

## **Leipzig Charter Implementation in Medium Size Cities (LECIMED)**

### **Context**

The medium size cities face to huge difficulties and handicaps to deliver integrated and sustainable urban strategy.

Traffic jam difficulties are not enough important to dissuade people to use their cars. The use of car stays attractive. The consequence is that the public transport systems meet difficulties to keep their client and have to face to large financial deficit.

Rural areas with their amenities are often very near from medium size city centre. Residential competition between the core city and the periphery is very high. In this context, the private developers are not very dynamic to promote green headquarters considering that they won't be commercialized. The innovation in residential products is then limited. And it's also a question of volume: the level of new housings in medium size cities show them less attractive than big cities. Private actors are less dynamic in the partnership with local authorities. The presence of large non urbanized spaces around medium size cities limits the public acceptability of restrictions, law limitations in the land use.

Their economic development is less dynamic than metropolitan areas. Globalization leads to a concentration of strategic services in big cities. The lack of economic growth limits their financial capacities. The budgets of local authorities are less important than big cities. But the centrality charges stay very important. They concentrate households with social difficulties. The social housing, the public services are present in these cities and not around them. In a context of concentration of public infrastructures, the medium size cities must accept to pay to keep them if they don't want to see their departure to large metropolitan areas. The keeping of the local university, the local hospital, the local orchestra, the local museum depends more and more the local capacity for local authorities to fund them.

Many other examples could be added to show that to design and to implement a sustainable urban development in medium size cities can't be a transposition of tools, actions implemented in large metropolitan areas.

Medium size cities need to be innovative to promote the use of non pollutant transport system, to fight against urban sprawl, to integrate climate change in their urban development. To sum up the consequences of climate change, the energy dependence have not the intensity and so the visibility they have in large metropolitan areas.

The attractiveness and the competitiveness of Europe are depending of the capacity to maintain a dynamic network of medium size cities. The SDEC (spatial planning document for the European Space) has an objective to maintain this middle-range urban structure. If these cities are declining, Europe will face to huge environmental difficulties. Housing crisis, moving supply, pressures on agricultural and environmental spaces will increase. The development disequilibria between big cities and rural spaces will be reinforced in opposite with the European cohesion policy.

### **The objective of the network**

The objective of the network is to design and to disseminate innovative tools, guidelines and methodological framework to develop sustainable urban development policies in the medium size cities and their areas. We believe that the medium size cities need to propose

something else to make the sustainable city that the model disseminated in big metropolitan areas.

The project will be focused on the delivering of operational solutions to three problems.

***The integration of energy in the elaboration of local and strategic land use plans***

In urban planning, the energetic issue is often limited at the conception of new buildings. Existing technical knowledge in local authorities and private consultancy limits the opportunity to make energy an input in the design of urban strategy.

The project will achieve the objective to disseminate examples of best practises to make energy the strategic issue in the design of urban development strategies. The link between the reduction GES and decision making process in the localisation of new residential extensions will be illustrated. Examples of urban development strategies to obtain an energetic independence at local scale in medium size cities will be disseminated.

***The way to develop low energetic new buildings at affordable cost***

In metropolitan areas, new zero energy emission neighbourhoods are building. Such residential projects have more difficulties to exist in the medium size cities. Social group having environmental preoccupations are less dynamic. Financial capacities of households are more limited (high value jobs are less present). Very attractive residential areas exist closely the city centre in rural areas.

The project will show innovative processes to build low energetic consumption new buildings in medium size cities: technical processes, public involvement (subsidies).

***The strategic planning orientations to limit the centre/periphery concurrence for residential attractiveness in the medium size cities areas***

The project will develop best practises to fight against urban sprawl at urban-rural scales. Several fields will be investigated: urban planning regulation, land use strategies, local taxes or refunding mechanisms. The project will work on the settlement of financial mechanism to give a sort of indemnity for the rural areas that would accept to limit their residential development.

***The alternative responses at big and expansion public transport infrastructures in the organization of the mobility system***

The limitation of GES emission by cars is often treated in large metropolitan by the delivering of new public transport infrastructures. The medium size cities have neither the population weight nor the budget to fund a metro or tramway network.

The project will examine the responses implemented in the medium size cities to limit the use of private cars. Technical choices will be detailed and compared. But the project will treat also the public transport funding. The financial mechanisms set up at large urban-rural scales will be presented.

## **The method proposed**

The method will be based on two main principles:

- A dynamic articulation between the local support group and the thematic network
- A mobilization of the managing authorities, the commission services and The European Bank of Investment at different steps of the project to increase the operational implementation of the proposals.

## **Contact**

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