputs (interim and final) capturing the knowledge generated during the transnational seminars and the main findings of the exchange activities.

- **WP3 – Impact on local governance and urban policies**

In order to foster the impact of the transnational activities on the local policies and governance, each partner joining an URBACT Action Planning network is requested to involve relevant local stakeholders in the design of the Integrated Action Plan to be produced in the framework of the network.

Partners will thus commit to set up and run a URBACT Local Group that will gather civil servants of different department, elected representatives as well as relevant stakeholders (representatives of other tiers of government, local agencies, NGOs, associations, etc.) linked to the policy area concerned by the Integrated Action Plan.

URBACT Local Groups are responsible for the co-production of the Integrated Action Plan in each partner city.

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

- To support transnational exchange activities through the preparation of input for the project meetings (e.g. case studies, site visits, etc.)
- To foster the impact of transnational exchange activities on local policies
- To strengthen the capacity of local stakeholders in integrated urban policies and participative action-planning
- To develop participative action planning processes for the production of Integrated Action Plans

- To ensure dissemination of lessons learnt (good practices, policy recommendations, etc.) to local stakeholders involved in urban development

More especially, activities to be implemented under WP3 shall include the following actions:

- To setting up and run a URBACT Local Group in each partner city for the co-production of a Integrated Action Plan
- To take part to the exchange activities at transnational level and contribute to these activities (participation to seminars, organisation of study visits, production of inputs, etc.)
- To take part to the capacity-building schemes organised by URBACT for core URBACT Local Group members.
- To build cooperation relations with the Managing Authorities of Operational Programme

- **WP4 – 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. 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

Activities to be implemented under WP4 shall include the following actions:

- To regularly update the project mini-site on the URBACT website
- To produce and disseminate communication material
- To organise a final event open to all target groups and dissemination events at partners' level
- To participate to external events to promote the network

## **5. Budget for Action Planning Networks**

### **5.1 - General Budget Information**

The total eligible cost for an Action Planning Network shall be between 600.000€ and 750.000€. The total budget shall be calculated based on the number of project partners and the specific identified needs of these partners. Action Planning Networks requesting the higher budget allocation shall be required to justify this request by demonstrating a higher number of project partners or increased project activity. The Monitoring Committee can approve a lower than requested budget should they consider this is justified.

Action Planning Networks shall be financed using European Regional Development Fund and local, regional or national contributions from city partners.



The ERDF co-financing rate for an Action Planning network is calculated at network level on the basis of the different co-financing rates for each partner.

- Partners from 'more developed' regions shall be co-financed at up to 70% by ERDF
- Partners from 'less developed' and 'transition' regions shall be co-financed at up to 85% by ERDF
- Partners from Norway shall be co-financed at up to 50% by Norwegian national funds
- Partners from Switzerland shall be co-financed at up to 50% by Swiss national funds

The calls for proposals shall provide detailed instructions for the creation of an Action Planning network budget and some examples to assist applicants. Further information related to the eligibility of expenditure can be found in Factsheet 2F - Financial management and control.

## **5.2 - Action Planning Network Budget**

An Action Planning network shall operate in two phase as outlined in previous sections of this Factsheet. The total eligible cost for the network combining Phases 1 and 2 shall be between 600 000€ and 750 000€ as outlined in the previous section. The Phase 1 total eligible cost shall not exceed 100.000€.

Considering the foreseen workload dedicated to the phase 1 to ensure a well balanced and coherent partnership and a high quality baseline study and final application form the costs incurred for this first phase of work shall be considered eligible for refund regardless of the approval of the project into Phase 2.

The budgets for Phase 1 and 2 shall be presented using 5 budget categories as follows:

- i) Staff costs**  
Expenditure on staff members employed by the partner organisation, who are formally engaged to work on the project
- ii) Office and Administration Costs**  
Operating and administrative expenses of the partner organisation that support delivery of project activities
- iii) Travel and Accommodation Costs**  
Expenditure on travel and accommodation costs of staff of partner organisations and associated partners that relate to delivery of the project. This category included travel costs, accommodation costs, costs of meals, visa costs, and/or daily allowances/per diems.
- iv) External expertise**  
Expenditure for external expertise and services provided by a public or private body or a natural person outside of the partner organisation. This category covers costs paid on the basis of contracts or written agreements and against invoices or requests for reimbursement to external experts and service providers that are requested to carry out certain tasks or activities, linked to the delivery of the project. This category also includes all costs linked to the organisation of meetings.
- v) Equipment**  
Expenditure for equipment purchased, rented or leased by a partner, necessary to achieve objectives of the project.

For each cost category a separate Fact Sheet has been developed providing detailed information about the eligibility of costs, the methods for calculation and programme specific rules.

## 6. Expertise for Action Planning Networks

### 6.1. General framework

The URBACT Programme provides to each approved Action Planning Network with an additional 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 expected to work in accordance with the URBACT networking framework and use the tools provided by the URBACT Programme. Dedicated training sessions shall be delivered to URBACT networks experts as needed.

### 6.2. Services to be provided by URBACT experts to networks

The expertise resource is meant to be made available to the whole partnership. More especially, the expertise envelope should provide partners with a package of services including:

#### 1. Expertise for the design and delivery of transnational exchange and learning activities:

- Definition and delivery, in strong cooperation with the Lead Partner and partners, of the methodology for exchange activities at transnational level to ensure high level of sharing, mutual learning and transfer of knowledge. Appointed experts will support the partnership with the definition of the main focus, design of the work plan, definition of the main expected outputs, and they play a key in the delivery of networks transnational activities (including preparation of input, collecting information from partners, designing agenda with appropriate methodology, moderating sessions during meeting, drawing lessons and reporting after meetings)

#### 2. Thematic expertise:

- Definition and delivery of thematic inputs that will nourish the exchange and contribute to the learning process of partners involved
- Production of thematic documentation and outputs in English that will capture and disseminate lessons learnt, good practices, etc, both to network's partners and to an external audience

#### 3. Expertise support to local authorities and other stakeholders in designing and delivering integrated and participatory policies

- Support to partners at local level in involving key stakeholders and in co-producing the main expected local outputs (especially Integrated Action Plans).
- Support to partners in making use of tools and methods for participatory design and implementation of integrated urban policies/action plans

In order to improve the efficiency of the support provided by experts to URBACT Networks, expertise will be made available to approved networks as follow:

- A Lead Expert will assist the partnership over the entire duration of the network (Phase 1 and 2) both with expertise for the design and delivery transnational exchange and learning and thematic expertise

- Ad-Hoc Experts may also be recruited to provide support on specific needs identified by the network concerning the methodology for exchange and learning activities, thematic expertise and local support to partners

URBACT network experts are also expected to work in close collaboration with the URBACT Joint Secretariat and contribute to capitalization and dissemination of network results. They shall use the tools and guidance provided by the programme for effective delivery of activities and outputs (eg. related to transnational exchange learning activities, production of network outputs, organization of network seminars, etc.). In this perspective, they shall take part to dedicated information and training sessions organized by the URBACT Joint Secretariat for the network experts. These will be part of their main tasks and work programmes.

### **6.3. Budgetary elements for expertise**

Each network shall have an allocation of € 127 500 maximum to cover the costs of expertise over the lifetime of the project (Phase 1 and Phase 2). This budget available for expertise is additional to the project budget. As the daily expertise fee for URBACT experts is set at 750 euros/ day all taxes included, this budget corresponds to an envelope of 170 days (including participation to training sessions and other activities at Programme level).

For phase 1, the expertise envelope available for each network shall be limited to 30.000 euros (40 days of expertise, including participation to information and training sessions organized by the URBACT Joint Secretariat). In Phase 1, only one single expert, designated as Lead expert, may be appointed. No additional ad hoc experts shall be appointed from the programme envelope. Days not used under phase 1 from the available envelope may be used during phase 2.

For Phase 2, the allocation of days to Lead Expert shall not exceed 80% of the days remaining in the expertise envelop after Phase 1.

The allocation covers days of expertise only. Travel and accommodation costs for URBACT Experts shall be covered by the network budget.

Action Planning Networks can contract additional experts for specific tasks (e.g. coordination of the URBACT Local Group, local animation, technical assistance, etc.) through the network budget under the category “External Expertise”.

### **6.4 Appointment of URBACT network experts**

#### **a) The pool of validated URBACT experts**

The additional expertise budget allocated to network shall be used to appoint experts who have been validated in the pool of URBACT Experts. Network Lead partners and partners will have to select their Lead expert and potential ad hoc experts from this pool.

The pool of validated URBACT Experts shall be created by means of an open Call for URBACT Experts defining the services to be performed to support networks and assessment criteria. An external service provider, to be selected through an open Call for Tender, will support the URBACT Joint Secretariat with the assessment and validation of the applications received by candidates URBACT Experts, following the assessment criteria outlined in the Call for Experts.

The list of all validated URBACT experts will be available on the URBACT website, with a search engine (allowing a search per field of expertise, country of residence, etc.). In cases where network Lead partners and partners do not find the relevant expertise in the pool of validated URBACT experts, they may invite experts to apply for validation following the procedure defined in the open Call for Experts.

#### **b) Appointment of URBACT expert by network Lead partners –Phase 1**

When submitting their Phase 1 Application , applicants are requested to designate the Lead Expert they intend to work with if the network is approved for Phase 1 and who will be in charge of producing the project baseline study. Ideally, this expert shall continue supporting the network as Lead expert in phase 2 if the project is approved for phase 2. Yet this appointment will have to be renewed for phase 2 once the project is approved, based on the Lead partner and partners' request.

The Lead Expert shall be proposed only from the pool of URBACT validated experts. No ad hoc experts may be commissioned during phase 1.

After the approval of the project proposal by the Monitoring Committee for phase 1, Lead Partners shall submit to the Secretariat an Expertise Request Form in which they confirm the expert they wish to commission for phase 1, building on discussions within the initial partnership.

The main tasks to be performed by the Lead expert under phase 1, the expected deliverables and work plan will be standard for all Lead experts, within the available envelope (40 days, 30.000 euros).

Following validation of the Lead partner's request by the URBACT Joint Secretariat, a contract will be established between the expert and the URBACT Managing Authority. The Lead partner shall be responsible for certifying the services performed by the Lead expert and validating the expert's activity reports (including deliverables, number of days claimed, etc.)

Lead Experts cannot be appointed to support more than one network at a time (whatever the type of network).

#### **c) Appointment of URBACT expert by network Lead partners –Phase 2**

After the approval of the project proposal by the Monitoring Committee for phase 2, Lead Partners shall submit to the URBACT Joint Secretariat an Expertise Request Form which defines the main tasks of the proposed Lead Expert, the deliverables expected, the work plan of the Expert and the number of days to be allocated. These components shall be discussed and agreed with project partners. Changes of Lead expert between phase 1 and 2 are possible, depending on phase 1 experience and achievements.

For Phase 2, the allocation of days to Lead Expert shall not exceed 80% of the days remaining in the expertise envelop after Phase 1.

Lead Experts cannot be appointed to support more than one network at a time (whatever the type of network).

Ad-Hoc Experts can be appointed by approved networks under phase 2, at the beginning of phase 2 or during the network life cycle as needs emerge. The procedure for appointment shall be similar as the one outlined above for Lead experts.

Lead experts and ad hoc experts shall be selected from the pool of validated URBACT Experts, only.

Following validation of the Lead partner's request by the URBACT Joint Secretariat, a contract will be established between the expert and the URBACT Managing Authority. The Lead partner shall be responsible for certifying the services performed by the Lead expert and validating the expert's activity reports (including deliverables, number of days claimed, etc.)

## 7. Capacity-building activities

In addition to the activities implemented by Action Planning Networks, the URBACT Programme offers regular training and capacity-building schemes to local stakeholders in order to improve the capacity of cities to manage sustainable urban policies and practices in an integrated and participative way.

Doing so, URBACT intends to go beyond individual learning and to allow local authorities to improve the way they are working with their communities.

Partners of Action Planning Networks will be invited to participate in the following capacity-building activities:

- National capacity-building seminars – this tool, tested under URBACT II, provides tools and methods to enhance capacities of local stakeholders to co-produce integrated and participatory strategies for sustainable urban development. National seminars are delivered in national languages. Member/Partner States are strongly involved in these sessions, which foster dialogue between national and local players on urban policies and allow project partners to better understand the national context in which they are operating.
- URBACT Universities, which proved highly successful under URBACT II (2011 and 2013). The URBACT University consists of a large transnational capacity-building event centred on the URBACT method and aiming to provide URBACT partners and their local stakeholders with tools and methods to develop integrated and participatory action-planning. Project partners from all URBACT networks come together to “learn by doing”, share good practices and test different tools they can apply in the work of their local partnerships at city level.
- Other ad hoc capacity-building actions based on established needs will be developed for specific stakeholder groups involved in the design and implementation of sustainable urban policies (e.g. elected representatives, Managing authorities of Operational Programmes, national authorities, etc.).