



**TRANS-URBAN
EU-CHINA**

Research & Innovation
on Urban Transition



KNOWLEDGE SHARING GUIDEBOOK

DECEMBER 2020
DELIVERABLE 5.6



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TRANS-URBAN-EU-CHINA

Transition towards urban sustainability through socially integrative cities in the EU and China

Deliverable

D5.6 Knowledge sharing guidebook

WP5 Living Labs, exploitation and dissemination

Task 5.2 Reference Cities

Sub-task 5.2.2 Provide guidance to cities

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

1.1 ABOUT TRANS-URBAN-EU-CHINA

Cities are places of social innovation and engines of economic growth. This is true for most global urban development, but especially relevant for China. Promoted by various levels of government, the country is transitioning from a majorly rural society to a more urbanised society with intense focus on land use and an improved quality of life.

One of the greatest challenges facing Chinese urbanisation is how to best design and turn cities into intelligent, socially integrative and sustainable environments. TRANS-URBAN-EU-CHINA has aimed to help policy makers, urban authorities, real estate developers, public service providers and citizens in China and Europe to create socially integrative cities in an environmentally friendly and financially viable way. Moreover, it has helped urban stakeholders in Europe and China to reflect and eventually reconsider their approaches towards sustainable urbanisation.

The project has focused on four main strands of work: (a) community building and place-making in neighbourhoods; (b) bridging the planning-implementation gap in eco and smart cities; (c) land use planning and land management in new urban expansion and urban renewal areas, and (d) transition pathways to sustainable urban planning and governance.

A fifth strand of work has facilitated, coordinated, and documented interaction with urban stakeholders in European and Chinese cities, Living Labs, the URBAN-EU-CHINA project (UEC), and other urban stakeholder representatives of authorities, industry, research, and citizens. The objectives of this work have been to:

- Test, consolidate and transfer the project's research outcomes with a number of Chinese Living Labs.
- Promote and facilitate exchange of knowledge and good practices with selected cities in the EU and China.
- Communicate project results to URBAN-EU-CHINA¹ project's Strategic R&I Agenda and Evidence Base.
- Communicate, disseminate, exploit and broker TRANS-URBAN-EU-CHINA results towards third stakeholder organisations.

1.2 OVERVIEW OF THE TRANS-URBAN-EU-CHINA ACTIVITIES TO PROVIDE GUIDANCE TO CITIES

TRANS-URBAN-EU-CHINA offered guidance and support to cities in order to facilitate the uptake of the project results and to promote the exchange of knowledge and good practices among cities in the EU and China. At the core of this process lay the three editions of the annual 'European cities working with China' workshops organised in the framework of the Eurocities Annual Conferences, as well as a

¹ EU-funded project that ended in December 2019, more information can be found on: <http://www.urban-eu-china.eu/en/>

series of online seminars organised by Eurocities and featuring the technical partners of the project in various capacities.

The TRANS-URBAN-EU-CHINA peer-learning and training events were carried out both onsite and online, with an overall participation of city representatives from more than 72 European cities.

At the time of the proposal (2017) two types of events offering guidance to cities were foreseen:

- Workshops
- Online Seminars

TRANS-URBAN-EU-CHINA organised three peer-learning workshops (two onsite and one online), and eight online seminars.

This knowledge sharing guidebook is meant to offer practical advice to any organisation or city authority interested in repeating (or initiating) knowledge sharing activities related to the project's content or good practices upscaling.

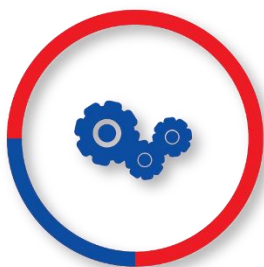


WHY TRAINING AND PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING?

WHY TRAINING AND PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING?

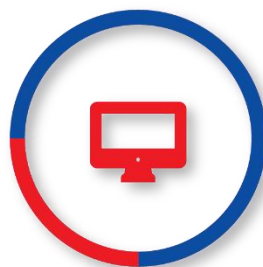
Peer-to-peer learning is an excellent instrument for improving the implementation of cities' policies and strategies. It is based on the idea that people who work on similar issues and have similar roles and working backgrounds in their cities can share experiences and learn from each other. These people are usually called 'peers' and can be city experts, decision makers or local stakeholders. 'Peers' share a common understanding of and interest in fostering socially integrative cities in an environmentally friendly and financially viable way. In many ways they face similar challenges, need to find solutions to similar problems and look for corresponding solutions, projects and alliances. Hence, sharing experiences and solutions with each other can help them to improve their projects, organisational structures and ways of thinking and working.

Peer-to-peer learning is part of a wider collection of training methods that cities can use to exchange knowledge and best practices. In this guidebook, three methods of training and peer-to-peer learning are presented. Each one has its own strengths and unique advantages and cities are advised to build a portfolio of different methods to maximise the flow of knowledge and skills that they can reach and benefit from.



WORKSHOPS:

engage in focused discussion and action



ONLINE SEMINARS:

collaborate in the most cost- and time-efficient way



STUDY VISITS:

be inspired by successful projects

The background of the slide features a photograph of the Dresden Frauenkirche, a large Baroque church with a prominent dome. The image is partially obscured by large, overlapping geometric shapes: a light blue triangle in the top left, a dark blue triangle in the middle left, and a large red diamond in the foreground. The text 'THREE LEARNING METHODS FOR CITIES' is centered within the red diamond.

THREE LEARNING METHODS FOR CITIES

Each method comes with its strengths and advantages. Check them all to decide which one better serves your objectives and fits your time, budget and needs.

3.1 PEER-LEARNING WORKSHOP

What is a workshop?

A workshop is a meeting at which a group of people engage in intensive discussion and activity on a particular subject or project. During a workshop, participants carry out a number of activities interactively rather than passively listening to a lecture or presentation. In the context of peer-to-peer learning among cities, a workshop can be organised either by one city (e.g. on the occasion of a launching a new project or service) or a facilitator (e.g. a network like Eurocities or a project like TRANS-URBAN-EU-CHINA) that brings together experts and city practitioners for the benefit of the latter. In addition, a workshop can vary in duration from a one-hour session (e.g. as part of a larger event or visit) up to a one-day event in which participants deal with various aspects of a topic or a number of different, linked topics.

Why host or join a workshop?

A workshop is an opportunity to bring a number of high-skilled experts and speakers on a specific topic into the same room for a well-defined goal. From the side of the host, this can be an opportunity to offer a quality service to its members or staff, advance the joint knowledge and skills of the participants, promote its success stories or set an example of its policies and projects. This list is not exhaustive and depends on the nature and aims of the host to define the reasons for organising a workshop.

There are many reasons why a city expert will join a workshop. Some of them are: Getting the tools to do his/her job better, bringing back new knowledge and evidence of good practices to the city and his/her department, evolving scientifically and staying in touch with recent developments, preparing for advancement or change of work assignment.

Identify priorities and needs

The topic of a workshop can be defined either by the host or by a group of experts that agree on their priorities and needs. In the latter case, the host should work closely with the interested participants in defining the content and format of the workshop or in identifying the most suitable speakers.

HOW TO ORGANISE A WORKSHOP:

PLANNING:

The host defines the goals of the workshop

The host selects the speakers and they jointly define the content

The host defines the detailed structure of the workshop

PREPARATION:

The host arranges the date, place and logistics of the workshop

The host identifies the target audience, invites participants and introduces the speakers to them

The speakers discuss the flow and content of the workshop and ask the participants for input material

The host and/or the speakers gather and provide useful information ahead of time

THE WORKSHOP:

Speakers introduce the topic and the new knowledge that will be acquired with the workshop

All participants interact with the speakers and among each other and work on the workshop's material

The host ensures the proper operation of equipment, availability of materials, proper documentation and notetaking during the event

The project context

In the context of the TRANS-URBAN-EU-CHINA project, peer learning workshops were used to introduce cities to the project, framing it as an open knowledge source from which useful material was available. At the same time, the workshops provided a forum for cities to strengthen their sustainable and socially integrative cooperation with China by exchanging on their professional experiences. The information flow works both ways in such settings, as hearing about the kinds of cooperation that cities had or wished to have with China allowed the facilitator, Eurocities, to better select project topics for dissemination that were likely to be of use to this target audience.

How to make a workshop more effective

- Think about your audience and what you're trying to communicate and decide what learning style fits best. For more complex topics, it's useful to use two or even three styles, to make sure that all participants are part of the workshop.
- Estimate how long it will take you to complete each section. You might find you've got too much. If this happens, you need to decide whether you can use a different learning style (for example, cutting down on feedback), or if you need to lose a topic.
- Don't scrimp on time for group discussion and feedback for the sake of packing everything into one day – rather cut down the number of topics you're trying to cover.
- Remember to factor in breaks, and time at the end for an evaluation form. Always build in some flexibility in time – if the participants have lots of questions, you should give yourself some leeway to answer them without rushing the rest of the day.
- Mark down which materials you'll need. This might include a flipchart, pens, post it notes, a handout or slides. You might put some handouts in delegate packs, or you might hand them out as you explain each exercise. Once you've got your list, you can prepare it in advance, so you've got everything you need on the day.
- It is essential to ensure that the right kinds of knowledge are in the room, given the questions framed in advance. There's nothing more frustrating than a group finding itself halfway through a discussion only to realise that they cannot answer the questions, or even understand the problem sufficiently.

FOLLOW UP:

The host develops a follow-up report with key take-aways and relevant links to materials

The host asks the participants and speakers to evaluate the event (e.g. with a survey)

The host certifies the attendance (optional)

FOLLOW UP WORKSHOP:

A 2nd (or more) workshop or module is organised to continue or dig deeper in the topic

- Involve the participants. For example, ask participants to share their experiences with the topic of the workshop. Many trainees are experienced personnel who have valuable information to contribute. All trainees will get more out of sessions by hearing about their co-workers' experiences with the subject—and not just the speakers' lecture points. Hearing different voices also keeps sessions varied and interesting. Structure interaction time into all the sessions.
- Keep the workshop on track. Start on time and finish on time. Don't hold up class waiting for latecomers. Run the class according to the schedule and don't get too far off course. Opening up discussion among participants may lead to some pertinent tangents, but don't let side issues take over. Ask if there's enough interest to pursue a separate session on that topic, but get this class back to the lesson plan.
- Make the workshop fun: Accommodate different styles, change the room layout, use props, play games, tell stories or use metaphors, play music, provide reward.
- Summarise outcomes and identify lessons learnt in a report after the event. It will be a valuable takeaway for participants and provide information to assist with organising future sessions.

Adapting to COVID-19

Holding a workshop in person has many distinct advantages: It makes participants more comfortable to join in the discussion, allows for more flexible formats in terms of creating smaller groups and kinaesthetic activities and allows for networking and positive spillover through informal and chance encounters or chats. However, due to COVID-19, it was necessary to try to hold the 2020 edition of the annual China cooperation workshop online.

Several measures were taken that can be seen as best practices in recreating the workshop atmosphere online. First, the decision was taken to institute Chatham House rules, meaning that while participants are free to make use of the outcomes and material from the meeting as they see fit, it is forbidden to attribute this material to particular participants. As topics like working with China can at times be politically sensitive, especially when it comes to failures, which can be very instructive for learning, the institution of such a rule is very useful to foster open communication. For the same reason, the decision was taken not to record the event. This has a downside, in that those who cannot attend will not be able to have the full benefit of all that was discussed, however it can be remedied in part by comprehensive takeaways being summarised and distributed beyond the participants, as was done in this case.

The force of inertia can act against participation, and this is even stronger in an online workshop context. For this reason, it is advisable to start with a light-hearted ice breaker, which can be as simple as asking participants to type where they are joining from, to something more complex like a Slido poll or interactive game. The ice breaker gets all the participants actively engaged, priming them to be more likely to actively participate in question and answer sessions or general discussion throughout the workshop.

Beyond this, there are many small things that can be done to increase the 'live' feeling of an online workshop. These include asking speakers and participants to ensure that they turn their cameras on when they are speaking, or to upload a photograph to their online profiles; calling on participants by name and soliciting feedback or questions; ensuring that those not speaking are placed on mute to avoid disruptions, and regularly recapping what has been said so far.

EUROPEAN CITIES WORKING WITH CHINA – 2018 EDITION

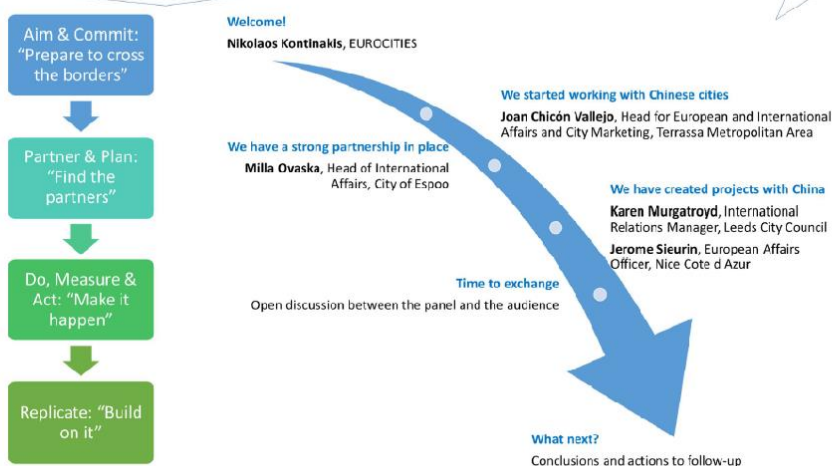


European cities working with China

29 November, 16:30-18:00, Room: Carrick Suite, 1st floor EICC (AGM venue)

Working internationally and especially with Chinese cities poses a number of challenges and requires resources, experience and patience. EURO CITIES with URBAN-EU-CHINA (UEC, <http://www.urban-eu-china.eu/en/>) and TRANS-URBAN-EU-CHINA (TUEC, <http://transurbaneu-china.eu/>) projects organises a meeting for member cities that work or want to work with China. *The aim of the meeting is to exchange on experiences and good examples and, eventually, help cities create joint project with Chinese cities.* The agenda is based on the Cooperation Guidelines for cities that UEC developed.

Agenda



PEER-LEARNING WORKSHOPS – TRANS-URBAN-EU-CHINA EXAMPLES

Workshop - European cities working with China - 29 November 2018, Edinburg, UK

TRANS-URBAN-EU-CHINA co-organised the “European cities working with China” workshop that took place in Edinburgh on 29 November 2018 in the frame of the Eurocities annual conference. Representatives from almost 25 European cities attended the event and the discussion that followed. The agenda included presentations from four European cities and an introduction about the EU-funded projects URBAN-EU-CHINA and TRANS-URBAN-EU-CHINA.

EUROPEAN CITIES WORKING WITH CHINA – 2019 EDITION



European cities working with China

21 November, 16:45-18:00

Room: terrace 2B

Prague Congress Centre

5 května 1640/65, Prague 4

Nikolaos Kontinakis EUROCITIES	16:45 – 16:50	Welcome!
Thanos Pinakas Gothenburg	16:50 – 17:00	<i>Refreshing a partnership: how to add new areas of work and projects in a well-established partnership</i>
Philip Lehner Vienna	17:00-17:10	<i>The “International City” challenge: how to work with an oversupply of INCO requests and opportunities</i>
Martin Churavy Prague	17:10-17:20	<i>Dealing with the political realities and challenges in China</i>
Jerome Sleurin Nice Cote d’Azur	17:20 – 17:30	<i>The IUC experience: what the project brought to cities, how would the perfect EU-funded project look like</i>
Time to exchange	17:30 – 17:50	Open discussion with the panel
What next?	17:50 – 18:00	Conclusions & follow-up actions

Workshop - European cities working with China - 21 November 2019, Prague, Czech Republic

TRANS-URBAN-EU-CHINA co-organised the “European cities working with China” workshop that took place in Prague on 21 November 2019 in the frame of the Eurocities annual conference. More than 50 participants joined the workshop where the following topics were discussed: How to expand areas of collaboration and enrich projects in the framework of an already well-established international partnership; how to work with an oversupply of INCO requests and opportunities; how to deal with the political realities and challenges in cooperation with China and the lessons learned from the IUC experience. The agenda included presentations from Gothenburg, Vienna, Prague and Nice followed by an open discussion with the participants.

EUROPEAN CITIES WORKING WITH CHINA – 2020 EDITION



City to city cooperation with China – Eurocities Annual Conference 2020
5 November 2020 – 16:00-17:30

16:00 – 16:15



16:15 – 16:30



16:30 – 16:45



16:45 – 17:30



Workshop – European cities working with China - 5 November 2020, Online

TRANS-URBAN-EU-CHINA co-organised the “European cities working with China” workshop that took place online on 5 November 2020 in the frame of the Eurocities annual conference. 30 participants joined the online workshop, which featured a presentation of the results of Ghent’s survey on mask donations from Chinese to EU cities followed by two interviews with Jani Moliis, Head of International Affairs, City of Helsinki and Laura Leonard, European and International Relations Manager, Belfast City Council. A lively open discussion with the participants followed the presentation and interviews

3.2 ONLINE SEMINARS

What are online seminars?

'Online seminars' or 'Web based seminars', are meetings with the objective of exchanging knowledge, using the internet as a communication tool. Online seminars are a powerful medium for reaching varied audiences - small or large. Easy to access as well as convenient, online seminars are an effective mode of learning for professionals who can fit the concentrated hours of learning or exchange into their schedules. The use of the internet avoids the need for travelling, which is naturally an important advantage for international networks and projects such as TRANS-URBAN-EU-CHINA.

Moreover, with the start of the COVID19 health crisis, online seminars became an essential channel for exchange and knowledge sharing. What was in the past seen as a useful add-on to standard physical events, became in 2020 almost vital.

Why join or host an online seminar?

The online seminar format can be a powerful training and sharing tool, but the decision to use it should be secondary to strategic objectives and the needs of the audience.

An online seminar has the potential to introduce and discuss complicated issues. The audience stays in their own work environment and can concentrate on the issue at hand. The technical possibilities of online seminars should then be used as much as possible (whiteboard, shared screen, interactive discussions, video, etc).

For networks like Eurocities or projects like TRANS-URBAN-EU-CHINA, online seminars can be used to exchange specific knowledge between experts spread across different continents, without expensive and time-consuming travelling. In such an application, the exchange between speakers and participants is important and needs particular attention when setting up the structure of the online seminar.

HOW TO ORGANISE AN ONLINE SEMINAR:

PLANNING:

Answer the questions:

- Who will attend?
- What is the topic?
- Where will the seminar be hosted?
- Why is the seminar organised?
- When will it take place?
- How will it run?

Set a goal for the success of the online seminar

Find speakers and agree on the goal and content

PREPARATION:

Make sure you have a quiet room
- with good internet connection -
ready for the day of the event

Book the time slot in your software/suite

Prepare a registration process for the audience

Prepare and send invitation to the potential audience

Brief the speakers and test the technical equipment with them

Send regular reminders and update the registered participants

THE ONLINE SEMINAR:

Open the online session some minutes before the starting time and test the connection with the speakers

Follow the agenda and keep track of the time

Identify priorities and needs

A highly specific content idea that can be presented in great detail should be selected. This will make it easier to focus on the topic. When the subject of the online seminar is not specific enough, it will not attract the right audience.

The proposal for the content can come both from the host or the speaker(s). In the former case, the host – a city, a network, an initiative – selects content according to its strategic priorities and needs. In the latter, the speakers ‘pitch’ their work or ideas in an effort to further disseminate and promote it.

How to make an online seminar more effective

- The subject must have genuine added value. Most people are too busy to stop what they’re doing and watch an online seminar that doesn’t interest them, or does not clearly address a specific need.
- Online seminars need to be hosted by skilled, knowledgeable experts in their field. They should be able to speak confidently about the chosen subject. Subject matter expertise is also important for answering unexpected questions.
- When choosing and communicating a time to host the live event, keep in mind that not everyone will be in your time zone, this is extremely relevant if you are trying to attract audiences in different continents as was the case for TRANS-URBAN-EU-CHINA.
- Create a registration page on your website that requires a name, company/city name, and email address to register and has all of the information about the online seminar. Describe what participants will learn in the online seminar and put presenter bios on your registration page.
- Promoting must start on time, at least one month in advance. Textual content for a virtual presentation should be clear and to-the-point. Like a classroom presentation, the text should not just mimic what the speaker will eventually say. Keywords and not sentences should be used. Back up with as much data and evidence as possible, and naturally presentations should be entertaining

FOLLOW UP:

Publish the outcomes of the online seminar along with the link to its recording

Ask speakers and participants to evaluate the online seminar and propose improvements or a follow-up session

The host certifies the attendance (optional)

FOLLOW UP SEMINARS:

Based on the evaluation, organise a second (and subsequent) seminars continuing from the point where the first one stopped









- Unlike a classroom presentation, where the presenter can talk and explain a slide for at least 2-3 minutes, a virtual presentation has to have a slide movement every 20-40 seconds to keep the audience interested. This can include slide transitions, annotations or section highlights - all relevant to what the audience needs to know.
- Graphics are a big part of a virtual presentation and reduce textual matter. Graphics that need to be explained like graphs or charts should be explained only to the suitable point of detail. Going into too many details will cause the learner's attention to flounder. Visual clues like one-word descriptors, figures or percentages can be provided to help the audience to understand the graph or chart quickly.
- A very interactive way of doing a presentation is using screen sharing. The presenter demonstrates or illustrates on his own computer screen his subject. This can be very helpful for explaining procedures and techniques in certain computer programmes.
- A short video between two presentations can make the online seminar more attractive. The videos should be short and illustrate the subject of the online seminar.
- An online seminar host or moderator can help with the flow of the presentation. This person introduces the speakers, asks any questions that come up during the online seminar or Q&A, and concludes the event. If any problems arise, this person can address them easily, without causing the speakers to get off-topic.
- Make sure to be online at least 10 minutes before the online seminar is scheduled to begin, or even earlier if possible. This will help get things going promptly, and can help you feel more relaxed when it's time to begin. Starting late will make participants leave, because they find no activity or connection at the time they expect to start.
- At the start of the online seminar, inform the participants about the discussion rules, and about the way they can ask questions.
- Some participants could be new to the technical interface. Therefore, one should take the time to walk them through the various features and functions they will need during the online seminar.
- Other interactive methods like open-ended discussions can be used at the end of a session to invite new ideas and suggestions.
- Because a part of those who register will not show up, it is advisable to record the online seminar. After the online seminar, send an email to everyone who registered with a link to the recording.

During the project, Eurocities organised eight online seminars on a great range of topics. The complete list is below (Table 1). It is important to highlight that recording online seminars and publishing them on an online platform such as YouTube greatly increases the outreach possibilities, as shown in the table below (column: Views of the recordings on YouTube).

Table 1. TRANS-URBAN-EU-CHINA Online Seminars

Online seminar title	Date	Recording link	Registrants	Views of the recordings on YouTube
Build and sustain an online community	10-Dec-19	LINK	34	28 Views
Cultural heritage – social and economic returns	06-Feb-20	LINK	72	72 Views
Replicate replicate replicate – the secrets to success and failure	09-Apr-20	LINK	50	44 Views
Landing good policy: Urban renewal, urban expansion and land banking	06-May-20	LINK	57	40 Views
EU-China solidarity – city to city ties during COVID-19	18-May-20	LINK	68	128 Views
Social cost/benefit analysis – How does it work?	26-May-20	LINK	156	336 Views
Invigoration and expansion in cities – land policy possibilities	19-Jun-20		38	
Wuhan and Tel Aviv - Digital resilience and COVID-19	22-Oct-20	Tel Aviv LINK	35	33 Views
		Wuhan LINK		23 Views

Figure 4. Online Seminars – Registration Platform

	Free	Thu, Oct 22, 10:00 AM Wuhan and Tel Aviv - Digital resilience and COVID-19
	Free	Fri, Jun 19, 10:00 AM Invigoration and expansion in cities - land policy possibilities
	Free	Tue, May 26, 10:00 AM Social cost/benefit analysis, how does it work?
	Free	Mon, May 18, 10:30 AM EU-China solidarity – city to city ties during COVID-19
	Free	Wed, May 6, 10:00 AM New date - May 6 Landing good policy: Urban renewal, urban expansion and la...
	Free	Thu, Apr 9, 10:00 AM Replicate replicate replicate - secrets to success and failure Online
	Free	Thu, Feb 6, 10:00 AM Cultural heritage - social and economic returns
	Free	Tue, Dec 10, 10:00 AM Build and sustain an online community

3.3 STUDY VISITS

What is a study visit?

The study visit is the most common method for peer-to-peer learning. It offers groups of experts, decision makers and/or other stakeholders from one or more cities (the visitors), the opportunity to visit another city (the host) and see first-hand how the latter has successfully implemented its plans, policies, projects and/or initiatives.

The study visit is a dynamic and interactive process that facilitates the exchange of experience and knowledge between cities. It provides the participants with a better understanding of local projects and initiatives and allows interaction with key local stakeholders and decision makers. During the study visit, the visitors are able to see how projects are implemented in reality and learn from the host city through short presentations, site visits and peer-to-peer discussions.

Why join or host a study visit?

One of the main advantages of a study visit is the opportunity for the visitors and the host to engage in an interactive and direct exchange of experiences. This method allows visitors to view successfully implemented projects/initiatives, learn about the history of any given project from planning to implementation and discuss challenges and barriers encountered along the way and how they were overcome. Thus, they can get useful information and ideas for improving their existing projects or initiating new ones.

Although the visitors are the main beneficiaries of a study visit, it can benefit the host city as well. The host city has the opportunity to showcase itself and demonstrate its successful projects and initiatives to visitors. Discussing its projects with their counterparts from visiting cities can also be beneficial as this way the host city can see its projects from a different perspective. The visitors' experiences and new ideas can help the host city to improve its project(s)/initiative(s) further.

HOW TO ORGANISE A STUDY VISIT:

PLANNING:

The host city drafts a guide with short descriptions of its projects

The visitors express their interest for the visit and for specific projects

The visitors send short profiles of their cities and a short description of their expectations

PREPARATION:

The host city develops a draft programme based on visitors' interests

Teleconferences are used to better define visitors' needs & expectations

The host city finalises the visit programme

A visit date is set

The host city circulates short profiles of visiting cities and people

THE STUDY VISIT:

Ice breaking activities

Introduction of visiting cities and people

Description of host city's vision and strategy

Presentations & site visits

Networking & discussion breaks

Discussion & conclusion sessions at the end of each day

Identify priorities and needs

Either the host or the visitors can initiate a study visit. The study visit can benefit both city experts and decision makers; cities may also decide to include local stakeholders (managers of public companies and operators, citizens' associations, local companies, technology providers, etc.). Participants should preferably be decision makers or experts who can use the knowledge gained to improve working patterns in their own city. The size of the visiting group should not exceed twelve people in total.

How to make a study visit more effective

- A good matching between demonstrated projects and visitors can increase the impact of the visit. Indeed, it is more likely that the visitors will initiate a new project or improve an existing one when there is a good match between the projects seen during the visit and the projects they are working on back home. In short, it is important to dedicate a great deal of time and effort during the initiation and preparation phases to achieve a good match between the visit programme offered and visitors' needs.
- One and a half days is not very long for a study visit that aims to encourage sharing experiences and to facilitate participants making new contacts. A longer visit (e.g. three days) would allow more time for discussion and networking.
- Small visiting groups facilitate interactive discussions. However, a higher number of participating cities gives a more transnational perspective.
- The sharing of experiences can be significantly improved if the participants know more about the work and background of their peers from the other cities before the visit. Circulating short profiles of visiting cities and people prior to the visit could be very helpful. Furthermore, it would be better if the participants made a short presentation of their background at the beginning and not at the end of the visit.
- Quite often the participants are not able to attend the conclusion and discussion session at the end of the visit. It might be better to have discussion and conclusion sessions at the end of each day or after each batch of presentations and site visits

TRANSFER SOLUTIONS (OPTIONAL):

The facilitator drafts a feedback report

The visitors develop action plans for transferring solutions

Teleconference is organised to update other participants about progress and improvements made

The visitors send progress reports to the rest of the participants

- Presentations followed by site visits to the described projects seem to be the most effective format of a study visit. The format can be further improved by including several opportunities for networking and discussion. In addition, a presentation of the city's vision and strategy at the beginning would help the visitors to understand better how the projects presented fit into the general framework.
- Interactive discussions during the presentations and site visits better facilitate sharing of knowledge and experience compared to fixed Questions & Answers sessions at the end. In addition, the visitors should be encouraged to make recommendations for improvements.
- Presentations by and discussions with local stakeholders involved in the projects help participants to understand better how these were developed and implemented. Hosts should avoid having presentations only by the personnel of the city.
- The visit should be the beginning and not the end of the learning process. The visitors should carry out a 'transferability analysis' to investigate whether and how the new solutions and methods can be transferred to their city. Based on the results of the analysis they could develop an action plan.
- The visitors should keep the hosts and other visitors updated about the results of the analysis and the progress of their action plans. A teleconference between the participants six months after the visit can help to evaluate the impact of the visit and strengthen collaboration.
- The organisation of a study visit brings together staff from different departments and usually improves interdepartmental communication in the host city. The host city should try to capitalise on these new contacts to improve the interdepartmental collaboration and develop cross-cutting projects.
- Hosting a study visit can improve the visibility of the city's energy or mobility team and reaffirm the interest of decision makers. The city officers should try to involve the city decision makers in the visit and give publicity to improve the political and citizen support of their work.

Within the framework of TRANS-URBAN-EU-CHINA, no peer-to-peer study visits between cities were organised. However, in November 2019 a study visit was organised in Wuhan, providing an opportunity for the TRANS-URBAN-EU-CHINA team to gain hand-on expertise on the field.

The study visit included an Expert Workshop and Knowledge Café with Wuhan University as an important local stakeholder (7 November). In the morning session, academics from Wuhan University and the TRANS-URBAN-EU-CHINA team exchanged their research on urban studies. In the afternoon session, the TRANS-URBAN-EU-CHINA team conducted a Knowledge Café with the teachers and students at Wuhan University in order to explore and compare experiences of living in Wuhan as a city with more than one million residents.

On 8 November, the TRANS-URBAN-EU-CHINA team got a chance to observe how government officials manage the city development. The development of the new Master Plan (2017-2035) has richly demonstrated Wuhan's main ambitions for the next 15 years. The study visit also included a tour of the East Lake, which provided useful insights on how a typical project is initiated and managed by the local government in China. A complete description of the Wuhan study visit can be found in the D5.3.

Feedback

How do we know that such activities, and the forms that they have taken, are useful for those participating? Feedback is the key!

"I found the meeting very useful with some great practical tips."

- City representative

"Thank you so much for allowing me to participate in the webinar... it gave me an interesting perspective by showing how those cities that already have links with China were able to establish a constructive collaboration in a time of crisis. Thank you so much for an excellent meeting!"

- Private industry participant

"The webinar was very informative and useful as it clarified many aspects of my understanding of the social benefit/cost analysis concept."

- Researcher

"Very inspiring for us."

- City representative

"Thanks for the useful meeting we had on EU-China Cooperation the other week."

- City representative



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