



 **URBACT**
Driving change for
better cities

Presentation overview

- ◆ **URBACT – what is it?**
- ◆ **URBACT – who can take part?**
- ◆ **URBACT – How does it work?**
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- ◆ **URBACT III – What's it done?**
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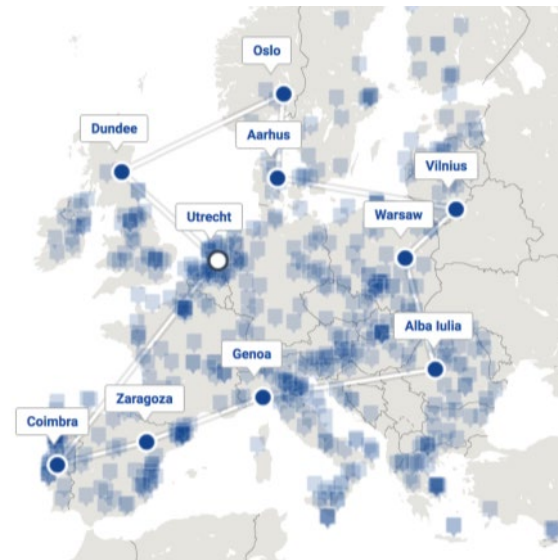
URBACT – what is it?

European Territorial Cooperation programme enabling local administrations to collaborate

428 unique partners
(mainly cities)

70
city networks

Since
2014



URBACT – what is it?

- URBACT allows EU cities & towns* to work together and develop integrated solutions to common urban challenges,
 1. by networking,
 2. learning from one another's experiences,
 3. identifying good practices to improve urban policies
- 3 types of networks
 1. Action Planning – cocreate solutions to common problems
 2. Implementation - cities with integrated plans share experience & lessons of how to implement their plans
 3. Transfer – a lead city transfers its existing good practice to receiving cities

URBACT – who can take part?

- In Ireland; all local authorities can become partners on URBACT networks
- They must pick a **defined urban centre** (of any size)
- Irish urban areas in URBACT vary drastically in size and context;
 - Our capital Dublin City,
 - Other cities such as Cork, Limerick, Waterford
 - Subsets of larger urban areas, e.g. Dun Laoighaire
 - Large regional towns such as Ballbrigginn, Naas, Athy, Kilkenny, Carlow, Portlaoise, Sligo and Longford
 - Smaller towns like Trim, Donegal, Rathdrum

URBACT – How does it work?

- URBACT works by bringing together all relevant stakeholders having a stake in the policy challenge addressed by the city
- Each partner in the network creates its own URBACT Local Group (ULG)
- ULGs consist of representatives from public, private, NGO and citizens groups
- ULGs co-create a policy plan to address the network topic (e.g. youth unemployment, regeneration of deprived neighbourhood, energy-efficiency in housing, etc.)
- IMPORTANT: URBACT does not fund capital expenditure

URBACT III – What's it about?

- URBACT III is the current iteration of the programme
- There are no further calls expected on this programme
- It grouped its networks into 5 main themes
 - Environment
 - Physical Urban Development
 - Inclusion
 - Governance
 - Economy
- Generated resources: [URBACT Toolbox](#), [Library](#) & [Good Practices](#)
- Irish partners were involved in 24 networks over the programme period

URBACT III – What's it done?

- Irish Partners who have participated in URBACT networks have seen the added value of participation
- Example: Limerick & Tech Town
 - Tech Town ran from 2016-18
 - Focused on job creation through the digital economy
 - Potential for spillover from stronger city level digital economies
 - How clusters can support businesses to access the digital skills, and innovations to start, grow and compete.
 - The role and viability of digital, content creation and technology clusters



URBACT III – What's it done?



- Participation in Tech Town allowed & enabled Limerick to form a ULG containing major digital stakeholders
- Limerick's Digital Leaders Network (DLN) was established from this ULG
- Limerick leveraged DLN to successfully bid for the H2020 +CityXChange & creation of the Smart Limerick digital Strategy

+CITYXCHANGE



Limerick Digital Strategy

Urbact Local Group

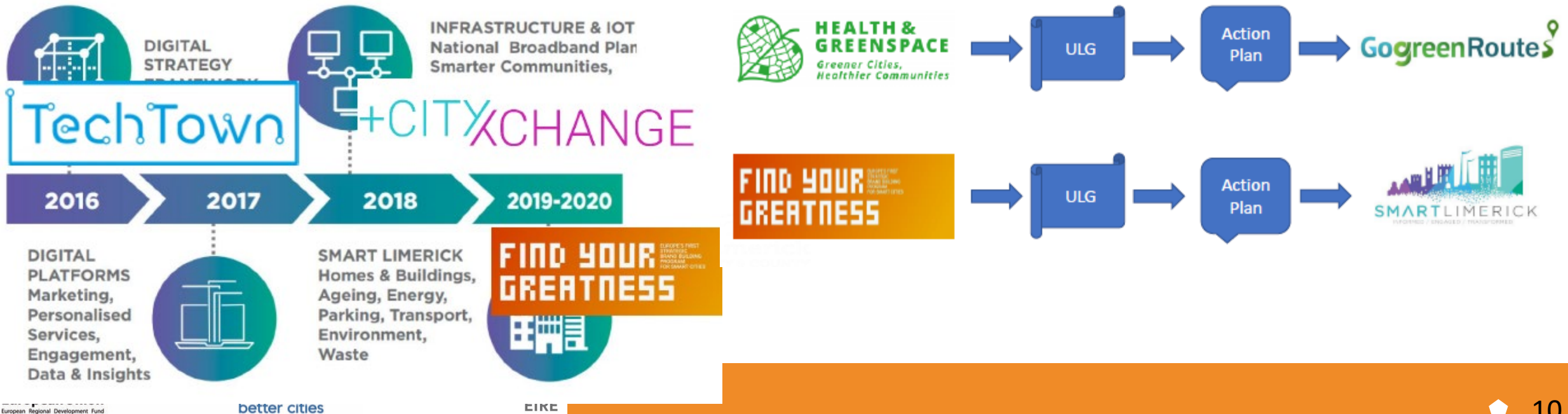


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Education & Training Board



URBACT III – What's it done?

- Limerick's participation in URBACT has:
 - Added to its ICT capacity
 - Forged excellent relationships with key stakeholders
 - Directly aided policy development
 - Enabled further securement of EU funding



URBACT IV – New Network opportunities

- URBACT IV is the latest iteration of the programme
- Negotiations have concluded and a [draft programme](#) has been submitted to the Commission
- New calls are expected to be launched in 2022 (June or more likely September)
- More details expected at the [URBACT City Festival 2022](#) (June 14th – 16th)
- Thematic objectives:
 - Interreg Specific Objective 1 (ISO 1): a better cooperation governance by enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders to implement urban territorial strategies.
 - As URBACT IV will build the institutional capacity of cities needed to implement territorial strategies, it directly contributes to PO5 (Europe closer to citizens) in particular.

URBACT IV – New Network opportunities

- URBACT IV – Commonalities with URBACT III
 - **Two main types of networks**
 - Action Planning networks
 - Transfer networks
 - **Capacity-building activities**
 - **Knowledge & communication activities**
- URBACT IV – Novelties compared to URBACT III
 - **‘Innovation transfer mechanism’**: city networks that elaborate investment plans for replicating elements of Urban Innovative Actions
 - **New counties eligible**:
 - Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Republic of North Macedonia



Thank you!

- Questions?
- Contact me at urbactireland@emra.ie for more info
- URBACT website: <https://urbact.eu/>
- Subscribe to the URBACT Ireland newsletter:
<https://mailchi.mp/ddc086fb7902/urbactinireland>