

CROSS-SECTORAL INTEGRATION

Contributors

Martina Busti – European Commission
Carlotta Fioretti – European Commission

Urban issues cannot be tackled using sectoral policies alone. Their complex nature implies that various dimensions of the problem are interlinked, mutually reinforcing each other. For this reason, solving urban questions requires **cross-sectoral integrated strategies**, built on a wider information base, and tackled through more collaborative **governance** (see also Governance chapter). Creating integrated strategies means covering gaps and blind spots in policy-making, and reconciling urban planning with other urban-related policy sectors (Leipzig Charter on Sustainable Cities, 2007; Pact of Amsterdam, 2016).

The concept of **sustainable development**, as introduced by European and global organisations, highlights the **complementarity** of actions in multiple policy areas – namely: the social, economic and environmental areas – in setting local governments trajectories and **goals**. The United Nations' (UN) *New Urban Agenda* (2016) has set the need for broad cross-sectoral and cross-level integration as one of its fundamental requirements for policy and institutional change. According to the Agenda, cities should aim to achieve 'an enabling environment and a wide range of means of implementation, including access to science, technology and innovation and enhanced knowledge-sharing on mutually agreed terms, as well as capacity development and mobilisation of financial resources' (NUA, 2016). The UN's Sustainable Development Goals emphasise the importance of implementing them jointly, with them being intertwined and multi-dimensional concepts. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 'enhanced policy coherence for sustainable development can help identify and manage these relationships and limit or overcome any negative impact'. To this end, 'an effective and inclusive institutional mechanism to address policy interaction across sectors and align actions between levels of government' is required (OECD, 2019).

For the European Commission (EC), **integration** is a key dimension of **cohesion policy**. Within this context, integration means coordination between policy areas (horizontal), between different levels of government (vertical) and across different territorial scales and areas (territorial) (see

Introduction). The **cross-sectoral approach**, more specifically, describes **the need to overcome the 'silos' structure, meaning the sectoral/policy field division of functions characterising public organisations**. The cross-sectoral approach entails both a horizontal and vertical dimension, referring in the former case to the relationship between departments in the same administration and in the latter to departments working in different administrations, or between government departments and external/private providers of services.

Cross-sectoral integration therefore means:

- ensuring **coherence in policy-making principles and objectives** among different policy sectors in public administrations, and **aligning priorities and timeframes**;
- **collaboration among different departments**, and across levels, in order to co-produce policies.

For an effective cross-sectoral integration to take place, all levels of administration should first agree on a form of collaboration conceived of as more than a purely organisational effort where powers and responsibilities are left unquestioned.

According to this principle, a cross-sectoral approach must be used, and must be based on explicit local needs and problems. The main aim of the approach is in fact to **anticipate and contrast possible negative externalities** of one-dimensional policies at local level, in order to avoid conflicting consequences and to make interventions in cities more effective (EC, 2019). Going beyond an immediate sectoral answer, considering how it can benefit from, or at least not jeopardise, other strategic objectives, raises awareness of the broader system in which every urban intervention is embedded. Furthermore, the approach allows administrations to add value to less institutionalised or more categorised issues (like gender, migration, climate change, etc.), building a multi-faceted and more effective answer to apparently straightforward traditional problems (building a new housing complex, opening a new school, introducing a new bus line, etc.). This flexibility is supposed to be further enhanced in the next programming period (2021-2027) by the introduction in the proposed regulations of policy objectives (POs) with broader scope, in place of the sectoral thematic objectives (TOs). Integration of funds at higher levels of EU architecture is intended to allow more freedom at all administrative levels, while maintaining a consistent framework.

The cross-sectoral integrated approach, though, is different from the 'holistic model of sustainable city development' (EC, 2011). The two are actually complementary: the holistic model provides a comprehensive view and guarantees overall coherence among policies, ensuring that no dimension is left behind; the integrated approach introduces a **pragmatic perspective**, producing

added value from the joint consideration of multiple policies, building on **governance capacity** and **funding** and **implementation instruments**.

Sustainable Urban Development (SUD), as envisioned in the 2014-2020 funding programme, can enhance cross-sectoral policy-making in this direction (Czischke & Pascariu, 2015), providing the framework for synergies among institutions and setting the stage for organising urban policies in accordance with multiple resources. According to Article 7 of European Regional Development Fund (ERDF):

*Integrated urban strategies should be comprised of **interlinked actions** which seek to bring about a lasting improvement in the **economic, environmental, climate, social and demographic conditions** of urban areas. Whilst **the operations supported by ESI funds need not cover all these elements, the wider strategy must take account of all the aspects listed**. [...] interrelated and interlinked, it means that actions should not be proposed and funded in complete isolation from each other, but rather that they should be developed within the context of a wider integrated strategy with the clear aim of **creating a coherent and integrated response to the problems of the urban area concerned**. (EC, 2016, p.8).*

Against this backdrop, cities have been asked to shape cross-sectoral integrated policies and projects, adopting this approach throughout the policy cycle. Strategic planning is based in fact on an agreement between actors, whose partnerships must consider a number of cross-cutting issues in their work. These cross-cutting issues help to ‘connect the dots’ within and between thematic partnerships.

From this point of view, cross-sectoral integration is useful in overcoming possible **bottlenecks in strategy- and policy-making**.

But while the formulation of urban strategies should be realised in an integrated way almost by definition, the phases of their implementation can be more difficult. Overcoming sectoral division is **not a solution to every problem** (URBACT, 2019). Authorities and officials willing to engage in cross-sectoral integration have to deal with many **challenges**.

In this chapter, cross-sectoral approach will be discussed in relation to two main components:

- **cross-sectoral integration within cohesion policy structure**, where the main challenges involve creating an enabling environment for integration at all levels, and dealing with existing conditionalities to guarantee that other cohesion goals are met – namely, thematic concentration;
- **cross-sectoral integration in territorial governance**, where local actors struggle to overcome the strict internal organisation of territorial administrations, and to include a wide range of public and private actors in the implementation of cross-sectoral projects.

CROSS-SECTORAL INTEGRATION WITHIN COHESION POLICY STRUCTURE

In this section we address:

How to integrate themes at the operational programme level?

How to achieve cross-sectoral integration with a limited number of thematic objectives available (thematic concentration)?

Sustainable Urban Development in the EU's cohesion policy aims to promote complementary actions in multiple policy areas.

The structure and regulations of cohesion policy funds set the principles for enhancing these synergies through a process of selection and interpretation of the dimensions involved in development disparities. Themes and bundles of themes selected by the EC for the distribution of its funds – namely thematic objectives and investment priorities (IPs) – are therefore those able to tackle the problems of unbalanced development, but also those for which the EC's contribution can be more effective in smoothing the process of policy implementation.

Member States and regions shall ensure that the interventions supported by ESI funds are complementary and are implemented in a coordinated manner with a view to creating synergies, in order to reduce the administrative cost and burden for managing bodies and beneficiaries [...]. (Annex I, 3.1.2, Common Provision Regulation).

The 'urban' dimension of development, in particular, acts as a boundary object, enabling collaboration between the EU and territorial authorities. More broadly, urban development related Priorities and Programmes help to enhance a multilevel and cross-sectoral governance system.

Managing authorities (MAs) especially should guarantee the integration of all the relevant themes in SUD strategies, smoothing mismatches between local and cohesion policy objectives and guaranteeing proper technical support to local authorities (LAs). In relation to cities' needs, and cohesion policy progress, issues and effectiveness linked to funds can vary, requiring those bundles to be reframed, as well as the conditions for their use. For this reason, the architecture of funds, in its evolution from one programming period to the next, has tried to enhance flexibility and has proposed new instruments. Nonetheless, the analysis of SUD strategy-making in the current programming period (2014-2020) has highlighted the difficulties encountered by both MAs and LAs in integrating different thematic objectives and, eventually, including more European Structural and Investment (ESI) funds in the design and implementation of SUD strategies.

All these difficulties can be classified into two main challenges as follows.

How to integrate themes at operational programme level?

Regulations play an important role in defining the conditions and possibilities for integrating themes into operational programmes (OPs). The Common Provisions Regulation collects the basic features of the different funds, allowing a holistic view of possible synergies but also of the limitations imposed. In this way, the EC gives territorial authorities an overview of funding possibilities and explains how to, eventually, join more funds. Common provisions, though, maintain thematic silos which are used to divide up funds. A first step in cross-sectoral integration can be found in individual funds structures. In ERDF, in particular, integration of policies at local level is proactively envisioned in two ways. First, Article 7 fosters the integration of multiple, diverse policies through SUD strategies as the proper way to approach urban development³¹ (see Introduction). Secondly, even though all investment priorities are possible under a SUD strategy, ERDF Regulation brings forward specific urban-related investment priorities:

- 4.e. promoting low-carbon strategies for all types of territories, especially for urban areas, including the promotion of sustainable multimodal urban mobility and mitigation-relevant adaptation measures;
- 6.e. taking action to improve the urban environment, to revitalise cities, to regenerate and decontaminate brownfield sites (including conversion areas), to reduce air pollution and to promote noise-reduction measures;
- 9.b. providing support for physical, economic and social regeneration of deprived communities in urban and rural areas;

These IPs acknowledge the transverse relevance of urban-related issues. The proposed regulation for the 2021-2027 programming period modifies funds architecture even more in this direction:

- the urban dimension of cohesion policy is strengthened, with the proposal to raise the minimum percentage of ERDF dedicated to sustainable urban development from 5%, as in 2014-2020 period, to 6% for 2021-2027;
- the eleven thematic objectives are consolidated into five policy objectives³².

³¹ Regulation (EU) No 1301/2013, Art. 7, comma 1: 'The ERDF shall support, within operational programmes, sustainable urban development through strategies that set out integrated actions to tackle the economic, environmental, climate, demographic and social challenges affecting urban areas, while taking into account the need to promote urban-rural linkages.'

³² The new objectives focus on having 'a (1) Smarter, (2) Greener, (3) Connected, and (4) Social Europe'. A new cross-cutting objective (5) is then dedicated to bring Europe closer to citizens by supporting locally developed investment strategies across the EU (EC, 2019).

This second decision broadens the scope of each objective, allowing Member States to be more flexible in shifting funds within a priority area. For instance, investments in administrative capacity can now be delivered under each policy objective instead of needing a separate policy objective (TO11 in 2014–2020). The urban dimension, in particular, can be now tackled in a new way: combining IPs from POs 1–4 in the cross-cutting PO5, which promotes integrated territorial development.

PO5 AND POST-2020 REGULATIONS

The proposed post-2020 framework offers more flexibility in terms of funds and aggregation of thematic objectives. The aim is to allow local strategies to fully integrate policies and sectors according to their particular needs. In particular, the proposal for the new funding programme introduces Policy Objective 5 (PO5) – ‘Europe closer to citizens’. The eleven TOs for 2014–2020 are consolidated into five policy objectives, but only PO5 allows full thematic flexibility. It frames two specific objectives:

- fostering integrated social, economic, cultural and environmental development and security in urban areas;
- fostering integrated social, economic, cultural and environmental local development and security, including rural and coastal areas.

Those can be reached combining different interventions of the other four POs, in addition to the intervention fields explicitly listed under PO5: public investments in tourism assets and services, cultural and natural heritage, regeneration and security of public places.

Considering that PO5 can combine activities financed under all other policy objectives, it enables a genuinely multi-sectoral integrated approach tailored to the local context.

For more information

Proposal for a Regulation Of The European Parliament And Of The Council on the European Regional Development Fund and on the Cohesion Fund:

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM%3A2018%3A372%3AFIN>

Additional resource

Steps in this direction are set to guarantee more degrees of freedom for territorial authorities, acknowledging that relevant synergies between policy sectors can only be achieved by including bottom-up needs, taking local actors’ capabilities into consideration.

Learning from practice

In pursuing this goal, a **major role is taken by managing authorities**. Being in charge of drafting the operational programmes, they can increase the coherence and efficiency of funding; they can select objectives early in the process, distribute tasks and decide strategies' territorial focus – taking account of the existing administrative organisation (FUA, metropolitan area, city, etc.).

According to analysis of 2014-2020 experiences, those decisions are more effective when based on a dialogue with the authorities involved, including those in charge of managing other EU funds – in particular, the European Social Fund (ESF). This dialogue is not only fundamental in the realisation of SUD strategies, but also responds to the partnership and multi-level governance principles set in the Common Provision Regulation³³ (see Governance chapter).

TUSCANY REGIONAL OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME (IT)

Tuscany Regional Operational Programme is the result of an **experienced management structure** and of a **process of co-design** of programme priorities, involving both managing and local authorities. Cross-sectoral integration is thus pursued, creating a network of support and coordination inside MA departments, and opening the programming process to territorial instances.

The funds management system is embedded in the extant administrative structure: a traditional sectoral organisation complemented by a solid governance system, based on strong and long-standing links between the Region and the municipalities. The result is a 'diffuse' organisation, where programming and management functions are distinct: a central coordination office is in charge of the programme, i.e. writing and structuring the OP and the Urban Axis; meanwhile, each administrative department manages and monitors actions separately.

The Urban Axis, in particular, has a manager in charge of vertical integration (with beneficiaries) and of horizontal integration (within administrative sectors). At the same time, the actions included in the Axis are actualised by the relevant departments. All the officials,

³³ See also Article 6 of the Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council. COM (2018) 375: '(1) Each Member State shall organise a partnership with the competent regional and local authorities. [...] (2) In accordance with the multi-level governance principle, the Member State shall involve those partners in the preparation of Partnership Agreements and throughout the preparation and implementation of programmes'.

according to their tasks, are in close contact with local authorities, and also exercise a technical support function.

This close relation stands from the beginning as a fundamental part of the process. The first step in writing the OP is a co-design phase in collaboration with local authorities, in order to delineate objectives and actions for territorial development. Despite the choice to include only two TOs in the Urban Axis (namely TO4 (the low-carbon economy) and TO9 (social inclusion)), the collaborative design of the IPs allowed the MA to articulate them in a way that reflects upstream the transverse needs of the whole area.

The links between ERDF and ESF funds are also sketched in the programming phase. The OP is built in dialogue between managing authorities. For instance, correlation with ESF programming was part of the selection criteria for strategies.

SUD strategies, in fact, are selected through a call for interest directed to cities. This choice helps the MA to stimulate the inclusion of specific features in the strategic documents. Among those, the call asks for clarity on connections with other public and private funds: although bundling multiple funds is not a requirement *per se*, these synergies are seen as a plus.

The Programme encourages holistic strategies as well, not only focusing on fund-related topics. This incentive, far from creating a mismatch with the objectives fixed in the OP, allows cities to elaborate their objectives more freely, and allows a higher degree of flexibility in topic integration.

For more information

STRAT-Board strategy fact-sheet: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/atlas/programmes/2014-2020/italy/2014IT16RFOP017

Official website of Regione Toscana:

<http://www.regione.toscana.it/porcreo-fesr-2014-2020>

<http://www.regione.toscana.it/-/por-fesr-2014-2020-i-progetti-di-innovazione-urbana-piu->

For instance, MAs can encourage LAs to draft broad strategies, encompassing and integrating several themes and policy fields, but also clearly stating the mutual interactions among objectives. This information will make it easier to foresee their implementation through integrated projects directly referring to those objectives.

Further encouragement can be provided by organising a competitive selection process for SUD strategies, or at least a ‘call for interest’. Through these

Be careful!

procedures, MAs can ask local administrations to fulfil specific conditions (as a more or less binding requirement, according to the capabilities of the involved cities). These conditions can be the integration of specific bundles of IPs, or collaboration among multiple departments.

MAs can also facilitate cross-sectoral integration by their **choice of territorial delivery mechanism**. During the 2014-2020 programming period, the use of multiple thematic objectives could be achieved through a dedicated urban operational programme, drawing from one or more funds. MAs, though, are often characterised by specific **targets, instruments and schedules** that are not necessarily calibrated to cross-sectoral policies.

The administration managing the OP is sometimes related to a specific policy sector (for instance, the Ministry of Infrastructure) and may have specific reference actors and monitoring processes. This is even more visible when the MA bundles more funds. Soft policies, normally financed through ESF, are not easily taken into account by spatial/infrastructure departments – which are usually more familiar with bidding procedures for ERDF (see Funding and Finance chapter).

With the proposed regulation for 2021-2027 programming period, the urban related OP option remain available but new combinations of instruments are introduced to extend the process of cross-sectoral integration at city level.

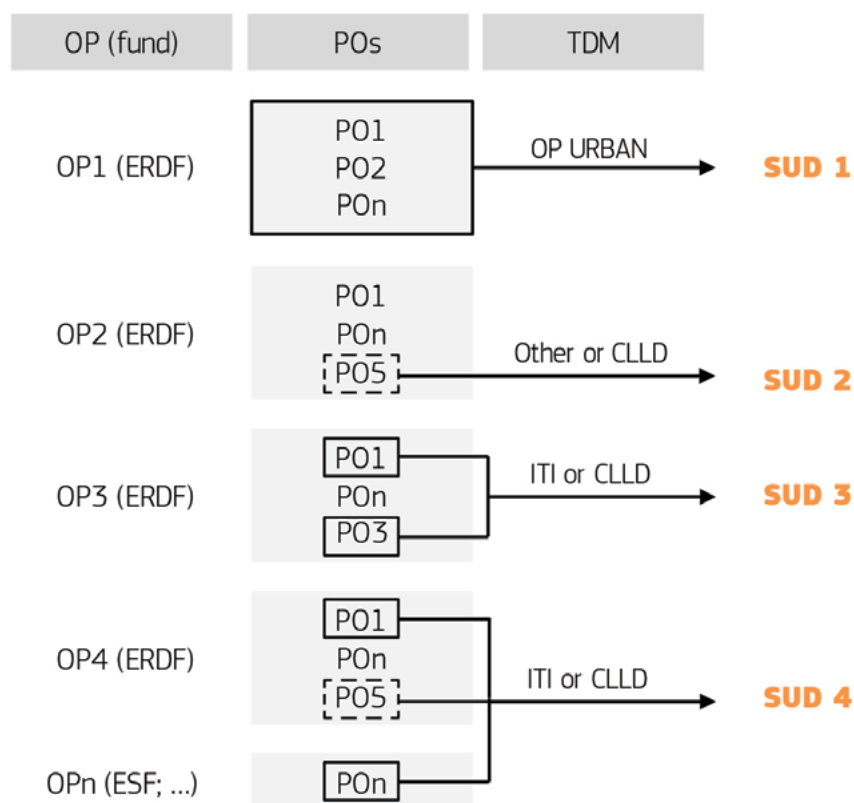


FIG. 1. Territorial delivery mechanisms structure, in the proposed regulation for 2021-2027 programming period.

Source: own elaboration.

MAs can also decide in their programmes the use of a specific territorial implementation instrument - integrated territorial investment (ITI) or community-led local development (CLLD), to combine more POs while drafting SUD strategies. ITI, in particular, is envisioned, sometimes already in Partnership Agreements, to encourage cross-sectoral integration in inter-municipal strategies, for instance in drafting SUD strategies in functional urban areas. ITI is in fact useful in incrementing funding resources and responding to more complex and variegated challenges (see Finance and Funding chapter). In Rotterdam, for instance, it is suggested that the development of the ITI in the functional urban area helps to address innovation policies, which normally need a broader territory with more actors involved. In Gothenburg, the SUD strategy also integrates, through the ITI, sectors that the city does not usually take on, such as innovation and business development.

When it comes to putting more funds together, though, organisational issues and bureaucratic burdens increase. This approach is more useful in addressing administrations that can count on a large amount of EU funding contributions and which have experience in EU funds management. Successful cross-sectoral integration then depends substantially on the expertise and ability of the offices in charge to overcome siloed thinking and to work collaboratively with other institutions and departments (see section two of this chapter).

How to achieve cross-sectoral integration with a limited number of thematic objectives available (thematic concentration)?

European Structural and Investment Funds have a set of conditions for their use. Every programming period regulation, though, keeps working on these rules, to guarantee a balance in regional development among Member States. In the 2014-2020 programming period, funds were channelled according to eleven thematic objectives. However, **each fund is especially focused on a few topics, which reflect its thematic concentration**. In particular, the ERDF is focused on the first four TOs, which are considered key priorities:

- innovation and research (TO1)
- the digital agenda (TO2)
- support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) (TO3)
- the low-carbon economy (TO4).

Moreover, the amount of resources allocated to each thematic objective depends on the category of region. As regards ERDF, for instance:

Learning from data

- in more developed regions, at least 80% of resources must be invested in at least two of the four key priorities;
- in transition regions, this focus is for 60% of the resources;
- in less developed regions, it is for 50% of the resources.

In addition, certain TOs must receive a minimum amount of funds, again according to the region classification. A certain percentage of ERDF resources, for instance, must be spent on TO4, namely on low-carbon economy operations:

- more developed regions: 20%
- transition regions: 15%
- less developed regions: 12%.

Although these percentages may change in the next programming period, the implication for managing and local authorities is the same: SUD strategies must take certain objectives into consideration, depending on the type of region and on the available resources. Further restrictions can be also set at national level or regional level, and made subject to specific guidelines for urban development established in the Partnership Agreement.

Thematically, SUD strategies in 2014-2020 contributed to all thematic objectives and to a wide variety of investment priorities, mainly from ERDF as well as ESF. However, the most commonly used TOs for SUD strategies are TO4 (low-carbon economy), TO6 (environmental protection and resource efficiency) and TO9 (social inclusion). In terms of cross-sectoral integration, 27% of strategies use four TOs, while around 36% of strategies integrate more than five IPs per strategy.

A higher number of objectives and priorities at disposal could allow cities more flexibility in tailoring strategies that are applicable to their local problems. Nonetheless, a collaborative selection of significant topics and their combinations can be effective, especially when few TOs are made available by the MA of the member state or region. The stricter thematic concentration is in the context of SUD, the more it influences the content of the strategy, and the more difficult cross-sectoral integration can be.

Local authorities are sometimes forced to adopt themes in their strategies that are not considered a priority or, conversely, cannot use the funds to act on urgent problems. A proper application of the partnership principle and a deep understanding of the effects of the alternative forms of SUD architecture on cross-sectoral integration and the relevance of the chosen priorities, could help palliate this risk.

INTEGRATED STRATEGY OF ÚSTÍ NAD LABEM-CHOMUTOV (IS ÚCA ITI) (CZ)

Learning from practice

For the 2014-2020 programming period, cohesion policy is supporting seven Sustainable Urban Development strategies in the Czech Republic, using integrated territorial investment (ITI) as implementation instrument. In total, seven operational programmes contribute to the strategies, as well as three different funds: European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), Cohesion Fund (CF), and European Social Fund (ESF). Taken together, the strategies address almost all thematic objectives. However, the mix of themes varies slightly across the seven strategies according to an analysis of the socio-economic indicators conducted at national level.

The case of the Integrated Strategy of Ústí nad Labem-Chomutov (IS ÚCA ITI), in particular, targets a functional urban area, including five main cities and their hinterlands. The area has experienced structural problems and complicated socio-economic transformation since 1990. It can be described as a structurally disadvantaged area (due to the previous focus on heavy industry), and it has been regularly listed among the regions in need of support from national regional policy programmes.

In IS ÚCA ITI, ESIF funding is absolutely crucial for strategy implementation and supports investment priorities in several thematic objectives and funds: (i) transportation accessibility and internal connectivity, (ii) landscape and environment, especially revitalising brownfield sites, (iii) economic competitiveness based on technologies, knowledge and innovation, and (iv) social cohesion. Nonetheless, as the scope of thematic activities designated for ITIs was defined centrally by the National Coordination Authority in the Ministry of Regional Development, the financial framework was also labelled as more 'top-down' than 'bottom-up'.

The main challenges in the ÚCA territory on the ground include transforming its socio-economic structure (decline of traditional industries, low employment, structural unemployment, pathological social features), and solving severe environmental problems (air, water and soil pollution, regeneration of brownfield sites). Only some of these weaknesses, though, can be addressed using ITI financial support as it has been drafted. For example, transportation and urban mobility pertain to important objectives of the strategy, even though their significance for the territory is low; at the same

time, the financial support allocated to environmental policies is lower than the real needs.

It is possible that IS ÚCA ITI could generate systematic and integrated projects, e.g. systematic planning of welfare services and social housing, a public transport system, public security and crime prevention, revitalisation of brownfield sites. However, additional financial resources, long-term planning (longer than one ESIF programming period), and coordination between central and local level are still needed.

For more information

STRAT-Board strategy fact-sheet: <https://urban.jrc.ec.europa.eu/strat-board/#/factsheet?id=CZ-001&fullscreen=yes>

More generally, the narrowing of eligible themes and activities, for instance in relation to the ITI rules imposed at national or regional level, can undermine the confidence of local partners in the instrument's capabilities (see also the issue of gold-plating in the Governance chapter). What is recommended is to develop a **shared understanding** of what is meant by cross-sectoral integration **between the various levels involved** in governance of ESI funds (URBACT, 2019). This can be achieved by **setting up formal and informal ways to provide multi-stakeholder input and feedback**: as mentioned, managing authorities should foresee the involvement of LAs in setting OPs priorities, but also encourage feedback from LAs on ongoing strategic processes and simplify multi-fund application procedures. At the same time, local authorities should raise their leverage on EU decisions, 'lobbying' to **bring their needs to the higher levels of the funds architecture**. Participation in international networks and initiatives can also be useful in enhancing their knowledge of MA-LA collaboration best practices and co-design and, more generally, raise awareness of possible approaches to cross-sectoral cooperation. A staff exchange and mobility between MAs and cities could also help to build accountability between the various government tiers and knowledge about cross-cutting issues. Such a programme makes staff aware of difficulties and limitations of the specific context.

When LAs have to deal with a limited set of thematic objectives made available by MAs downstream, there are nonetheless ways to realise cross-sectoral integrated strategies. For example, **even individual thematic objectives can be considered through a holistic view** that takes account of integrated actions among different sectors. For instance

TO1 (research and innovation), in a sustainable strategy, can be intended as transversal (e.g. see the concept of social innovation) and address mixing hard and soft measures pertaining to different policy areas. That means that **strategies can still achieve integration even when using a limited number of TOs**. In Finland, for instance, the Six City strategy (see box in the chapter on Strategic Dimension) combines regional innovation strategies with broader urban development objectives, starting from a clear economic development focus. Nonetheless, as of 2018 the six cities have launched up to 30 smaller pilot and trial projects ranging from smart mobility, clean-tech, health and education, to creating an enabling environment for business development. In turn, this sectoral collaboration has boosted exchanges between different departments, cities and local actors, which can be used as a basis for new cross-sectoral strategies.

Moreover, the local authority can decide autonomously to concentrate its strategy on a specific priority theme. This decision does not imply that it cannot pursue the integration of multiple objectives. Themes can be cross-cutting, recognised by multiple departments (for instance, regeneration of deprived neighbourhoods), able to bring together several projects, resources and actors. International agendas actually stress the existence of **cross-cutting issues which can bring multiple policies and projects together while guaranteeing their overall coherence** – see for instance the Urban Agenda for the EU.

Finally, another possibility is the use of **additional territorial instruments to address specific issues** that cannot be tackled directly by the SUD strategy. In particular, the reference here is to the possibilities offered by community-led local development for urban areas as promoted during the current and the upcoming programming period (a detailed explanation of CLLD can be found in the Governance chapter). With CLLD, it is possible to integrate topics, funds and actors (including non-public actors), enhancing bottom up decision-making, sharing information, and shedding light on specific issues which did not make it to the political agenda. For instance, CLLD can be used in synergy with an ITI in order to address thematic objectives not included in the SUD strategy in a particular area. One example is the integration of social policies through TO9 (social inclusion) in a deprived neighbourhood, while, at urban or functional urban area level, the ITI addresses another set of policy themes. In this specific case, integration would be achieved by considering the two strategies together.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Explore the multiple possibilities for cross-sectoral integration made available by cohesion policy regulations.

- ▶ Operational programmes can be built using thematically transverse investment priorities (urban-related)
- ▶ The proposed regulations for 2021-2027 add new ways to combine topics and funds at the operational programme level.
- ▶ In particular, the introduction of PO5 will allow OPs and strategies to include topics with more flexibility.
- Plan cross-sectoral integration in SUD strategies during the drafting of operational programmes.
 - ▶ MAs should involve LAs from the first phases of programming, thus assuring the commitment to the partnership and multi-governance principles.
 - ▶ MAs can set specific requirements or suggestions in operational programmes to enhance cross-sectoral cooperation in strategy-making.
 - ▶ MAs can use competitive selection procedures for strategies, in order to capitalise on the strategic capacities of LAs, and push them to design integrated strategies.
 - ▶ MAs can choose the proper territorial delivery mechanism, to make multiple TOs and funds available to cities.
- Establish formal and informal ways to provide input and feedbacks on cross-sectoral integration, in order to avoid mismatch between top-down decisions and local needs.
 - ▶ Develop a shared understanding between MAs and LAs of what is meant by cross-sectoral integration.
 - ▶ Managing authorities should encourage feedback from LAs regarding ongoing strategic processes.
 - ▶ Local authorities can raise their leverage on EU decisions by ‘lobbying’ to bring their needs to the higher levels of the funds architecture, for instance participating in international networks and initiatives. In this way, cities can get in contact with peers and learn from best practices for MA-LA collaborations.
 - ▶ Build confidence and accountability between participating tiers of government, for instance by allowing staff to move between MAs and LAs.
- Build cross-sectoral integrated strategies also in case of an individual thematic focus, and with a few thematic objectives.
 - ▶ LAs can use broad interpretations of the available TOs.
 - ▶ When the strategy focuses on a specific topic, it is possible to define multiple objectives, considering the main theme as a starting point and addressing it from different points of view.
- Use community-led local development (CLLD) to gather attention and funds on particular problems at local level.
 - ▶ Select issues and sort out solutions within an enlarged network of local actors (beneficiaries, citizens, associations, etc.).

CROSS-SECTORAL INTEGRATION IN TERRITORIAL GOVERNANCE

In this section we address:

How to make different departments and offices work together?

How to achieve Cross-Sectoral Integration at local level in the implementation phase?

ESI funds coordination allows **silos to be broken down, synergies** to be identified and **complementarities among policy fields** to be found. For this reason, the realisation of an SUD strategy is also an opportunity to overcome existing sectoral **barriers inside territorial administrative organisations**.

This expectation requires not only a focus on instruments, in which funds and topics are integrated according to specific rules, but also a focus on the establishment of collaboration between actors and departments across local governance structures (see Governance chapter for a broader discussion on collaboration between actors). In this way, the role of strategies in merging interests and stakeholders is enhanced, as well as the capability of regions and cities to cultivate a **stable and long-term integrated sustainable development process**.

Policy integration at this level has been traditionally understood as mainly related to the management of human resources and efficiency objectives. The literature on policy integration is dominated by empirical analysis and is mainly dedicated to facing the complexity relating to specific cross-sectoral topics (in particular, especially at the beginning of its diffusion, to environmental protection and climate change issues) (Tosun & Lang, 2013).

While this is still true, cross-sectoral integration as promoted by the EU also has the ability to boost innovation, not only erasing boundaries between sectoral policies, but also redrawing them (Rode et al., 2017).

Moreover, within the multi-level governance of SUD strategies, silos can be different at national, MA and LA levels. Vertical integration using cross-sectoral policies can imply **delegation of powers and responsibilities** and emphasise the role of politics in pursuing a more centralised or decentralised approach.

Due to its innovative character, cross-sectoral integration has to deal with multiple bottlenecks, linked in particular to **actors' preferences** and more generally to challenges in framing **multiple interests** (Tosun & Lang, 2013).

Finally, the level at which the integration takes place carries different meanings, and different goals, depending on practice. Cross-sectoral integration during **implementation**, especially, can be challenging.

How to make different departments and offices work together?

There are two main forms of cooperation to be put into practice in overcoming sectoral barriers: **flexible** cooperation (building ad hoc, temporary, solutions around emerging issues) and **structural** cooperation (focusing on organisation/administrative structures).

In both cases, the optimal solution is to ensure coherence among participating authorities' departments and **think of possible joint policies and projects as early as the strategy formulation stage**. Prompt and unambiguous decisions at early stages of the process require precise knowledge of existing relations among departments and territorial authorities and actors, the ability to build upon past experiences of collaboration on integrated strategies, anticipating potential contrasts of interest among officers and very clearly allocating responsibilities and duties.

However, this level of anticipation is rare, and many turning points can intervene in the long process of strategy-making (from **changes in political priorities**, to **redistribution of functions** and **administrative reorganisation**). In these cases, specific measures can be put in practice to smooth collaboration throughout the process.

The first step to be considered is the **choice of strategic issues and objectives which deserve a cross-sectoral integration effort**.

Be careful!

Complex integrated issues can reach the political agenda more easily (Tosun & Lang, 2013) because they gather more interests and are more likely to generate awareness. These are not always addressed in practice, however, because related aims and priorities are not shared among stakeholders. This situation can appear when the city fails to include all interested parts in the selection of topics early on. The **sharing of information among internal (and external) resources working for and within the administration** is fundamental, both in integrating proper content and objectives of the strategy, and to identify **priorities according to their feasibility**.

For instance, a newsletter can be sent to all officials, updating them on opportunities and results of all departments, while at the same time questionnaires can be circulated among them to grasp emerging needs.

Also the **characteristics of the organisation** – for instance, number of departments and officials that can be put at work on the transverse policy, office structure, project management process – can contribute to determining which issues could be integrated. In a big administration, the presence of a specific office or an appointed official, in charge of collecting all the information coming from each policy manager, can help to define possible cooperation. In smaller environments, human and personal interactions,

and, therefore, opportunities to engage in common activities, are the trigger for defining possible collaborations. Even the spatial organisation of offices can be altered to increase the probability of interaction. In Ghent, for instance, the administration introduced flexible desks that make it possible to create more contact between staff from different departments.

It follows that the decision on which policy fields to integrate depends heavily on the capacity to **put together different departments' interests**. To this end, one suggestion could be to introduce, early in the process, self-assessment phases, which can be used to grasp the main strengths and weaknesses in integration (see box below).

REFERENCE FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE CITIES (RFSC)

The Reference Framework for Sustainable Cities (RFSC) is an online toolkit for local authorities that are involved in or are willing to start a process of integrated and sustainable urban development. The RFSC addresses the principles of integrated sustainable urban development and assists local authorities when designing, implementing and monitoring strategies and projects at city level.

Initially created within the framework of the Leipzig charter (2007) by EU Member States, the European Commission (DG REGIO) and relevant stakeholders, it has been further developed by the French Ministry of Housing and Sustainable Homes with the scientific support of CEREMA (Centre d'études et d'expertise sur les risques, l'environnement, la mobilité et l'aménagement) to follow the progress of the Urban Agenda for the EU and the implementation of the UN Agenda 2030 and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at local level, with a new version launched in 2016. It is endorsed and promoted in Europe by CEMR (Council of European Municipalities and Regions).

The toolkit can be applied to urban strategies or projects at various scales but it works better for small and medium size city strategies by offering a simple, structured and informative self-evaluation tool. The most useful feature for strategic thinking is the identification of five key pillars for strategy development (spatial, governance, social, economic and environmental) and a related set of 30 strategic objectives. The RFSC provides for a detailed description of these objectives that can structure a strategy for sustainable urban development in a holistic way. In addition, the tool can also be used

Additional resource

to design a strategy to localise the SDGs. Thus, it can be useful at an early stage of strategy elaboration for setting the strategy framework, explaining the key components of sustainable urban development and facilitating discussion. Key issues of sustainable urban development strategies are explicitly addressed, e.g. citizen involvement, capacity-building and monitoring and evaluation. The prioritisation among the five pillars or the SDGs can be visualised by means of a spider-web diagram that shows the thematic focus of strategies, which objectives are best addressed, or conversely what to strengthen in order to achieve an holistic approach, and what can be done to pursue an integrated approach. Similarly, the evaluating the impact of specific actions to be implemented and contributing to each strategic objective provides a basic estimation that mainly helps reinforce the inner coherence of the strategy.

For more information

RFSC website: <http://rfsc.eu/>

RFSC, *Towards green, inclusive and attractive cities*, RFSC, July 2019, Brussels, 2019. Available at: https://issuu.com/rfsc/docs/towards_green__inclusive_and_attractive_cities

In the case of Novo mesto (SI), for instance, the self-assessment in SUD strategy-making allowed the offices to validate their efforts in overcoming historical barriers in cross-sectoral cooperation.

There are **bundles of policies that are traditionally integrated at local level**, thanks in part to affinity of instruments and targets. For instance, mobility, infrastructure and planning issues are commonly tackled through similar spatially related approaches. Consistent with above suggestions, **building on existing experiences and actors-networks, and retaining know-how created through past experiences of cooperation**, are sure ways to avoid this impasse. The knowledge built during projects, for instance, can be capitalised on through lunchtime talks and periodic presentations.

When the authorities' interest is to build an integrated approach among sectors and departments which have never worked together, the **availability of extra funds** can help to enhance collaboration and management of complex interventions. In this regard, MAs can advise and support the use of the **EU's technical assistance** funding to enhance the cross-sectoral capacities of the officials involved.

In these situations, though, it is necessary to consider the advantages of innovation compared to its **inherent costs**, especially if the process is

concentrated into a short period. Fixed administrative and bureaucratic structures establish a path dependency that is hard to contrast without involving innovative processes. Investments are firstly needed in for capacity-building (see chapter on Strategic Dimension) – for instance providing courses to existing officers, and fostering ownership of EU-funded projects by city staff – in order to ensure that officials properly understand issues and grasp opportunities from different policy areas, not only their own. Introducing new roles – experts in coordination and communication, or bid-writing experts – can also guarantee independent advice and can help to manage the process from a new external point of view (see Governance chapter and box on JASPERS in this section).

SUD STRATEGY IN GHENT (BE)

Ghent uses a large array of policy tools to implement the strategy. The administration was recently restructured to have only 10 departments in order to make organisational structure and responsibilities clearer and simpler. At the same time, the tendency towards decentralisation of urban management was pursued with the creation of neighbourhood managers and an urban development company. According to the city, in fact, better results come from the existence of networks across the city, which are useful in developing extensive knowledge and include more actors.

Another structural step was taken with the institution of a Coordination Unit for EU funds. The Unit offers a range of services to different departments (full management, just financial and audit, informative) on the basis of needs. This is paid for out of the EU project's technical budget in the case of successful applications. One of the initiatives thus related was the creation of 'envelopes' of financial resources for objectives, for which various departments could apply. The collaborative design of the budget ensures the need for them to coordinate/cooperate to access the resources.

The city also experimented with non-structural tools to integrate contributions both from public and non public actors. The establishment of 'city contracts' between the city and the regional government enabled an exchange of information across departments at different levels. Likewise, the city built on the participation of citizens and associations for the inclusion of different instances in the formulation and implementation of projects. Attention for the more physical and infrastructural themes (renovation of the old Docks area and re-organisation of the mobility) was coupled with

Learning from practice

the organisation of a season (during the project construction) of events, temporary use and informative events to link soft and hard policy initiatives.

Some further suggestions rely on job organisation: divide the tasks clearly, prepare and consult relevant bodies' internal rules/processes, focus on transparency (e.g. with periodical reports).

For more information

STRAT-Board strategy fact-sheet:

<https://urban.jrc.ec.europa.eu/strat-board/#/factsheet?id=BE-007&fullscreen=yes>

Finally, the creation of new offices (more structural approach) or ad hoc committees (more flexible) to manage cross-sectoral policies in an inter-departmental way are two of the most-used approaches. The example of Rotterdam (NL) is significant in terms of structural changes: the city reorganised the offices completely, moving from 30 departments to 5 clusters. The structural reorganisation, though, was paired with a set of softer measures (the directors of the clusters meet on a weekly basis and are informed all together about the available EU funds and ongoing processes).

It is important to stress that SUD strategies are often delivered within a context of **multi-level governance** – for instance, when the strategy targets a functional urban area (see Governance and Territorial Focus chapter). In these cases responsibilities and functions for specific topics could be spread among different actors, making their integration more complex. Next to bring all relevant actors together to deliver a coordinated response to a problem, in fact, this means that various levels of governance need to be involved.

LAs in charge of strategy formulation should be able to establish contacts with corresponding policy departments at other administrative and territorial levels, sharing knowledge and working together to agree on coordinated objectives. In Gothenburg (SE), for instance, the newly formed executive Committee of the City defined sectors, partners and themes for cross-sectoral cooperation, and indicated cross-sectoral projects and activities, all linked to the three priorities defined by the programme. The ERDF programme structure is reflected in the strategy with the creation of a fund coordination group inside the City organisation. The group consists of four representatives of major local programmes upon which the strategy is based. The MA is also part of the group. There is also a regional partnership involving labour unions, and the social and business sectors. The group meets at least three times a year to pave the way for synergies

between the EU and local objectives and functions as a platform where knowledge can be stored and extended to be available to all territorial authorities.

How to achieve cross-sectoral integration at local level in the implementation phase?

The elaborate and complex nature of cross-sectoral SUD strategies and related actor networks, hardly matches the existing **implementation structure** without the creation of **bottlenecks**. Those can be situational or be perceived as inherent in the implementing system. Most problems are observable in relation to:

- overlap with **sectoral plans** activities;
- **translation** of cross-sectoral goals into **policies and projects**;
- conflict between **long-term and short-term objectives**;
- **involvement of external actors** in implementing a project.

Often, SUD strategies overlap with sectoral plans, risking inconsistencies among their priorities and goals. If the process of sectoral plan-making is parallel to that of strategy-making, or proceeds from it, **synergies can be jointly built**. This is also true for the relation of SUD to higher-level plans.

When sectoral plans are already in place, though, it may be necessary to update them in order to achieve proper coherence. Instead of completely revising the plan, which is a burden both in terms of human and time resources, **administrations can ensure complementarity and coherence by acting on monitoring activities**, introducing indicators and tools which link the specific sectoral objectives to the overall strategies (see Monitoring chapter).

When the strategy is left particularly broad and integration is not detailed in respect to the succeeding actions and expected achievements, it can happen that integrated added value gets lost. In fact, at the implementation stage, **projects can be caught back in the silos system**. This happens partly because the EU's cohesion policy structure reproduces a sectoral division also in the later phases of the process, in particular during financial management and reporting. For this reason, simplification could be seen as a necessary condition, especially if the local authority has not yet developed enough coordination capability.

In such cases, the local authority could resort to external expertise. Additional assistance – like that provided by Jaspers (see box below) – can complement administration efforts and help deal with the complexity of integrated projects.

*Additional resource***JASPERS – JOINT ASSISTANCE TO SUPPORT PROJECTS IN EUROPEAN REGIONS**

JASPERS is a partnership between the European Commission (DG REGIO), the European Investment Bank and Member States to improve the quality of investment projects delivering EU policies. JASPERS provides advisory support on the preparation of plans and projects supported by ERDF, CF, Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) and Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA). This assistance has been active for over a decade. Today, JASPERS operates in 23 countries (all 28 countries are eligible). JASPERS has supported more than 650 projects and helped the absorption of more than € 130 billion.

In particular, under the umbrella of the EU Urban Agenda and cohesion policy, JASPERS:

- advises authorities on strategic planning in urban, smart and social development sectors;
- supports beneficiaries to help them meet the required standards in preparing projects eligible for EU funds;
- improves the capacity of administrations and beneficiaries by transferring knowledge about project preparation, environmental issues, EU legislation and any related needs;
- speeds up the EU approval process by carrying out an independent quality review which prepares the ground for the European Commission's decision.

Providing upstream support for integrated urban strategies, Jaspers' advisors (more than 120 technical experts covering the sectors mentioned above) help cross-sectoral interactions between relevant topics to be utilised.

*Learning from practice***METHODOLOGICAL ADVICE ON HOW TO SET UP AN INTEGRATED, CROSS-SECTORAL URBAN REGENERATION PROGRAMME IN NOVO MESTO (SI)**

Slovenia's Partnership Agreement for 2014-2020 programming period, and the related operational programme, identify Novo mesto as a strategic node, and support it to strengthen its regional role and development potential. By using an integrated territorial investment, EU funds for Sustainable Urban Development have been directed to finance measures in urban renewal, energy efficiency and sustainable mobility. JASPERS was requested to provide

guidance to the local authority, assisting it in identifying integrated projects. JASPERS helped Novo mesto deploy a methodology that facilitated the strategic alignment of ‘packages of measures’ (i.e. schemes). In particular, JASPERS helped the LA to build its integrated strategy using policy-led Multi-Criteria Analysis. The analysis was aimed at reviewing the eligible ITI-backed *schemes*, connecting them with the city’s overall development strategy. In this way, the LA could develop a holistic view of investments, reducing the negative effects of division between silos.

JASPERS was also beneficial in the process of breaking silo divisions in the municipality, as the process of analysing the city’s action plan demanded inter-departmental cooperation. In this sense, there are separate challenges in the planning and implementation phases. There is a natural organisational inclination towards manageable projects that are one-dimensional in their nature as it is more ‘realistic’ for administration to achieve their goals. On the basis of such analysis, Novo mesto set-up an ‘integrative’ projects office that oversees all phases of the strategy process (implementation, project build-up, alignment with policies) and enables communication channels between departments and stakeholders.

For more information

JASPERS webpage: <https://jaspers.eib.org/>

JASPERS Networking Platform webpage: <http://www.jaspersnetwork.org/>

STRAT-Board strategy fact-sheet:

<https://urban.jrc.ec.europa.eu/strat-board/#/factsheet?id=BE-007&fullscreen=yes>

Implementation of integrated projects could also be facilitated

by breaking them into a series of steps. In particular, actions can be realised in relation to **long- and short-term objectives**.

In this case, the risk is that multiple parallel processes of sustainable urban development proceed in an un-governed way, with urgent issues – especially those gathering political interests – being given attention, while issues with less relevant, or more complicated, implications remain pending in coordination inertia or spending reviews.

When there are not transverse offices and ad hoc resources to deal with broad and complex processes such as these, administrations should make

Be careful!

Additional resource

sure to guide these processes while taking different speeds into account. For instance, using **implementation, investment or action plans as intermediate steps to organise actions in time.**

URBACT (2019) STUDY ON INTEGRATED ACTION PLANS (IAP STUDY) URBACT ACTION PLANNING NETWORKS

The URBACT Report (see box in Strategic Dimension chapter) tried to spot trends, strengths and weaknesses in approaches to integration. An important aspect of the methodology was breaking down the concept of ‘integrated action planning’ into its diverse elements in order to assess the Integrated Action Plans (IAPs) against each other. The study provided in this way:

- a more detailed understanding of ‘integration’;
- refined criteria for assessing and improving integration for sustainable urban development.

Starting from the URBACT definition of four types of integration³⁴, fourteen aspects of integrated action planning have been identified, covering: integrated planning processes, planning for integrated urban development and integrated plans. Among the resulting indicators, some pertain more directly to the cross-sectoral integration dimension:

- actions are needs-based – they respond to real needs based on a sound understanding of the local context, challenges and opportunities;
- actions address all three pillars of sustainable development in terms of economic, social and environmental objectives;
- actions address the full range of policies/sectors of activity;
- actions and objectives are aligned and complementary to existing strategies in place at city, regional, national or European levels;
- the plan effectively balances the need for both ‘hard’ (physical/ infrastructure) and ‘soft’ (human capital) investments;
- the plan seeks to mobilise all available funding - from EU Funds to private local sources.

Interesting lessons, trends and important variations can also be identified by considering each aspect in turn. In particular, the study spots trends across URBACT networks of cities being stronger at developing a clear internal strategic logic to their

plan than they are at developing strong 'external' coherence with other strategies and external funding sources. It is highly likely that improving integration with relevant strategies and funding will increase their likelihood of achieving implementation, scale and impact. Specifically:

- urban strategies need to be integrated, but action plans can be more specific, applying to only one part of the overall strategy. In this way, the action plan may not need to cover all the sectoral and spatial dimensions, so long as the overall strategy does;
- alternatively, IAP itself can be seen as more of a strategic document which will need to be broken down into more specific actions in due course. Much depends on where the city/region is at in terms of its overall sustainable development strategy and how it intends to implement that;
- integrating funding is one of the major challenges/potential opportunities for local development in Europe. Coming up with clearer and more detailed funding strategies for the planned actions could therefore help to increase the chances and impact of implementation.

For more information

URBACT website: <https://urbact.eu/integrated-action-plans-study>

Instruments like the Reference Framework for Sustainable Cities (RFSC) can help cities to evaluate the cross-sectoral integration of their strategies and projects, highlighting which objectives are best addressed the best, or, conversely, what can be done to pursue a more integrated result (see Reference Framework for Sustainable Cities box).

In a similar way, an individual big project that is identified with the strategy can be broken up into smaller projects (as in Ghent Old Docks strategy). This effort makes integrated actions more manageable, even within unexpected 'shocks' in the starting conditions.

Cross-sectoral strategies and policies, even more than sectoral ones, need support from political, administrative and societal actors which are able to smooth the process and overcome difficulties. In the best-case scenario, the inclusion of proper stakeholders and the creation of the tools required happens during strategy formulation. This condition can help the LA to foresee possible bottlenecks in implementing the individual actions related to the integrated strategy. In the South Essex area (UK), the strategic process

brings together local authorities and NGOs as early as the drafting phase, discussing how to integrate different objectives, defining who is in charge of what and in which areas.

However, unforeseen bottlenecks can arise in the course of the process. For this reason, it is worth grounding the strategy in a broad network of actors which can provide feedback on all stages of policy-making. Opportunities for multi-level dialogue (public presentations, workshops), with social and business sectors, academia and other institutions, are useful in creating synergies based on strategy awareness and sharing (EC, 2016).

Actors' networks can also be created using the urban space as a 'trading zone' (Balducci, 2015): strategies, or part of them, can directly address needs and problems related to specific areas of the city (neighbourhoods, public spaces, buildings). This approach, rooting multidimensional policies or projects in visible and delimited interventions, can also help to enhance the fruitful involvement of people with differing interests. Moreover, it can underline the interconnections of multiple factors in causing urban problems.

For instance, the project of redevelopment of a square has been, in the city of Novo mesto (SI), the main way to raise awareness of cross-sectoral integration complexity and, at the same time, its critical role in solving apparently intractable problems (traffic, deterioration of public spaces, etc.). In this way, public officials and the local population have become aware of the advantages of integrated solutions through visible outputs (measurable effects, physical transformations, etc.).

Moreover, the networks created can set intermediate consultation phases and disseminate the strategy, putting it into practice directly focusing on urban spaces.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ensure coherence between objectives and actions across participating departments.
 - ▶ Weigh possible joint policies and projects as early as the strategy formulation phase.
 - ▶ Use newsletters and questionnaires to circulate information on departments' activities and needs.
- Identify main strengths and weaknesses in the administrative organisation.
 - ▶ Introduce a phase of self-assessment of integration capacity in different departments.

- ▶ Start the cross-sectoral integration process involving the departments that are more willing to collaborate.
- ▶ Build on existing actor networks, also using past experiences as a reference point.
- ▶ Organise lunchtime talks and periodic presentations on good collaboration practices.
- Invest in capacity-building in order to enhance officials' understanding of possible cross-sectoral synergies.
 - ▶ MAs should ensure the use of Technical Assistance funding by LAs.
 - ▶ Weigh the possibility of introducing new figures and experts.
 - ▶ Weigh the possibility of creating new offices or ad hoc committees to manage cross-sectoral policies in an interdepartmental way.
- Provide instruments (pacts, meeting, sharing moments) to guarantee multi-level and inter-municipal dialogue among corresponding and complementary departments involved in the strategy.
- Enhance synergies, and avoid inconsistencies, between SUD strategies and existing sectoral plans.
 - ▶ When plans already exist, act through the monitoring system to adjust inconsistencies, introducing indicators and tools which link the specific sectoral objectives to the overall strategies.
- Draft the strategies already during the planning process ahead of implementation of integrated projects.
 - ▶ Consider using external expertise to assist the LA in operationalising integrated projects.
- Use intermediate steps in the policy process - implementation, investment or action plans – to prioritise and to detail parts of the integrated strategy.
 - ▶ If the strategy focuses on a big project, break it down into smaller interventions and manageable goals.
- Include a broad network of stakeholders throughout the policy process, in order to overcome possible bottlenecks in implementing integrated policies.
- Enhance stakeholder engagement by focusing on the spatial dimension of policies.
 - ▶ Anchor policies to urban places to foster a sense of ownership among stakeholders.
 - ▶ Show public officials and local population the advantages of integrated solutions through visible outputs (measurable effects, physical transformations, etc.).

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