

InnovaCity – Progress on the regional dimension of science and society

The project concerns the interface between research and development (R&D) actors and users within local and regional governance networks. The overall aim is to provide a sustainable knowledge base for management of the transition to sustainable city regions in Europe, in order to impact on policies, socio-economic conditions and citizens. In the short term the project will result in development of networks and demonstrations of best practices (networks, forums, feed back dialogues, training resources, guides).

1. Need and relevance

The rationale behind the proposed work and network is two-fold: the need of know-how for governance and policy-making in a knowledge based society on one hand and the need of sustainable development of city regions on the other.

The challenge of generating know-how for governance and policy-making

- Researchers and experts are playing more important roles in preparing and monitoring decisions in the knowledge based society. This is outlined in FP6 as well as in the White paper on European Governance.
- Users are having more important roles in innovation or regeneration processes, networks and alliances. Innovation in services stand out as a new kind of process within a new kind of context, because of the greater role of tacit knowledge and network characteristics.
- Policy relevant R&D has an unclear relation to policy decisions
- There's a need of developed interface and know how services between researchers/experts and users.

The challenge of sustainable city regions

Sprawling suburbs, declining economic activities in inner cities, the spread of out-of-town shopping centres, are all trends which increasingly endanger Europe's urban environment, economic development and cultural tradition. Policy makers increasingly acknowledge the powerful impact of housing patterns on energy consumption, social interaction, patterns of consumption and particularly on transport demand. Sustainable development – the means to reconcile today's prosperity with future generations' quality of life – demands the rapid, efficient and focused conversion of new knowledge into socially, economically and environmentally acceptable solutions.

Criteria for bringing the members of the network together

The challenge is to bridge the gaps between R&D actors and users – not only the expertise gap but also gaps on approach, communication and policies:

- Views on the role of science differs, but is changing - from a view on science as the motor of progress or problem solver to a view on science as a source of strategic opportunity. The later view is characterised by an emphasis on strategic basic, interdisciplinary and collaborative research, foresight processes, evaluation and the use of "interface institutions", all aimed at ensuring that society derives the maximum possible value from the research community.
- Communication gap: Researchers in the development field deem policy choices to be critical and policy makers deem research to be crucial. Yet the mutual perceptions are out of synch.
- Expertise gap: Experts either try to apply their intelligence to fields that are far removed from their own specialisation or do it in a situation where there has been a hasty effort to recruit appropriate expertise at a late stage of decision making, tacking it on to an existing set of activities and processes.
- The politticy gap: The gap between a vision and the practical action and implementation, i.e. sustainable city regions versus city regions of today.

The European value

The project will support a wide range of emerging EU policies, such as eEurope 2002, the White Papers on European Governance and European transport policy for 2010, the Strategy for Sustainable development, ESDP, Towards a European Strategy for the security of energy supply and Environment 2010.

The Lisbon European Council singled out an innovative approach to European policy development, the new "open coordinated method". Research and development, education and vocational training, enterprise policy and social inclusion were mentioned as areas where this new approach could be applied. The Lisbon Council also set a new strategic goal for the next decade: "to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion". The Stockholm European Council then decided that the EU sustainable

development strategy should complete and build on this political commitment. This recognises that in the long term, economic growth, social cohesion and environmental protection must go hand in hand.

EU research has prioritised issues where transnational and multidisciplinary collaboration are essential – global change, water quality, the marine environment and the quality of life in our cities and their associated cultural heritage. The projects already finalised has done much to bridge the gap between political and public perceptions of sustainable development, and has prepared the ground for the creation of a true European Research Area in environmental research.

More than one hundred projects has been co-funded by the fifth or earlier framework R&D programmes. Many of them have governmental focus from different aspects: Urban Management (41 projects), Cultural Heritage (38 projects), Sustainable Built Environment (13 projects) and Sustainable Transport Systems (16 projects). Some transnational clusters have also been created aiming at synergies between projects and stimulating the dissemination of research results.

2. Aims and deliverables

The objectives are to improve generation, distribution and use of knowledge on sustainable development of cities and regions by:

- Access & integration of European, national and regional R&D, using a bottom-up approach on a choice of themes on sustainable development of city regions.
- Best practices on the interface between policy-makers and researchers, i.e. demonstration of characteristics of new governance, regional variations and flexibility to how R&D can be disseminated and implemented.
- Infrastructure, i.e. providing networks and strategies for a knowledge base which will be conditioned by local and regional policies, programmes and actions.
- Support policy-making processes adequate to the reality of the knowledge based and sustainable society.

The proposed work will contribute to the structuring and integration of European research by the development of four regional networks, acting as pilots and closely linked to transnational, national and regional research groups and networks on the topic "Sustainable City Regions", with the aim of

- Advancing knowledge by assembling a critical mass of skills targeted toward long-term, multidisciplinary objectives
- Common knowledge base, created within and between the regional intermediary networks
- Mutual access to R&D results
- Conversion into society benefits, by promoting better links between science and society,
- Regeneration & synergies, promoted and developed through co-ordination of regional implementation activities and joint actions conducted at regional level.

To meet the demands from information society we propose a range of results, delivered to stake holders and users in the following potential work packages:

| Expected results, potential work packages | | User of results |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | Case studies on development strategies or plans on regional, city and living area levels | Cities, regional governments and county boards |
| 2 | Regional integration workshops | Policymakers in cities, regional governments, SMEs and NGOs |
| 3 | Transnational integration workshops | Network members, research groups and openly invited |
| 4 | Best practice in innovation infrastructures (organisations, forums, training resources) | Universities and Educational ministries. Other research & development networks and policy-makers, EC |
| 5 | Best practices on dissemination and implementation forms and activities (feed back dialogues, guides) | Universities and Educational ministries. Other research & development networks and policy-makers, EC |
| 6 | Seminars for youth | Young people interested in discussions on sustainable living and sustainable cities. |
| 6 | A marketing web information system | Workshop participants, policy-makers and other networks and projects |
| 7 | A scientific eJournal | Policy-makers and youth. |

3. Partners

The innovations and the challenges of the proposed approach are to create an organised interface between researchers and users, including a mix of people with a diversity of skills, tacit knowledge and other resources. From the Stockholm wider region a part of Effektnet¹ and their hosts will participate.

Partners from three more regions (countries) are desired, from organisations as Research institutions, cities, regional organisations, SMEs and NGOs.

| Partner | Contribution i.e. |
|--|--|
| 4 universities (EDU 4) | Leading partner or co-ordinator of WP |
| 4 cities (PUB 1) | Co-ordinator of WP |
| 4 regional organisations (PUB 2, NGO or SER) | Leading partner or co-ordinator of WP |
| 4 SMEs (SER) | Co-ordinator of WP or participant |
| 4 NGOs | Leading partner, co-ordinator of WP or participant |

The networks will involve a wide range of research and development capacities and experts with relevant competence, related to the prerequisites of each region. Collective competence is seen as an organized cluster of knowledge and expertise, more than the sum of the individual skills and capabilities, because of the synergistic effects. Five types of criteria will be used for the selection of the Swedish regional network, criteria necessary for creating a cluster of knowledge. Similar criteria are desirable for selection of members creating the other regional networks:

Geographic and physical presence of organisations and individuals will enhance learning and innovativity. The Swedish network members are all connected to the wider Stockholm area.

Common culture; There is a need of common culture that makes it possible to transfer knowledge between individuals and organisations. This criteria will be fulfilled in the Stockholm region through the connection to the same geographic area and the relationship to an innovative network of international project leaders, Effektnet.

Changeability; The orientation to international networkers and project leaders used to manage regeneration and changes is a good guarantee for changeability. The use of already submitted projects makes it possible to avoid institutionalisation, mainly due to the principal independence from single stakeholders and political interests.

Critical knowledge base; The need of a broad knowledge base and a diversity of knowledge (different types, different levels), overlapping, will be satisfied by the Effektnet members.

Representative size of members from each type of organisation; The network will have a core of members from the outset. Four representatives each of research institutions, cities, regional organisations, SMEs och NGOs.

4. Relevant European Union Institutions

The proposed work could possibly fit into the Sixth Framework Programme for Research and Development (FP6), priority thematic area "Citizens and Governance in a Knowledge-based society" and more specifically the issues on "citizenship, democracy and new forms of governance".

The context of application will be research elements across priorities of FP6. By the choice of a governance area under an umbrella of "Sustainable City regions", different issues on governance in a knowledge based society may be handled, such as "Social cohesion", "Sustainable development, global change and ecosystems" and "Information Society Technologies".

The proposed work also corresponds to horizontal activities complementary to the thematic ones within FP6. By the creation of regional and intermediary networks, the impact will be enhanced support for anticipated challenges and policies (Specific activity on policy-oriented research) on sustainable city regions. To a certain extent the work also include collective integration and research activities for SMEs and NGOs in the participating regions.

By creating regional and intermediary networks the work also aims at strengthening the foundations for research on the regional level considering regional specificity and for converting R&D results into useful regional benefits. Using a bottom-up approach, the work will support the co-ordination of policy activities on sustainable city regions as well as research and innovation policy.

The work will also respond to the objectives on structuring the European Research Area, through better connections between Science and Society.

¹Effektnet is a network of project leaders around the wider Stockholm area, experienced from transnational work and interested in making synergies for innovative projects., www.oeffektnet.org.