

GREEN DIGITAL CHARTER



GUIDEBOOK

Peer-to-peer learning
for cities

FEBRUARY 2018





GuiDanCe
Support the coordination of cities' activities
via the Green Digital Charter

GUIDEBOOK

Results of the GuiDanCe training
process

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SIGNATORY CITIES



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This guidebook comes as a result of the training activities of the GuiDanCe project. It aims to help cities - GDC signatories and more - deliver successful training and peer-to-peer learning activities that match their priorities, strategies and plans. It is based on the experiences and lessons learnt during the GuiDanCe project and its predecessor, the NiCE project². Additional material for training formats and examples have been drawn from other EUROCITIES projects like Culture for cities and regions³, CASCADE⁴ and Implementoring⁵.

INTRODUCTION

About the Green Digital Charter and the GuiDanCe project

The Green Digital Charter aims to improve the quality of life in cities through the use of digital solutions. 53 European cities - home to over 26 million people - have committed to work together towards its aims and objectives. Cities that sign the charter commit to addressing sustainability, growth and resilience in the interest of our citizens by:

- Working with other Green Digital Charter signatories to promote the best applications and results of ICT solutions;
- Establishing local partnerships to implement the Green Digital Charter's commitments, and to make these central elements of the cities' wider strategies;
- Deploying five large-scale and replicable ICT pilots per city within five years and communicating the impact of these to citizens and local stakeholders;
- Decreasing the direct carbon footprint of the ICT sector by 30% per city within ten years.

The charter was supported by the European Commission via the GuiDanCe project (2015-2018)¹

Overview of the Green Digital Charter and GuiDanCe project technical training

The GuiDanCe project offered guidance and support to cities so that they can implement their GDC commitments and create a tangible impact for their digital strategies and activities. At the core of this process lay the two editions of the biennial 'GDC implementation monitoring report' and a set of training events - both on site and online - that were delivered between the end of 2015 and the first months of 2018.

GuiDanCe training events consisted of both onsite and online training with the participation of experts from signatory cities. At the time of the proposal (2014) three types of training events were foreseen:

- Onsite training;
- Pairs of work shadowing visits (two cities exchange visits);
- Online training (webinars).

Four (4) onsite training events, five (5) pairs of work shadowing visits and six (6) online training events would be organised during the GuiDanCe project.

Eventually, by the time GuiDanCe was completed (2018), onsite training events proved to be becoming increasingly difficult for city practitioners to attend. On the other hand, online training events are more attractive since they last typically one hour and interested experts can connect and participate while sitting and working in their office.

Eventually, GuiDanCe managed to organise four (4) onsite training events (training workshops), two (2) work shadowing visits and ten (10) online training events (webinars). It also produced two guiding documents:

- Work shadowing visits: a practical guide;
- A checklist on the use of webinars.

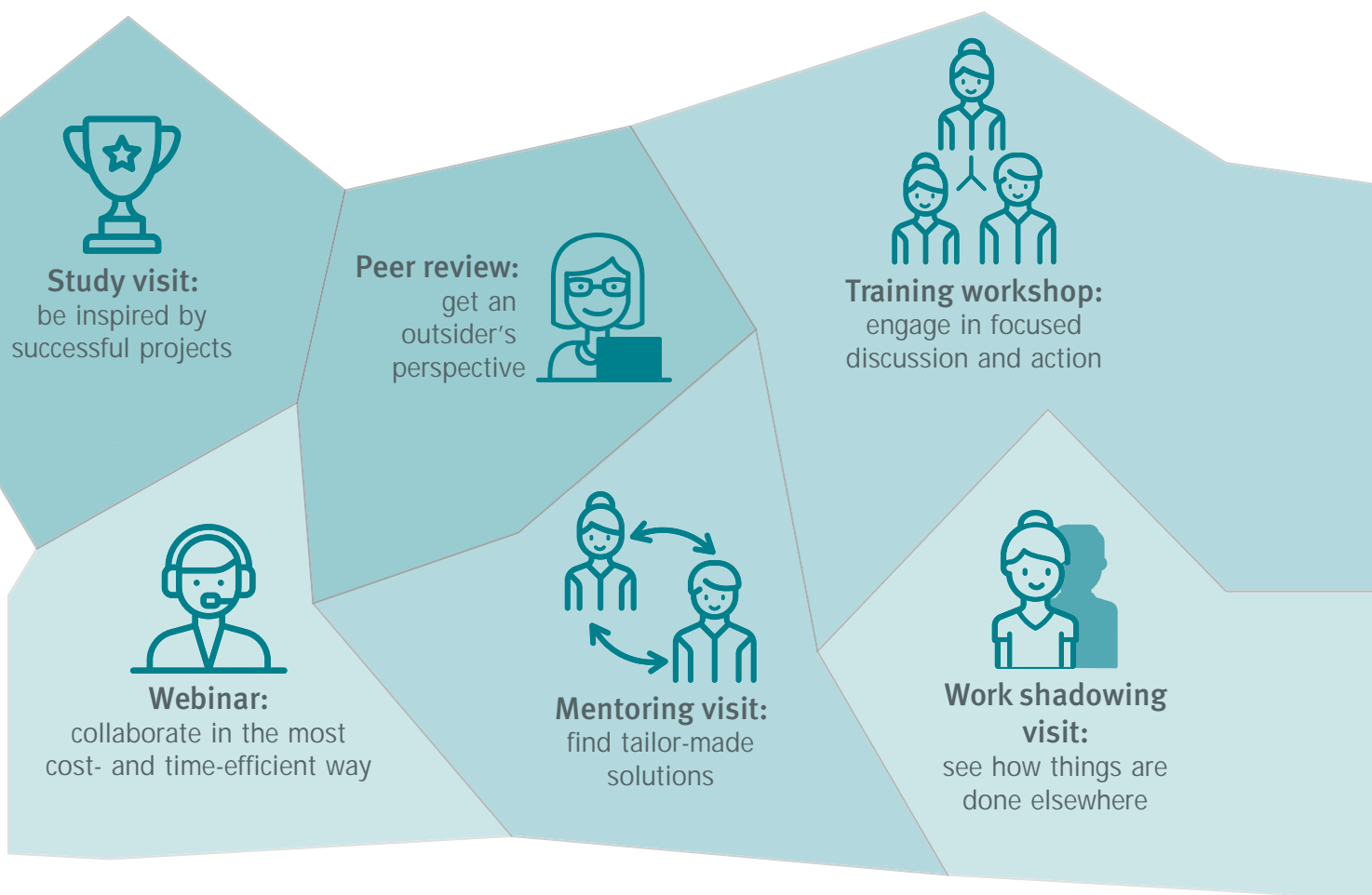
WHY TRAINING AND PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING?

Peer-to-peer learning is an excellent instrument for improving the implementation of cities' policies and strategies.

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 implementing smart and digital projects and policies in their cities. 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, six 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.



SIX 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 required level of detail.

1. TRAINING WORKSHOPS

1. What is a training workshop?

A training workshop is a meeting at which a group of people engage in intensive discussion and activity on a particular subject or project. During a training workshop, participants carry out a number of training activities interactively rather than passively listening to a lecture or presentation.

In the context of peer-to-peer learning among cities, a training workshop can be organised either by one city (e.g. in the occasion of a launching a new project or service) or a facilitator (e.g. a network like EUROCITIES or an initiative like the Green Digital Charter) that brings together experts and city practitioners for the benefit of the latter. In addition, a training 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.

2. Why host or join a training workshop

A training 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 of organising a training workshop.

There are many reasons why a city expert will join a training 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.

3. Identify priorities and needs

The topic of a training workshop can be defined either by the host or by a group of experts that agree on their training 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 TRAINING WORKSHOP:

PLANNING

The host defines the goals of the workshop

The host selects the speakers and they jointly define the content

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

TRAINING WORKSHOP

Speakers introduce the topic and the required new knowledge

All participants interact 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

4. How to make a training 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 hand out 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 realize that they cannot answer the questions, or even understand the problem sufficiently.
- Involve the participants. For example, ask participants to share their experiences with the training topic. 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.

FOLLOW-UP

The host develops a follow-up plan

The host asks the participants and speakers to evaluate the event

The host certifies the attendance (optional)

Speakers give the results and final feedback in a follow-up teleconference

FOLLOW-UP TRAINING (OPTIONAL)

A 2nd (or more) training workshop or module is organised to continue or expand the training

The GDPR demystified: technical training for cities' experts on assessing privacy in smart cities

As from May 2018, the new EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) takes effect and impacts all EU cities, which are asked to appoint a data protection officer (DPO) and to implement a series of new rules and practices. Good practices related to the implementation of the GDPR has been identified as a priority in the frame of the Data Working Group of the Knowledge Society Forum.

This training was designed to help cities' data experts to understand the concepts and processes necessary for the data management chain within a city administration to deal with citizens' privacy while delivering smart services. 20 participants from 14 cities learned how to conduct a privacy impact assessment (P.I.A) based on four specific and concrete use-cases presented by four volunteering cities:

- A specific application (smart energy sensors in social housing) by the Royal Borough of Greenwich, London;
- A specific application (using non-motorised traffic metrics for optimising traffic flow, by the city of Eindhoven;
- The general case for open data, by the city of Espoo;
- The general case for building a roadmap for GDPR compliance, by the city of Barcelona.

The challenge-based approach of the training allowed city officers and experts in the digital and smart city field to brainstorm together using a concrete example channelling the exchanges. GuiDanCe issued a certificate for each attendee (see Annex).

A report gathering the training's outcomes was later presented in the course of a webinar organised on 5 February where participants were invited to bring comments and questions.

Presentations are available on the GDC website: <http://bit.ly/2EZGMHp>



2. WORK SHADOWING VISIT

1. What is a work shadowing visit?

Work shadowing is a method for exchanging professional experience and knowledge. It involves one or two people from one city (the visitor) spending a period of time with one or more people from another city (the host) working in the same field or on similar projects. The aim is to facilitate an exchange of expertise by observing first-hand how things are done elsewhere, thus providing inspiration and new ideas for working methods. Typically, a work shadowing visit lasts from a couple of days up to one week.

2. Why join or host a work shadowing visit

Work shadowing is an opportunity for the visitor to work alongside a person with similar responsibilities in another city. The possibility to observe, ask and discuss ideas on the spot allows people to gain experience and fresh insights into specific professional roles and the methods employed therein. This can be useful when new tasks are introduced into a professional field (e.g. implementation of the GDPR) or new methods are implemented (e.g. opening city data). By observing a host city with greater experience and/or in a different institutional setting, the work shadowing method enables people 'to see behind the curtain' into a single professional role. Due to the intense time the participants spend together, the visitor can develop a deeper understanding of the methods and strategies used by the host.

Although a work shadowing visit is usually more focused on the host assisting the visitor, there are many benefits for the host as well. Introducing his/her field of work, explaining his/her tasks and how things work in his/her institution, the host can develop his/her own skills further and reflect on his/her day-to-day work. Answering the visitor's questions and discussing different possibilities might give rise to ideas on how to improve strategies, projects and/or methods.

3. Identify priorities and needs

Either a host or a visitor may initiate a work shadowing visit. A city willing to share its experience in a specific field could offer a work shadowing opportunity to other cities. However, it might be the visitor contacting another city or professional experienced within a field of interest asking for a work shadowing opportunity.

The right shadowing partner can be found by contacting a city that is known to be working successfully on a topic of high interest, within networks of which the city is a member (e.g. EUROCITIES), or by searching for expertise in a specific topic (e.g. implementation of an urban platform).

HOW TO ORGANISE A SHADOWING VISIT:

INITIATION

The visitors identify their needs

The visitors identify the right shadowing partner (hosts)

PREPARATION

The visitors send detailed information to the hosts

Teleconferences are used to better define the visitors' needs

Visitors and hosts develop the visit programme jointly

A visit date is set

VISIT CITY 1

Visitors and hosts introduce themselves to each other

The visitors get a clear insight into hosts' work: discussions, meetings, site visits

Visitors and hosts are given individual time

Establish conclusions & future steps

4. How to make a work shadowing visit more effective

- The work-shadowing topic should be clearly defined. The visitors should send information well in advance. A teleconference can help to clarify questions and build a better understanding of the needs and expectations. It is better first to make sure that everything is clear for both parties and then to set the date of the visit.
- The duration and format of the visit should be adapted to visitors' needs as well as the hosts' availability. Thus, it is important that the visitors and hosts build the visit programme together.
- Open, honest and interactive discussions are the key to a good work-shadowing visit. Visitors and hosts should share experiences, compare working methods, explain what is going well and where there is need for improvements. The visiting programme should ensure that the two work-shadowing partners have plenty of time to discuss issues.
- To gain a clear insight into the work of the hosts, the visitors need to understand the general organisational framework of the hosting city, meet and talk with the key personnel and/or stakeholders who closely collaborate with their hosts and visit some of the projects closely related to their hosts' work.
- It is important to arrange some individual time for the visitors and hosts to evaluate what they saw and heard and prepare themselves for the final session. At this final session, the two work-shadowing partners describe the lessons learnt and how they are going to use the knowledge gained to improve their work.
- 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 they can transfer the new solutions and methods to their city. Based on the results of their analysis they can develop an action plan.
- The visitors could keep the hosts updated on the results of the analysis and the progress of their action plan. Hosts can help them overcome difficulties and adapt the new methods and solutions to their local context.
- In addition, a return visit, during which the roles are reversed, should be arranged 6-12 months after the first visit. The hosts visit the visitors to help them with their action plan and at the same time to get an insight into their working methods and to get ideas to improve their own.

TRANSFER SOLUTIONS

The visitors draft a feedback report

The visitors conduct a 'transferability analysis' of identified solutions

The visitors develop an action plan to transfer solutions

The visitors update hosts on progress & challenges

(Optional) arrange a return visit to City 2 (optional)

RETURN VISIT- CITY 2 (OPTIONAL)

The roles are reversed: visitors become hosts & hosts become visitors

The hosts update the visitors on achievements after visit to City 1

The visitors get a clearer insight into hosts' work: discussions, meetings, site visits

Visitors and hosts are given individual time

Conclusions

Bratislava visits Reykjavik

Bratislava is willing to engage with its citizens but the administration still faces some challenges in changing its attitude towards active citizens. Reykjavik's approach to citizen involvement ('Better Reykjavik - My Neighbourhood') was showcased by the GuiDanCe project on several occasions. Learning from Reykjavik's participatory budgeting tool was seen by Bratislava as an opportunity to better connect with its citizens, especially on managing green areas and transportation, road services and city planning.

A series of email exchanges enables both parties to organise the visit considering Bratislava's needs and interests. First contact was made on 13 November 2017 which resulted in a visit scheduled for 30 January 2018. The visit was approved for two Bratislava city experts.

During the work shadowing, Reykjavik experts worked with their colleagues from Bratislava to explain and unravel all aspects of 'Better Reykjavik - My Neighbourhood': how the project was designed and executed in the city hall down to how it is implemented in the field: with citizens, service centres, neighbourhood councils, etc.

Presentations are available on the GDC website: <http://bit.ly/2BLaQoi>



3. STUDY VISIT

1. 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.

2. 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.

3. 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 ORGANISE A STUDY VISIT:

INITIATION

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

4. 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 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.
- 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 energy 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

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

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

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.

Study visit to Murcia

The third Networking Intelligent Cities for Energy Efficiency (NiCE) study tour was hosted by Murcia on 5-6 May 2014. Visitors from six Green Digital Charter signatory cities learnt about the projects that Murcia is carrying out to fulfil its GDC commitments. Presentations and demonstrations by different city departments that deploy ICT and smart solutions, site visits and peer-to-peer discussions were organised to various project sites and venues around the city:

- The smart city roadmap of Murcia
- New municipal ICT management model
- SMARTSPACES project in Murcia (Saving energy in public buildings using ICT)
- ICT for public bicycles
- The public Wi-Fi network
- The 'Green Line' Murcia (App to report incidents)
- ICT for the promotion of tourism
- Noise control in smart cities

Presentations are available on the GDC website: <http://www.greendigitalcharter.eu/3rd-nice-study-tour-hosted-by-murcia>



4. MENTORING VISIT

1. What is a mentoring visit?

Mentoring can be described as a host city (the mentee) receiving advice during a visit by one or more other cities (the mentors). Based on a detailed request from the mentee for support on specific project(s)/initiative(s), the mentors prepare and spend two to three days in the city to advise and give feedback to city officials (technical experts, politicians and policy makers) involved in the area of interest.

Mentoring visits are meant to assist with the process of sharing experiences and knowledge and exchanging good practices between cities. Mentoring is a positive relationship built on mutual benefit. Some mentoring relationships benefit from the familiarity of shared concerns, others benefit from differences in perspective and still others from the combined achievement of developing new, innovative solutions to problems.

2. Why join or host a mentoring visit

Mentoring visits are useful in situations where the mentee (host city) needs help with specific aspects of the project(s)/initiative(s) discussed. The method is limited to situations where the expertise/experience of one or two mentors is sufficient to address the needs of the mentee. Mentoring visits aim to provide the opportunity for mentors and mentee to together build an understanding of the issues, situations and challenges faced by the host city. This is then used to discuss and explore new ideas, options and solutions that will help the mentee in its work.

Although a mentoring relationship is usually focused on the mentors assisting the mentee, there are many benefits for the mentors including developing their own skills, reflecting on issues raised, gathering new ideas and addressing their own thinking and organisational methods to make improvements in their work. Furthermore, the mentors can directly benefit from the expertise of the other mentors during their interactions.

3. Identify priorities and needs

Mentoring topics can be various: the wish for feedback on newly planned or implemented projects, barriers appearing in existing projects, initiatives that need to be 'repowered', and many more. Once the focus is clear, the mentee should describe the project(s) or initiative(s) as thoroughly and specifically as possible.

HOW TO ORGANISE A MENTORING VISIT:

INITIATION

The mentees identify the mentoring topic(s)

The mentees select suitable mentors

Mentors and mentees are trained

PREPARATION

The mentees send detailed information to mentors

Teleconference(s) are organised to better define mentoring needs

A visit date is set

1ST VISIT

Open with ice breaking activities

Mentors and mentees build an understanding of the local situation

The mentors meet to discuss (without mentees)

Mentors and mentees explore solutions

Mentors and mentees start drafting an action plan

The mentors meet with decision makers

To achieve this, a document of three to five pages should be prepared describing the project(s)/initiative(s) the visit will focus on and detailing the specific aspects the mentee seeks advice for. It should be submitted to the mentors for preparation approximately one month before the visit. The description should explain the areas where help is needed, expertise sought or existing barriers to overcome.

4. How to make a mentoring visit more effective

- The key to good mentoring is the mentors' ability to guide the hosts and help them develop solutions tailored to their own needs. It is important that both mentors and mentees are aware of their roles. Thus, most of the times it is necessary that they both attend a collective training session or use an external facilitator.
- The mentors should have a clear overview of the mentoring needs and local situation before the visit. The mentees should send them information well in advance. A teleconference could help clarify questions and build a better understanding of the needs and expectations. It is better first to make sure that mentors have all the information they need and then set the date of the visit.
- The mentors need to build a good understanding of the local situation. They have to understand how the mentoring topics are related to the city's vision and goals, what challenges and difficulties face the host city and how it has tried to overcome them. Thus, they need to have discussions with all the parties involved (decision makers, local stakeholders) and not just with the city experts. In addition, they need to visit the project sites.
- It is important to arrange some time for the mentors to evaluate and discuss what they saw and heard before they meet the mentees and start exploring new ideas and solutions.
- The mentors should not 'sell' solutions from their cities, but they should enable the mentees to explore the suitability and applicability of different ideas, options and solutions. Open, honest and interactive discussions are crucial for good mentoring.
- Political support is key to ensuring the implementation of the action plan. High level officers should actively participate in the mentoring process. In addition, the mentors should communicate the results of the mentoring to city politicians or other local decision-making structures (e.g. consultation committees and forums).
- The visit should be the beginning and not the end of the learning process. After the visit, mentors and mentees together can start drafting an action plan. The mentees should be given some time to digest the mentoring results and finalise the action plan.
- The mentors should follow the implementation of the action plan closely through brief six-month progress reports and/or teleconferences. A new visit could be arranged 6-12 months after the first visit to evaluate the progress made and update the action plan.

FOLLOW UP

The mentors draft a feedback report

The mentees finalise the action plan

The mentees send six-month progress report(s) to mentors

Teleconference(s) are scheduled to discuss the action plan progress

Set a visit date: 6-12 months later (optional)

2ND VISIT (OPTIONAL)

The mentors evaluate the progress of the mentees

Mentors and mentees identify problems and explore solutions

The mentees revise the action plan

Terrassa: shifting towards a more sustainable mobility model

Mentor: Nantes Metropole

Terrassa approved its first Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) in 2003. The SUMP promoted a polycentric sustainable urban mobility model and improved the links between the city centre and local centres in suburban areas by creating safe walking and cycling routes. In 2014, the city was reviewing its SUMP. It was seeking to improve air quality, reduce noise pollution and increase energy efficiency. Terrassa asked for the support of Nantes Metropole to mentor how to update its SUMP and improve its mobility strategy.

Mentor and mentees together explored different options and solutions and came up with new ideas:

- Introduce an 'all doors boarding' system in public transport buses to increase travel speed.
- Convert the bus-lines serving the train stations into high-performance lines.
- Further promote cycling: e.g. give priority to cyclists in intersections, double circulation of bikes in one-way streets.
- Create low-emission zones in the city centre.

The participants were one mentor from the visiting city, seven mentees from the host city and one facilitator.



5. PEER REVIEW

1. What is a peer review?

In the peer review method, a group of people (experts, decision makers, stakeholders) from different cities is brought together to jointly evaluate, against a benchmark, the performance of the host city. These people are usually called 'peers' or 'equals', as they work on similar issues in their cities' administrations and they have similar working backgrounds. The peer group follows a structured and well-defined procedure for assessing the performance of the host city. It first has a thorough desk review of its self-assessment report and then visits the host city to seek further evidence. Once the evidence is put together, the peer group draws conclusions about the host city's performance and suggests improvements to help strengthen its energy and climate policies.

A peer review is not just an appraisal method. It is also a process of peer-to-peer learning and exchange of experience. Peers not only assess the performance of the host city, but also share their experience and know-how while they bring new knowledge and skills back to their cities.

The benchmark is a list of criteria ('key factors') that allows a city to assess the implementation of its plans and policies. It describes an 'ideal' or 'desirable' standard against which the actual performance of the city can be compared. It is also a source of ideas and inspiration for improvements.

The benchmark includes three categories of content:

- **Context factors** beyond the city's control that significantly affect its ability to meet the benchmark.
- **Key factors** crucial for the successful implementation of the city's plans and policies. These factors represent the policy and planning elements that a city should put in place to meet the benchmark. They are formulated as a statement, allowing a city to verify whether it is true or not.
- **Examples of evidence** that verify the city's performance against a specific key factor.

2. Why join or host a peer review

A peer review is an excellent instrument for assessing, inspiring and improving a city's plans and policies. It gives the city the opportunity to get an external in-depth appraisal of its work and gain valuable insights into how to improve it.

Its key strength is the 'peer group' itself. The peers are not external experts offering 'tailor-made' technical solutions. Working in a field

HOW TO ORGANISE A PEER REVIEW:

INITIATION

The host city identifies suitable peer reviewers

Training is scheduled for peer reviewers (peers)

PREPARATION

The host city drafts a self-assessment

The peers undertake a desk review of the self-assessment

Teleconference is scheduled for questions & clarifications and for developing the visit programme

A visit date is set

1ST VISIT

Open with ice breaking activities

The facilitators explain the structure of the visit

The peers gather evidence & information

The peers record & interpret evidence

The peers present their findings & recommendations

Workshop is held to share experience between peers

similar to that of their counterparts in the host city, it is not only their scientific expertise, but also their experience in addressing the challenges and delivering solutions that make their contribution so important. They are aware of the difficulties involved in delivering plans and policies, the organisational barriers, the complexity of the decision making process, the financial restrictions and the scepticism of citizens. At the same time work on how to overcome these barriers and can share this valuable experience with the host city through a peer review.

The peer review methodology is also suitable and valuable for broader aspects, conceptual topics and strategy development. It can help a city answer questions such 'How can we facilitate innovation in the city?' or 'How can open data be handled by the city?' or 'How do I implement my Smart City Strategy?'.

Of the six learning methods presented in this guidebook, the peer review is the most rigorous and time consuming (both for host and visiting cities). If a city wants to focus on a specific and smaller scale project, it might be appropriate to choose another learning method.

Although a peer review is predominantly focused on supporting the host city and requires substantial time and effort from the reviewers, there are many benefits for peers as well. By reviewing the work of the host city, the peers gain a deep understanding of the main drivers, challenges and solutions of the local plans and policies, which can help them to further improve their own work back home. Furthermore, as the peers present and discuss their own experiences with the hosts and other peers during the visit, they might also get relevant feedback.

3. Identify priorities and needs

The focus of the peer review should be clearly defined. Failing to define the topic of the city's review precisely could result in general and vague recommendations from peers. Keep in mind that the better the information the host city delivers, the better the peers can assess its relevant strategy and plans and develop specific recommendations.

FOLLOW UP

The peers draft a feedback report

The host city develops an action plan based on review results

The host city identifies new peer learning needs

The host city sends six-month progress report(s) to reviewers

Arrange follow up visit: 1-1 ½ years later (optional)

2ND VISIT (OPTIONAL)

The peers assess the progress made against the benchmark

Peers and hosts identify problems and explore solutions

The host city revises its action plan

4. How to make a peer review more effective

- The key to a good peer review is the ability of the peers to conduct good interviews. It's important that peers are aware of their role. Thus, it is essential to attend a training session with the help of an external facilitator.
- The information given through the self-assessment should be concise but clear. A teleconference during the desk review process can help explain unclear points, better define what information is missing and identify the right person to interview.
- Three days is not very long for a peer-review visit. A four- to five-day visit can give the peer reviewers more time to prepare for the interviews and to analyse the evidence and information collected. It will also provide more time for networking and making personal contacts.
- At the beginning of the visit, a clear explanation should be given of the structure of the process and of everyone's responsibility and role. It is also advisable to allocate tasks and responsibilities to the peers as from the preparation phase.
- Political support is necessary to ensure that the recommendations from peers for improvements will be taken into account. High level officers should actively participate in the peer review process. In addition, decision makers should be present at the conclusions & recommendations session.
- The visit is the end of the evaluation process but at the same time the beginning of improvements for the host city. The host city should carefully evaluate the results of the peer review and develop an action plan to improve its policies and projects. Moreover, it should identify the topics and projects for which it needs support and use the other peer-to-peer learning methods of this guidebook to find solutions and get new ideas.
- The peer reviewers could follow the implementation of the action plan closely through brief six-month progress reports. A new visit could be arranged 12 to 18 months after the peer review to evaluate the improvements made and make new recommendations for further improvements



Peer reviews in CASCADE project

CASCADE was a networking and peer-to-peer learning project that focused on local energy leadership. It supported cities in delivering the European Union 2020 targets for energy and climate change. CASCADE helped 76 large- and medium-sized cities from 19 European countries to improve the implementation of their sustainable energy policies in three thematic areas:

- energy efficient buildings & districts,
- renewable energy resources & distributed energy generation,
- energy in urban transport.

For the peer reviews, CASCADE developed three slightly different versions of the benchmark, one for each of the three CASCADE thematic areas: energy efficient buildings & districts, renewable energy production & distribution of generated energy and energy in urban transport. The benchmark comprised of three main elements:

- **Context factors** beyond the city's control that significantly affect its ability to meet the benchmark including:
 - Urban context
 - Energy demand
 - Energy supply and infrastructure
 - Building stock
 - Transport
 - Regional and national context
 - City competences and resources
- **Key factors** crucial for the successful implementation of the city's energy policy. These factors represent the policy elements that a city should put in place to meet the CASCADE benchmark. They are formulated as a statement, allowing a city to verify whether it is true or not. CASCADE identified six 'clusters' of key factors, each cluster containing 4-5 key factors:
 - Local leadership and ambitions;
 - Local strategies and policies;
 - Organisational and managerial issues;
 - Stakeholder and citizen involvement;
 - Information, knowledge and awareness;
 - Financing, investments and risks.
- **Examples of evidence** that verify the city's performance against a specific key factor.

6. WEBINAR

1. What is a webinar?

‘Webinar’ is short for ‘Web based seminar’, a meeting for the exchange of knowledge, which uses the communication tools of the Internet. Webinars are a powerful medium for reaching varied audiences - small or large. Easy to access as well as convenient, webinars are an effective mode of learning for professionals who can fit the concentrated hours of learning or exchange into their schedules. The use of Internet avoids the need for travelling, which is naturally an important advantage for international networks and projects.

2. Why join or host a webinar

The webinar 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.

A webinar 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 the webinar should then be used as much as possible (whiteboard, shared screen, interactive discussions, video, etc).

For networks like EURO CITIES or initiatives like the Green Digital Charter, the webinar can be used to exchange specific knowledge between experts spread all over Europe, 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 webinar.

3. 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 webinar 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 ORGANISE A WEBINAR:

PLANNING

Answer the questions: Who will attend? What is the topic? Where will the webinar be hosted? Why is the webinar organised? When will it take place? How will it run?

Set a goal for the success of the webinar

Find speakers and agree on the goals and content

PREPARATION

Book the room where the webinar will be hosted or moderated from

Book the time slot in your webinar software/suite

Prepare a registration process for interested audience

Prepare and send an invitation to the potential audience

Brief the speakers and test the technical equipment with them

Send regular reminders and update the registered participants

4. How to make a webinar more effective

- The subject must have genuine added value. Most people are too busy to stop what they’re doing and watch a webinar that doesn’t interest them, or does not clearly address a specific need.
- Webinars 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.
- 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 webinar. Describe what participants will learn in the webinar 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.
- 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 reduces 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 webinar more attractive. The videos should be short and illustrate the subject of the webinar.
- A webinar host can help with the flow of the presentation. This person introduces the speakers, asks any questions that come up during the webinar 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 on-line at least 10 minutes before the webinar 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,

WEBINAR

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

Follow the agenda and deliver the webinar

FOLLOW UP

Publish the outcomes of the webinar along with the link to its recording

Ask speakers and participants to evaluate the webinar and propose improvements or a follow-up webinar

NEXT WEBINAR (OPTIONAL)

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

- because they find no activity or connection at the time they expect to start.
- At the start of the webinar, inform the participants about the discussion rules, and about the way they can ask questions.
- Many participants are probably 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 event.
- 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 webinar. After the webinar, send an email to everyone who registered with a link to the recording.

GDC webinar on 'Data management and citizens' privacy in open governance'

Data enables municipalities to develop better informed decision making and improve public services but citizens need to understand why and how information they provide is being used to improve their own quality of life. This webinar intended to show how city administrations can build trust in a model of governance based on opening and sharing data. The experts that presented in the webinar were:

- Daniel Sarasa, smart city programme manager for Zaragoza City Council, presented his guidelines on urban big data sharing. Daniel co-authored Zaragoza's Open Government Strategy 2012-2015;
- Antonio Kung, leader of the EIP-SCC 'citizen centric approach to data: privacy-by-design', brought his expertise on how to integrate privacy management measures.

Presentations are available on the GDC website: <http://bit.ly/2oT4Yko>

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