

TRANSNATIONAL MEETINGS GUIDEBOOK

Some general guidelines for the organization of transnational meetings...



URBACT Thematic Network

Sustainable Food in Urban Communities

Brussels, January 2013

The URBACT Thematic Network "Sustainable Food in Urban Communities" is a project involving 10 European cities that wish to grow, deliver and enjoy more sustainable food: they are looking for joint, effective and sustainable solutions to develop low-carbon and resource-efficient urban food systems.

Partners will exchange knowledge and experience on sustainable food through 6 thematic workshops and 2 conferences to produce joint outputs and feed their local action plans.

This "Transnational Meeting Guidebook" is intended to help partners prepare and animate transnational meeting by proposing a format, a preparation process, content as well as a series of animation tools.

The "Transnational Meeting Guidebook" includes the Workshop animation toolkit from page 33.

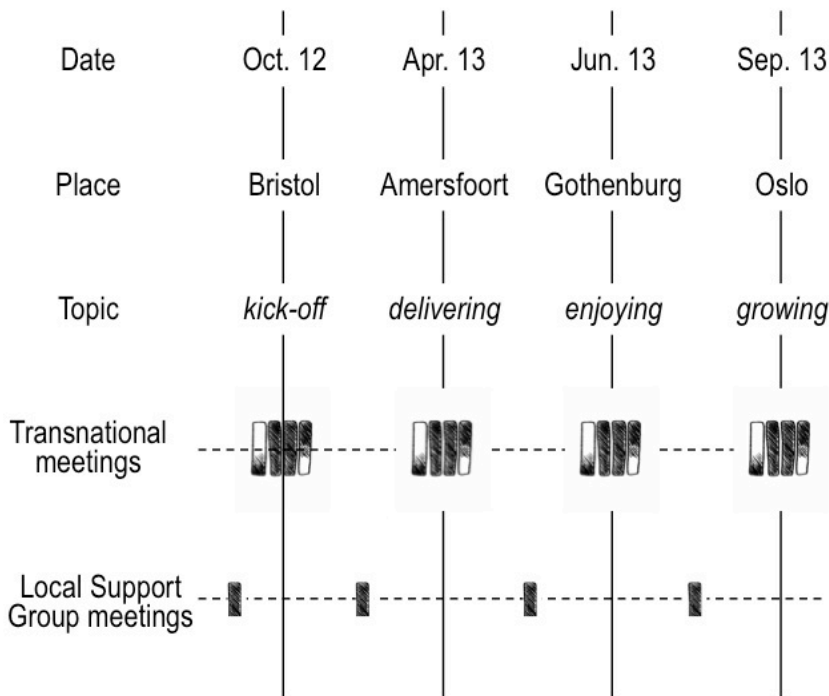
URBACT mini-site: <http://urbact.eu/sustainable-food>

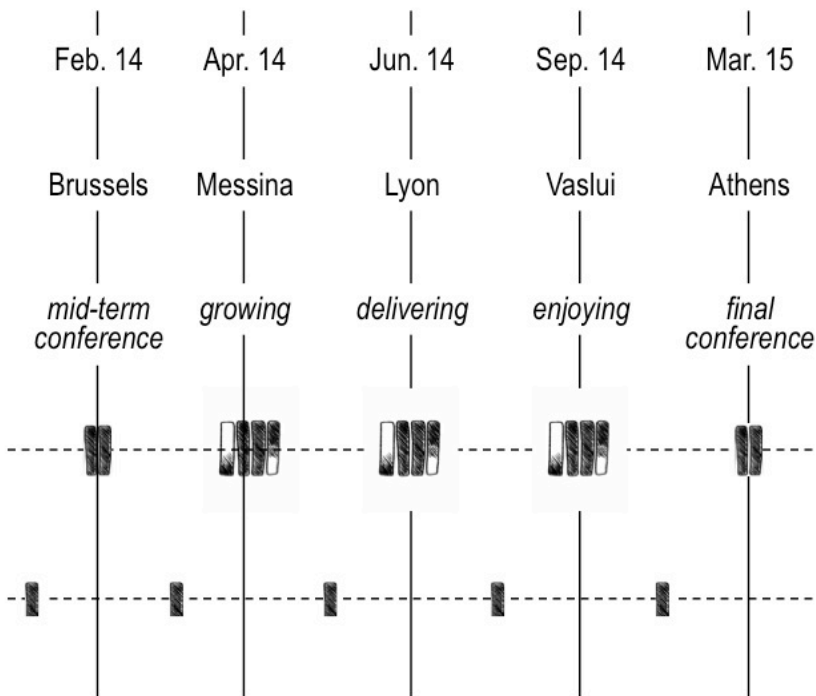
Project blog:

www.sustainable-everyday-project.net/urbact-sustainable-food

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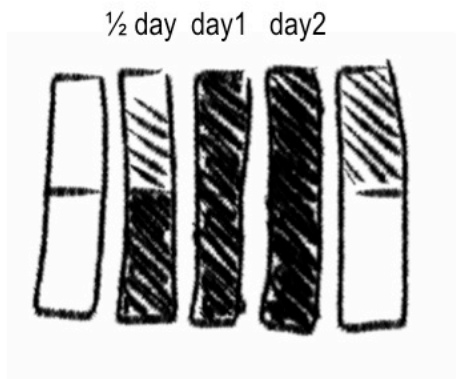
Meeting length

2,5 days of activities (either option 1 arriving the evening before and departing on the last afternoon or option 2 arriving in the morning of the first day and departing on the day after the last day);

Option 1:



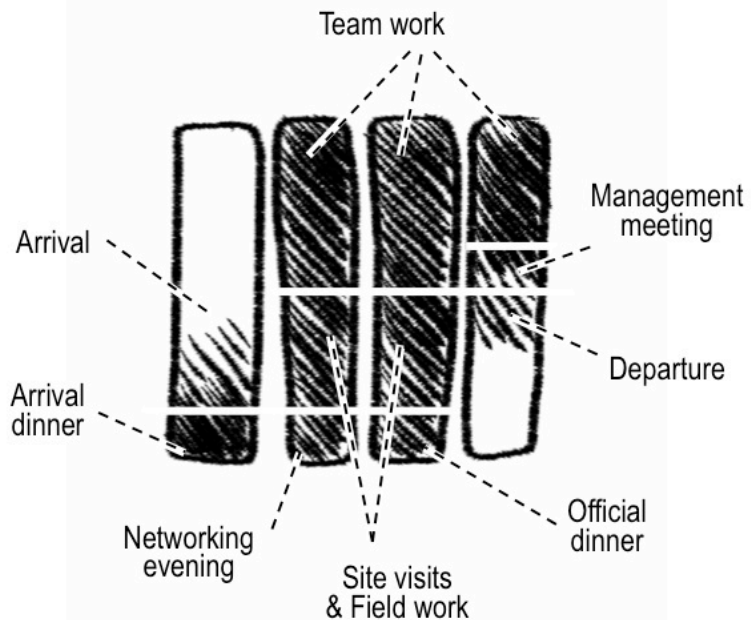
Option 2:



Allocation of time

3 half days dedicated to team work (preferably in the morning); 2 half days dedicated to site visits/field work (preferably in the afternoon); 1 session dedicated to project management; 1 evening dedicated to networking with local support group; 1 evening with social dinner;

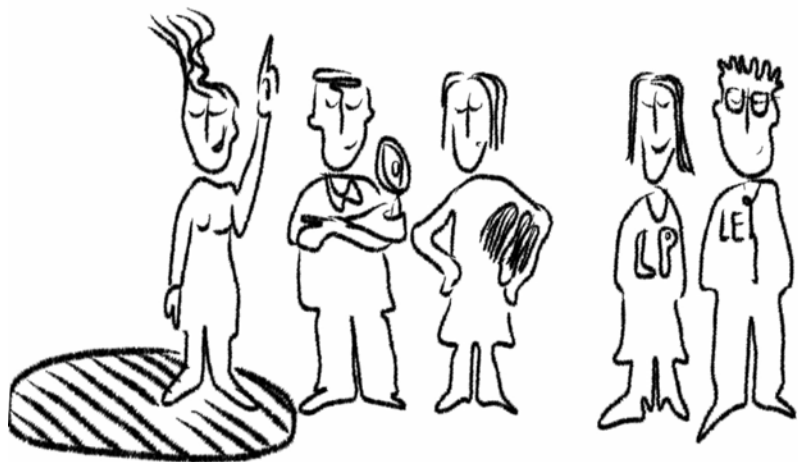
One of the 2 complete days should be organized in order to be attractive for local (or transnational) stakeholder such as elected representatives, local authorities, policy makers from other departments, etc. that may be invited to experience the URBACT Thematic Network and get an insight into sustainable urban food issues (i.e. one day concentrating presentations on *growing/delivering/enjoying* rather than internal work; keynote speech if any or discussions with invited Thematic Experts; field work scheduled beyond site visits; no internal/administrative session...);



Meeting organization

For each transnational meeting an ad hoc organization team constituted by local host, her/his *growing, delivering* or *enjoying* team, lead partner and lead expert.

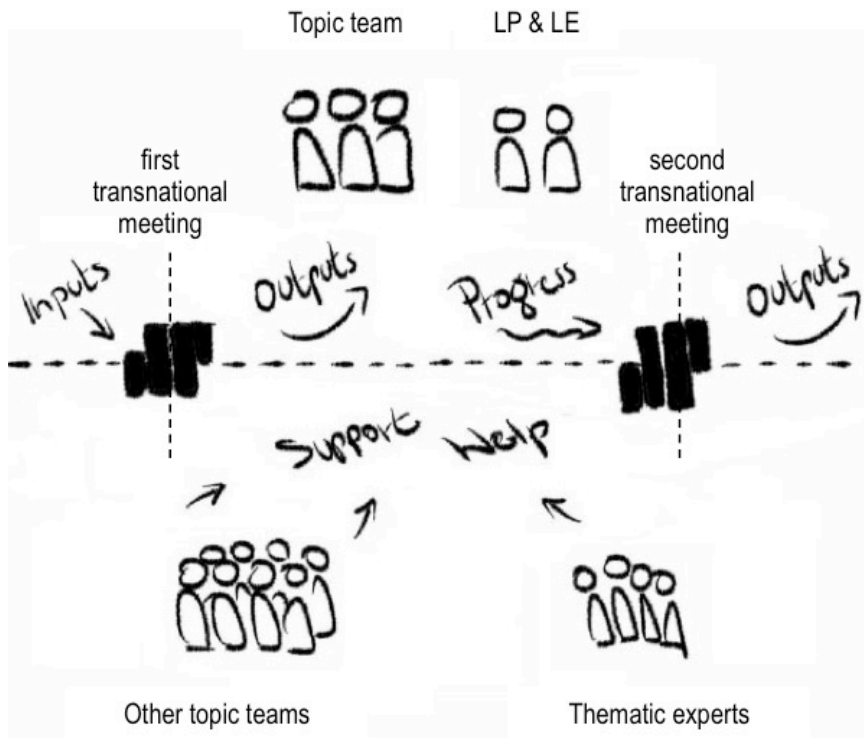
Topic Team



Preparation of content

Each meeting is dedicated to a specific topic: *growing*, *delivering* or *enjoying*. The corresponding topic team is responsible for gathering the inputs for the first meeting and ensuring content progress for the second topic specific meeting. All partners should contribute to each of the topics as well as the lead partner and lead expert.

Concentration of the work as much as possible during the meeting in order to limit the preparation work before and the elaboration work after the meetings;



Topic team

In each of the 3 topic teams (*growing*, *delivering* or *enjoying*), 3 different roles have been assigned:

- *Animation*: organize the work for the specific topic, propose a work plan for the implementation phase, organize with LP and LE the activities of each of the 2 partners meetings dedicated to the topic;
- *Research*: lead the research on the topic, build bibliography, look for case studies and gather sources of information from within and outside the 10 partner cities;
- *Deliverables*: take the responsibility for dispatching, collecting and integrating written contributions and make sure that a summary is provided after each meeting and deliverables at mid-term and final stages.



Planning main stages:

3 months before meeting:

Participating Partners agree on the meeting date;

Person responsible for animation to provide a work plan with their topic team lead partner and lead expert;

2 months before meeting:

Meeting of Local Support Groups in each city and gathering information on: city activities (more in depth inventory of activities past/present/foreseen); resources to share (available reports on the topic to build joint knowledge base/reference list); main challenge(s) to address locally; specific question(s) to raise in transnational discussion/deliverables; speakers to invite or cities to visit on this subject; etc.

Host to define the draft meeting program (meeting places booked, schedule for local authorities and local support group, site visits and speakers proposal) with person responsible for animation for the topic plus

lead expert and lead partner.

1 month before meeting:

Online meeting between topic team, lead partner and lead expert;

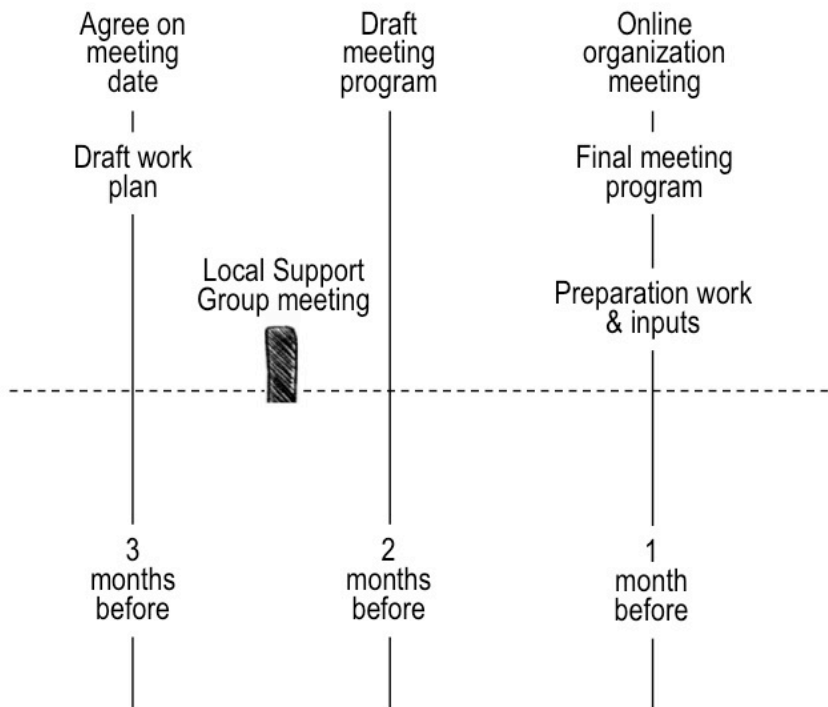
Person responsible for research for the topic to dispatch preparation work and organize the inputs/contributions to feed the meeting along the 3 half days of team work;

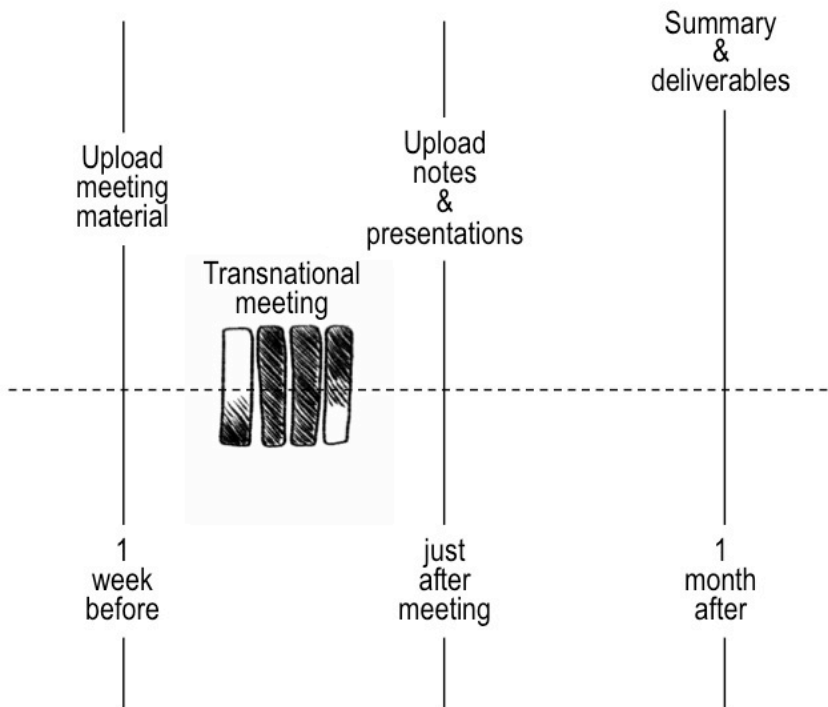
Person responsible for animation for the topic to finalise meeting program (with precise schedule, activities along the 2 1/2 days, animations and interaction tools to be used...);

1 week before the meeting:

Person responsible for research to upload preparation material such as papers, slides, summaries, etc. for all participants to read before the meeting;

Person responsible for animation appoints rapporteurs to take notes and draft minutes for various sessions of the meeting.





Just after the meeting:

Person responsible for deliverables to dispatch and organize reporting among partners, upload notes and presentations;

Within 1 month after the meeting:

Person responsible for deliverables produces and shares draft thematic report.

Within 2 months after the meeting:

All partners suggest improvements and the report is adopted.

Meeting program

Six of the participating partners will host transnational thematic workshops. Each transnational workshop shall put a special focus on one topic (*growing, delivering or enjoying*) while associated field visits will provide concrete examples of three topic (to reflect the variety of local actions in the field).

In each thematic workshop and report the key crosscutting questions will systematically be considered.

3 half-days of teamwork:

Each half-day of team work should be dedicated to explore and develop the topic in the light of one of the crosscutting issue. The issues can be addressed in any order but it may be desirable to group issues 2 and 3 as they are more specific to a given theme.

Issue 1: Governance, synergies & local system

How can we link multiple promising food practices, develop synergies, increase resilience and generate the vision of a coherent local food system?

This question applies to all 3 topics combined (*growing, delivering, enjoying*). It requires learning from each other's food governance approaches (e.g. Bristol's Food policy council, Amersfoort's bottom-up facilitation...), drawing on the URBACT methodology & capacity building related to Local Support Groups and Local Action Plans.

It requires an initial inventory/mapping of what is already in place in the partner cities in the area of sustainable food, in order to each take targeted actions to generate synergies, upscale initiatives and strengthen the local food system.



Issue 2: Social Inclusion, jobs & economics:

How can we leverage on a sustainable food transition to reduce food poverty, foster (re)engagement with growing and cooking food, support inclusion of marginalised and underprivileged population groups and enhance cohesion between communities? How can we consolidate promising food practices, transform them into sustainable businesses and upscale sustainable food initiatives to reach a larger share of the population?

Examples of how this question relates to the 3 topics:

- *Growing*: What is the economic importance of the local sustainable food production and transformation sector? What is the job creation or preservation potential in this area, notably for unqualified agricultural workers? What business models exist to upscale pilot farms and make them viable in the long term? How can local communities and marginalised or vulnerable population groups be involved in growing projects and benefit from them?

- *Delivering*: What is the economic importance of the sustainable food distribution sector? What is the job creation or preservation potential in this



area, notably through the start-up of new means of distribution and a shift of existing actors? What business models exist to step-up from a niche market and ensure access of local producers to local markets? How can local communities strengthen their ties and take an active role through purchasing groups and other bottom-up projects? How can commercial retail be complemented by social groceries to ensure fair access?

- *Enjoying*: What is the economic importance of sustainable food demand (both private consumption and public canteens) as a lever to drive supply? What is the job creation or preservation potential in this area, notably through a shift in public procurement practices and in the services provided by catering? How can purchasing of food be made more sustainable and remain affordable within a limited budget for households and public bodies (through redefinition of menus, lowering the share of animal protein in favour of vegetables & legumes, use of locally available produce...) with special attention to accessibility for low-income households? Reaching out to population groups less easily reached by communications on sustainable food (multi-cultural, low-income households...)

Issue 3: CO₂ & resources efficiency:

How can we assess and improve promising food practices in order to reduce emissions and impact on resources and energy?

Examples of how this question relates to the 3 topics:

- *Growing*: Considering the carbon footprint and resource efficiency of various urban agriculture methods (greenhouses, aquaponics, indoor production...) and which growing practices should be promoted on environmental grounds in the local context. Avoid wastage at production stage.
- *Delivering*: Assessing the relative importance of transport distances and logistics to the city and within the city in terms of carbon footprint and resource efficiency. Avoid wastage along the food chain.
- *Enjoying*: Enable informed consumer and public procurement decisions with regards to carbon footprint and resource efficiency of different options. Foster behavioural change for more sustainable practices (purchasing, storage, cooking) and avoid food wastage.”



2 site visits/field work half-days:

+++ Each of the 2 half-days of site visits/field work should be organized to support the team work on the topic of the meeting as much as possible.

+++ The choice of the initiatives/places to visit shouldn't aim at giving a touristic exhaustive view of the city's best practices in terms of sustainable food (as was the case during the lead expert visits in the preparation phase) but rather to show in priority what is different, new, exceptional for the other participating partners (based on the baseline profiles and synthesis);

+++ Visits are an opportunity to experience different realities; meet outstanding people as well as collaborate and develop work with them. Therefore, several team activities should be organized in the field during the visits:

Workshop animation toolkit

The following part of this handbook presents 7 tools proposed for team building, local diagnostic, animation of both transnational meetings, local support groups meeting and the interaction between them.

Their aim is to try out new tools and methods that could be adopted by the local support groups and carried on regularly or on a recurrent basis:

For each of the tools you'll find:

- A short description including why it is pertinent for strengthening the LSG and feeding the LAP;
- A proposed schedule for first implementation and training of participating partners in using the tool;
- Tips and notes describing concretely how to implement it, giving tips for organizers and examples.

This part constitutes the Workshop animation toolkit deliverable.

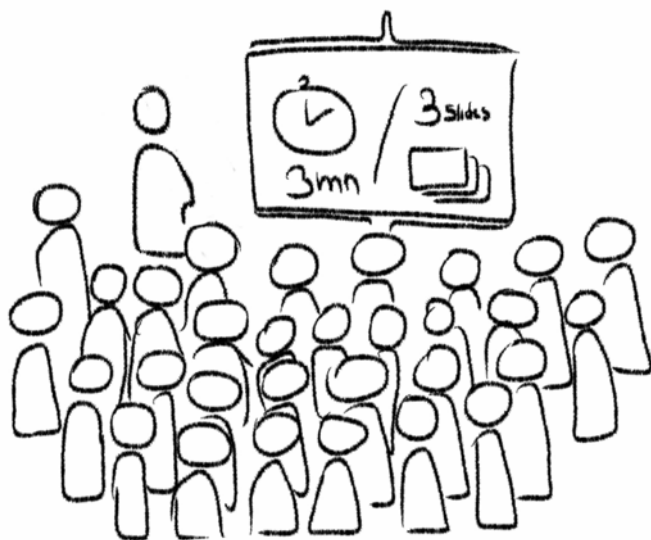
SPEED PRESENTATION EVENING

Speed presentation evenings (*pecha kucha* style) based on a '3 slides / 3 minutes format' provides rapid insights to local and foreign experiences and a subsequent opportunity for informal direct exchanges. It is an opportunity for the transnational partners to present one case of their city that they think will be particularly inspiring and new for the local support group. It is also for the hosting city the moment to show an exhaustive panorama of the best and most promising practices of the city in particular initiatives that could not be shown during the site visits.

The aim of such networking evenings at local level is to ensure that all stakeholders involved in sustainable food in the city have met at least once all other stakeholders involve in sustainable food in the city. Therefore, this activity is initiated locally in the occasion of a transnational meeting.

Schedule proposed

First tested at the transnational meeting in Bristol (16/10/12). To be organized at each transnational meeting and continued regularly by Local Support Groups (e.g. monthly or quarterly) in each cities to strengthen links within the sustainable food community,



Tips & notes for implementation:

- Invite about 9 local presenters to back-up the presenters from the 9 invited cities;
- Make sure to explain the 'rules of the game' well in advance and check that all local presenters are comfortable with the preparation of the 4 slides template (good, large images rather than too many words);
- Focus on cases (no generic presentations of cities or problems...) and make sure that you get a dynamic cocktail between local and international cases. The secret of a good speed presentation evening is the DJ: like with mixing music, you need two cases that echo each other and resonate. ...
- Send invitations all around: it's an evening show on sustainable food in the city (not an official meeting of an EU project). More people than environmentalists and the foodies community might be interested;
- Organize the evening with someone playing the role of moderator and shortly introducing each speaker. All the slides on one computer with 1 black slide between each presentation;
- 3 min. sharp and drinks at the very end!

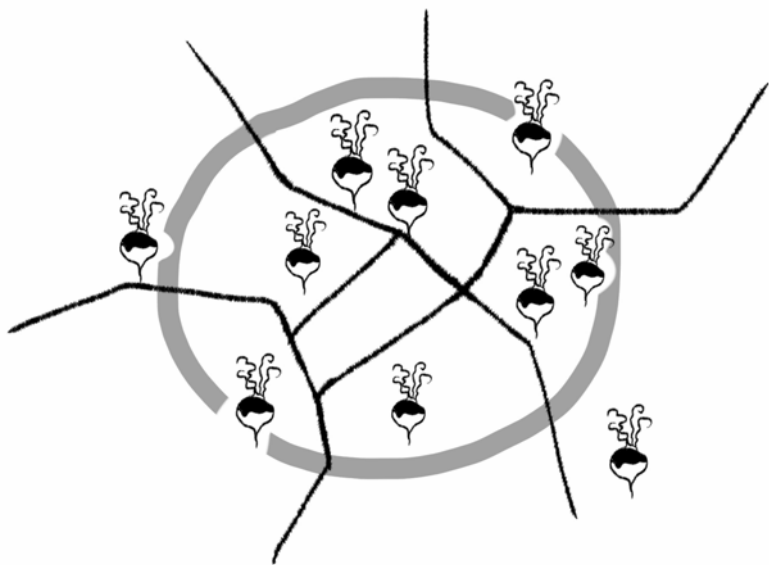
OPEN SOURCE URBAN FOOD MAP

An overview of all projects, initiatives, players, ideas in progress, etc. geared towards sustainable food in all of the 3 topics *growing*, *delivering* and *enjoying* is a very good basis for the stakeholders gain a panoramic view of what is going on in their city. It is especially useful for local authorities involved in linking, synergizing the bottom-up food movement with the top-down urban food policies.

An open source map using existing online ready-to-use tools (such as *GreenMap*) could be implemented in any of the participating cities and continuously fed by the local stakeholders themselves.

Schedule proposed:

To be tested at the meeting in Amersfoort (early 2013). Consequently, to be initiated by all participating partners cities (if not yet existing).



Tips & notes for implementation:

- It is possible to develop such a specific tool starting from Google maps or using dedicated software. But sustainable mapping initiatives have already produced online platforms with ready-to-use (and generally low cost) tools. 'Green Map' is one of the most famous ones that started in the US and now offers any city the possibility to initiate an open and collaborative mapping of sustainable hot spots in general;
- Our focus is on food but keep the process as open as possible to any other sustainable initiatives: URBACT is the motivation to initiate the mapping process in your city and beyond food issues, many other type of initiatives in terms of mobility, housing, health, etc. public or private, grassroots or institutional could be added, enrich your city map and create synergies with the food field;
- Make it an open participative process: stakeholders must feel invited and free to fill-in the map using already organized categories (i.e. citizen's initiative; community gardens; organic shops; etc.) and self-assessment criteria or descriptions. It is not intended as a certified and well-structured map (no official label or public guaranty of reliability): the main scope is to give visibility.

RESILIENCE TEST

Qualitative assessment of the food resilience/non resilience of the city: a series of challenges are proposed in terms of food and stakeholders discuss and assess the resilience of their city.

The aim of the Resilience test tool is first to raise awareness among local stakeholders about weaknesses of their city's food system and, more importantly, to make them acknowledge these weaknesses collectively. The results of this Resilience test sets the basis for raising in reaction a first set of actions and organize them into a draft LAP.

Schedule proposed:

First trial at the transnational workshop in Gothenburg – ideally the LSG meets in the late afternoon (in parallel to the project partners' site visits) for 2 hours of 'resilience test' and reports directly the results during the *Speed Presentation Evening*. To be organized once locally by all participating partners cities during one of the LSG meeting in 2013 (before mid-term conference in Brussels early 2014)



Tips & notes for implementation:

- Start preparation with some close participants of the LSG and imagine some tough challenges for the city's food system such as:
 - A huge strike blocks all outside food supplies: what happens? How long does the city resist?
 - A deepening of the food crisis on international markets: prices boom! How does the city react to first food riots?
 - Oil peak and energy price booming: costs of fertilizers, mechanized agriculture, and food transport increase dramatically: what's next?
 - Junk food kills! Proved by medical studies. Demonstrations in the street against health-damaging food!
 - Repeated cuts in public budgets: no subsidies for agriculture, schools canteens and food banks?
- Make sure to adapt the challenges to the local and national context;
- Read all challenges to the LSG. Leave 30 min. to discuss among them in sub-groups and draw a mind map. 5 min. presentations and collective ranking of the city's resilience weak points...

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MICRO-CONSULTING

A local initiative/project hosts a visit and asks the visitors in exchange for a micro-consulting on a problem they face. A specific question is asked in advance and participating visitors use their own experiences to find solutions.

The aim of the Micro-consulting tool is first to stimulate the field visits during transnational meetings. Beyond engaging the representatives of the participating partners into active visiting, the result is to apply the multiples know-hows available directly to local cases, as well as the experiences and cultural points of view they represent. If not all, key actions of the LAP could benefit from this booster and align to best practices.

Schedule proposed:

First trial proposed at transnational workshop in Oslo in late 2013. To be organized at least once by all participating partner cities during transnational meetings or Local Support Group Meetings.



Tips & notes for implementation:

- The Micro-consulting session should be prepared in advance: it cannot be improvised in the last minute or as a round table of comments;
- Define a clear and concise question that the host initiative will ask to the visiting consortium: *how can we justify private food production on public land? How can we involve the local inhabitants?* etc. rather than vague *what do you think of our initiative?* Possibly match in advance capabilities you know are available in the consortium with potential local requests;
- Elaborate the question with the local partners when you set the visit. Pay attention to the fact that the local partner should be comfortable with what will be asked and with language issues;
- Express clearly the 'rules of the game' as: *shorter visit focused around the question; ensure a comfortable place for everyone but not necessarily seated; rephrase and explain the question for 5 min.; visiting consultants each prepare 1 response they would like to develop; round of consulting proposals; local host to choose 4 contributions; each contributors presents for 5 min.; local host wraps up in 5 min. lessons learnt (videotaped);*

BLOCKER CHECK

Persons developing local projects/initiatives review together r hurdles encountered (legislative problems, multilevel governance issues...) and list them with priorities to be discussed with local authorities. The aim of the Blocker check tool is to give visibility and share among stakeholders the main barriers and difficulties encountered by the stakeholders themselves in the implementation of a local sustainable food system. This apparently simplistic process reveals first that a minor part of these blockers may decrease or find solutions by the simple fact of acknowledging them within the LSG arena. The majority of more resistant blockers are then clearly identified and may be addressed by specific actions and measures in the LAP.

Schedule proposed:

First trial at transnational workshop in Messina in early 2014 – ideally the LSG meets in the late afternoon (in parallel to PPs site's visits) for 2 hours of 'blocker check' and reports directly the results during the *Speed Presentation Evening*. To be organized once by all participating partners cities during one of the Local Support Group meetings in the second half of project duration (after the mid-term conference in Brussels).



Tips & notes for implementation:

- The tool is simple: make a list of blockers. The tricky issues are to find out what the actual blockers are and to acknowledge a shared understanding among local stakeholders involved...
- Organize the session first as a creative brainstorming:
 - Participants alone first write on cards the 3 main obstacles they meet in their own project;
 - Cards are shared in subgroups, discussed, enriched;
 - A ranking of top-ten blockers is agreed in plenary.
- The second part of the session should look like a problem solving back-casting:
 - New subgroups take a card and draw a time line 2013-2018 on a paperboard landscape;
 - The card is pasted upside down to the right: in 2018 the blocker has been removed!
 - Subgroup reviews local actions and place them on the timeline in order to build a solving scenario;
 - Key actions beneficial for removing key blockers are inserted in the LAP.

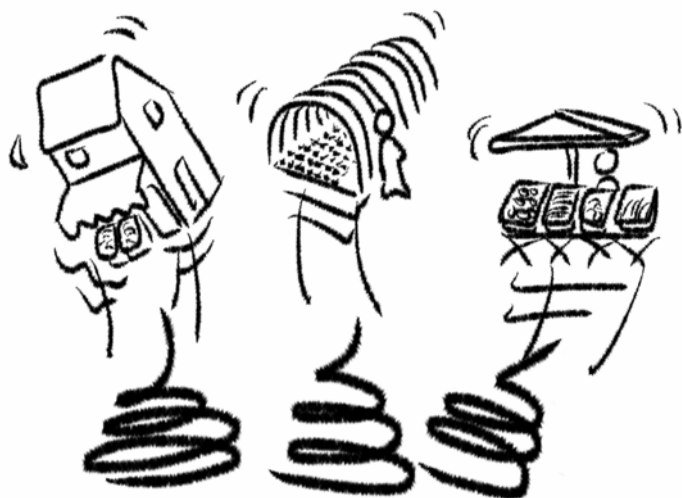
BUSINESS LAUNCH PAD

Creative sessions specifically dedicated to develop new business models and invent new green jobs from promising initiatives visited.

The aim of the set of Business launch pad tools is to transform single bottom-up initiatives into tentative self-standing businesses able to upscale the local sustainable food system and generate jobs. LSG platforms serve as efficient incubators: all key stakeholders are represented, connected and able to both stimulate and support local entrepreneurship. The tentative new business solutions emerging are stimulating inspirations to enrich and orient the LAP.

Schedule proposed:

First trial at transnational meeting in Lyon in mid-2014. To be organized at least once by all participating partners cities during transnational meetings or by their Local Support Group on its own.



Tips & notes for implementation:

- Organize it as a role playing game. Assign roles to the consortium participants according to their skills and interests: business entrepreneurs, local authorities, key stakeholders from the growing-delivering-enjoying chain; etc.
- Possibly invite locals to play the role of potential clients;
- Choose 2-3 local initiatives with a high potential to generate business and employment. Invite 1-2 representatives to present their experience. Possibly prepare with them a rich and concise series of slides with pictures and available data:
 - The context of the initiative and its motivation(s);
 - The key innovation(s) and how it works;
 - Barriers, enablers and perspectives.
- Organize a 40 min. 'business challenge' per initiatives:
 - 5 min. presentation of the initiative;
 - 5 min. Q&A
 - 2 competing teams (each with participants taking on the various stakeholder roles) filling-in a Business Model Canvas -like template for 20 min.;
 - 5 min. presentations by each team (videotaped).

VISIONING

Involve Local Support Group to build a collective vision of sustainable food in 2040 in their city.

The aim of envisioning tools is to enable the LSG to collectively build a representation of a future local urban sustainable food system. This medium term vision helps to create convergence between heterogeneous stakeholders groups and facilitates the shaping of a coherent and shared LAP.

Schedule proposed:

The first trial took place in Brussels at the first transnational meeting (30/5/2012). Initial visions produced in Brussels shall be up-dated based on progress made during the mid-term conference in Brussels (early 2014). A final version of the city's visions shall be up-dated during the final conference in Athens (early 2015).



Tips & notes for implementation:

- Building a synchronised medium-term vision of what is desirable requires knowing where we would like to go collectively: this seems to be obvious but acknowledged concrete future visions (beyond wishful thinking) are very often lacking!
- What is the rationale?
 - *Desirable*: no black scenario, only positive;
 - *Medium-term*: not right now and not in a lost future;
 - Synchronised: no bits and pieces but a coherent food system likely to work;
 - Acknowledged: one step beyond m.a.y.a. (most advanced yet accepted);
- This is not an official vision but rather a 'vision for thought' and triggering questions: is it really the future we want? Is it a desirable way of living? Is it realistic medium-term? Is it coherent? Do we all agree?
- Take inspiration from existing cases. Assemble pictures in a slide show presenting how your city food system may look like in 10 years. Wrap-up the vision by telling a 5 min. story in front of the slide show. Display it offline and online as 'a possible vision' and trigger social conversations.

Design:
Strategic Design Scenarios
January 2013



Sustainable Food in Urban Communities

"The 10 partners of the URBACT Thematic Network "Sustainable Food in Urban Communities" are:

- Brussels Environment of the Brussels Capital Region (Lead Partner) (Belgium),
- the Bristol City Council (United Kingdom),
- City of Messina (Italy),
- the Municipality of Amersfoort (Netherlands),
- the City of Lyon (France),
- the City of Göteborg (Sweden),
- Vaslui Municipality (Romania),
- Ourense City Council (Spain),
- City of Oslo (Norway) and
- Athens development and destination management agency sa (Greece).