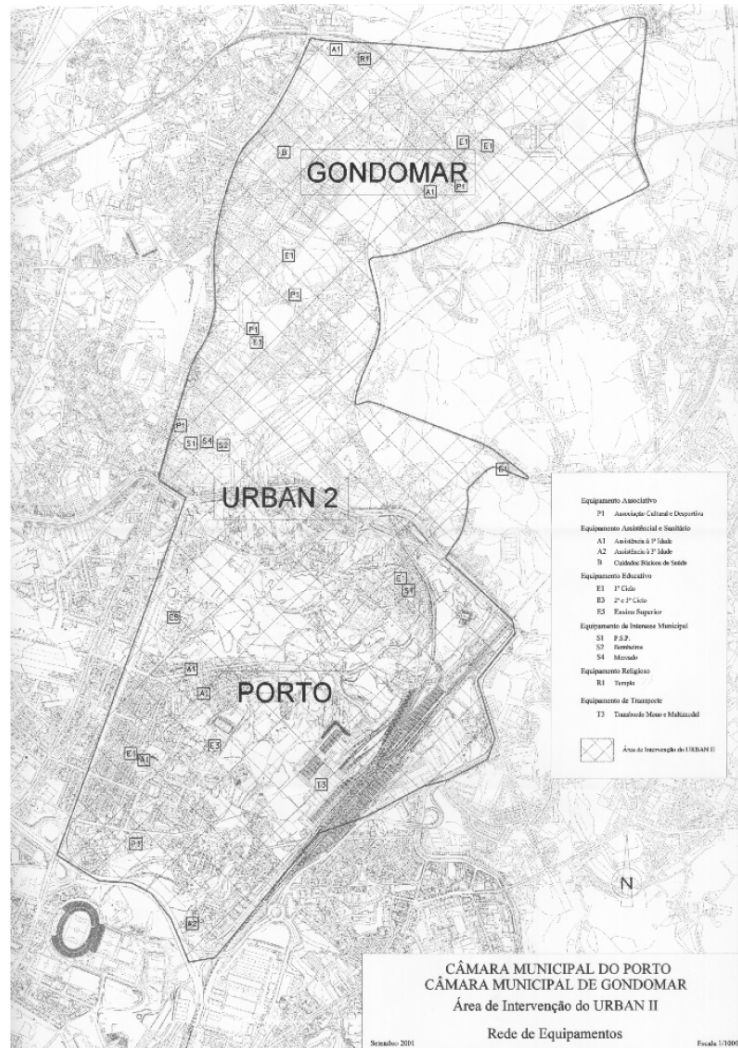


URBAN II Evaluation
Case Study: Porto Gondomar
An isolated success story?



1.0 Introduction

The URBAN II “Porto-Gondomar” intervention area covers 5.7 km² containing a total estimated population of 27,365 inhabitants¹ divided over two municipalities and boroughs: the *Campanha* district in the municipality of Porto, and *Rio Tinto* borough in the municipality of Gondomar. The lay-out of the URBAN II area within the wider agglomeration is shown below.



Porto, which also benefited from URBAN I in the preceding period, is peripheral from an administrative, physical and socio-economic point of view. Furthermore, it is physically separated by a large ring road that again acts as a physical barrier to the movement of people and an issue which separates large numbers of people from local services.

The URBAN II target area of Gondomar covers one of the most deprived and problematic urban area within the metropolitan area of Porto. Gondomar was

¹ INE 2001

characterised in 2000 by 'urban flight'², extremely high and multiple deprivation, derelict buildings and a lack of green areas. Significant new social housing was developed between the 1940s and the 1960s as part of the 'Plan for the Urban Improvement of the City of Porto'. The plan aimed to relocate the poor urban population from the "ghettos" in the city centre towards more 'modern' purpose built accommodation. However the new districts where these individuals were relocated are now amongst the most deprived urban areas in the whole of the Metropolitan area of Porto.

The key data for the overall URBAN II target area are presented in the table below.

Indicators	Data at 2000
Number of Inhabitants (Thousands)	27,365
% of population under 16 years of age in URBAN intervention area (%)	19.2
% of population above 60 years of age in URBAN intervention area (%)	16.4
Extension (km ²)	5.7
EMPLOYMENT	
Unemployment rate (%)	27
% of long-term unemployed compared to total unemployed (%)	66
Number of companies (per 10,000 inhabitants)	120
Number of people supported by States social assistance schemes as compared to total population in URBAN intervention area (State social benefits) (%)	10.5
% of immigrants / minorities / refugees as compared to total population in URBAN intervention area (%)	20
EDUCATION	
% of school drop-out rates (compulsory education levels – secondary school)	30
% of university graduates compared to total population in URBAN intervention area (%)	1.5
Number of nursery schools seats per 1,000 inhabitants	5.8
Crime	
Total number of crimes per seats per 1,000 inhabitants	45
Environment	
% of green areas as compared to URBAN II total extension (km ²)	0

With unemployment rates in the URBAN II area of 27%, they exceeded the average figures for the country and the region by some margin (6.2% and 8.8% in Portugal and in the metropolitan area of Porto respectively in 2002)³. Around 15% and 12% of the total population of Porto and Gondomar respectively were illiterate. Related socio-economic problems included poor ethnic integration in some communities, isolated elderly people and high drug use and trafficking. Furthermore, the area had insufficient basic infrastructure in terms of inadequate roads which again acted as a key barrier for local people to access both jobs and social services.

Based on an original SWOT analysis undertaken by the city authorities, the URBAN II "Porto-Gondomar" programme was launched as a global and integral development programme with a strong focus on urban regeneration and social inclusion. The programme was aimed at the following strategic objectives:

- (1) *Revitalise the urban environment and add value to the public space*, to enable urban spaces to become areas where social and intergenerational relationships are

² Mass depopulation out of the urban core

³ Data from the Mid-term evaluation report carried out in 2003.

possible; and develop green areas improving the overall image of the neighbourhoods;

- (2) *Combat drugs traffic and drug addiction*, within the framework of other national initiatives by promoting prevention and information measures by fostering the existing health and social services to host and treat drug addicts;
- (3) *Revitalise the social environment*, by strengthening local communities to integrate more vulnerable people (elderly, immigrants, ethnic minorities, etc);
- (4) *Boost the economic context*, by making the URBAN area a more secure and open and by improving the skills and qualifications of the local population, particularly the most vulnerable people, to enable them to enter into the labour market;
- (5) *Revitalise the socio-educational context for young people*, by improving the physical environment and by promoting activities to reduce school drop-out rates.

The Programme laid down the following priorities and measures as shown below:

URBAN II "PORTO – GONDOMAR" (2000 – 2006)		
Programme Priorities	Programme Measures	Budget (€ % of total)
Priority 1 – Regenerating the urban character of the area.	▶ <i>Measure 1: Urban and Environmental qualification.</i> <i>Measure 2: Platforms for social integration.</i>	▶ € 8,977,874 58.9% of total
Priority 2 – Social Inclusion and economic and professional qualification	▶ <i>Measure 3: Pre-training, vocational training and promotion of self-employment.</i> <i>Measure 4: Valorisation of local economic activities and promotion of entrepreneurship.</i> <i>Measure 5: Prevision of drug addition.</i>	▶ € 2,240,846 14.7% of total
Priority 3 – Promoting social, cultural and sporting activities	▶ <i>Measure 6: Education.</i> <i>Measure 7: Promotion of socio-cultural life and sport.</i> <i>Measure 8: Active citizenship and participation.</i>	▶ € 3,220,356 21.1% of total
Priority 4 – Technical Assistance	▶ <i>Measure 9A: Technical assistance IN.</i> <i>Measure 9B: Technical assistance OUT.</i>	▶ € 800,874 5.3% of total
TOTAL		€ 15,239,950

Source: PIC, 2007.

The Programme's total cost amounted to € 15,2 million euros, of which € 10,1 million came from ERDF⁴. The programme was managed by the *Comissão de Coordenação e Desenvolvimento Regional do Norte* (hereinafter, CCDR-Norte) a service found at regional level in the *Ministério do Ambiente, do Ordenamento do Território e do Desenvolvimento Regional* (who is responsible for promoting regional development policies in the northern region of Portugal). As Managing Authority for the URBAN II Programme, the *Comissão* was in charge of the project appraisal, funding allocation, monitoring systems and project support, in close collaboration with the local coordinators at both municipalities in Porto and Gondomar members of the Programme's Steering Committee. This public institution is also responsible for the management of other EU-funded programmes (particularly those funded by ERDF: ERDF-Regional Operational Programme; INTERREG, etc).

⁴ Data from PIC (2007).

Has the Programme theory been realised on the ground?

The philosophy underlying the URBAN II programme, which was based on the combination of urban regeneration projects with social inclusion activities, has not fundamentally changed along the way. Nevertheless, the programme was slightly readjusted in 2007 in the light of the evolving context and the need to improve administrative structures and procedures. The financial expenditure data related to Programme priority actions 2 and 3 (linked to social inclusion objectives) are now regarded jointly and expenditures shown in the 2007 Annual Implementation Report exceeded the initially committed amounts by over 20%.

2.0 Impact of the programme

How has the target area changed?

Statistical information provided in the 2007 Annual Implementation Report does not provide a clear picture of the changes produced in the URBAN intervention area. In fact, no updated statistical data for 2006 is provided for the municipalities of Porto and Gondomar or in the area of Grande Porto to reflect changes in levels of unemployment, schools drop-out, etc, and allowing a comparison with the data for 2000/2001. The Mid-term evaluation report also referred to data from 2000 or 2001 to illustrate the socio-economic context in the URBAN II intervention area (as opposed to saying how the area had changed).

When asked about how the URBAN zone in Porto and Gondomar has changed, the key stakeholders interviewed stressed that the support given by the programme has allowed them to implement a participative and integrated strategy. The visit to the intervention area confirmed that the programme contributed to significant changes and improved, revitalised and reshaped the physical urban spaces and improved social and there were numerous 'URBAN labelled' educational, cultural and sport activities to be found. However, stakeholders also emphasised that problems were so deep-seated, that the funding support provided by URBAN could only play a limited role.

Direct Impacts

The latest updated information on the level of outputs and results provided by the 2007 Annual Implementation Report shows that the programme has contributed to noticeable effects in terms of the physical urban environment and social cohesion and that these impacts are highly visible. Derelict neighbourhoods have better access, new improved streets furniture and green spaces, improved façades and better equipped youth centres (i.e. sports equipment, learning materials). Alongside the physical projects, the programme has also improved access to services for those seen most at risk, such as those for elderly, school children and drug addicts. Activities also achieved "social impacts" that stakeholders felt were difficult to quantify or measure, such as 'strengthening' of local communities and boosted self esteem.

On the whole, the output data shown in the 2007 Annual Implementation report points to a high level of achievement by 2006. Most output and results indicators have performed well above what was expected by a significant margin (more than 100%). Only a few output and result indicators were under 100% (highlighted in blue in the tables below). Although the figures suggest that the programme has achieved a very satisfactory performance, they may also indicate that the programme targets may well have been largely underestimated in the beginning (according to three of the stakeholders interviewed). The best performing indicators can be found under:

- Measure 1 on “*Urban and Environmental qualification*” (Pavement extended by 9,390m raising the level of achievement up to 508%; 19,347m² of “Green areas created or renovated”, which raised the level of achievement up to 387%);
- Measure 5 related to “*Prevention of drug addiction*” (20 “Partnerships created” which represented a 1.000%; 2,705 Young (men / women) people supported through the awareness-raising / prevention activities which represented a 451% level of achievement); and Participants (men / women);
- Measure 6 on “*Education*” (5,820 “Children that are Internet users” representing a 582% overshooting; 23,202 “Participants in innovative education projects”, representing a 431% overshooting);
- Measure 8 on “*Active citizenship and participation*” (665 “Participants (men / women)” which represented 738% overshooting).

In contrast, the indicators showing a less satisfactory performance can also be found under Measure 8 on “*Active citizenship and participation*” (2 “Exchanges carried out” represented 40% of what was expected); Measure 4 related to “*Valorisation of local economic activities and promotion of entrepreneurship*” (3 “Awareness-raising activities undertaken” represented the 25% of the expected number). Other underachieving output indicators refer to “Sport facilities created or renovated” (50%), and “Training to support socio-vocational integration” (50%).

Regarding the **programme objective to “Revitalise the urban environment and add value to the public space”**, 16 projects have largely contributed to the performance of the programme. Many of the most successful projects undertaken by the Programme aimed at improving the attractiveness of the neighbourhoods and renovating derelict sites – and preparing them for social infrastructure (cultural and educational functions, such as youth centres, elementary and primary schools, etc).

Priority Area 1 – Regenerating the urban character of the area				
Measures	Indicators	Unit	Accumulated Execution by 31 st Dec 2007	% of achievement
Measure 1 - Urban and Environmental qualification.	Extension of Pavement	m	9,390	507.6%
	Green areas created or renovated	m ²	19,347	386.9%
	Extension of roads spaces for people with reduced mobility	m	5,650	188.5%
	Creation of ramps	n ^o	86	114.7%
	Public urban spaces rehabilitated	m ²	122,287	135.9%
Measure 2: Platforms for social integration.	Sport facilities created or renovated	n ^o	1	50%
	Socio-cultural facilities created or renovated	n ^o	1	100%
	Buildings built	n ^o	2	100%

Among the most successful projects, it is worth mentioning:

- The Project for the **“Urban renovation of External Spaces in Bairro de Habitação Social de Pio XII”**: A total investment of € 455.306 (62% from ERDF) contributed to changing radically the urban landscape in the social housing neighbourhoods of Porto (which dated from 1958). 2,917.91 m² of urban public spaces were improved and a total of 3,083.89 m² of green areas were created or renovated allowing for improved access to the neighbourhood, organised pedestrian and parking areas and the improvement of various building facades).
- The project **“Jardim de Infância da Triana”**: With a total investment of € 417,330, a new and well-equipped primary school building was constructed in the neighbourhood of Triana in the municipality of Gondomar. The new building provided much improved activities for pre-school and primary aged children and offered them educational, recreational, leisure activities that were not possible in the existing old prefabricated school room. The extracurricular activities and the school timetables also help working parents to better reconcile their family responsibilities with their working times. The local population served by this education infrastructure amounts to 14,000 people.

The programme delivered nine projects in order to contribute to the objectives to **Revitalise social environment** and to **Combat drugs traffic and drug addiction**. The programme has contributed to the prevention of drug addiction by targeting information and treatment programmes especially on young people affected or at risk. As for the strategic objective to **Boost the economic context**, the main intervention carried out under URBAN II was the “Regeneration of the Areosa Market”, a physical regeneration project of importance to promote the economic and commercial environment in Gondomar.

Priority Area 2 – Social Inclusion and economic and professional qualification				
Measures	Indicators	Unit	Accumulated Execution by 31 st Dec 2007	% of achievement
Measure 3: Pre-training, vocational training and promotion of self-employment.	People inscribed in vocational training actions by gender (men / women)	n°	84/117	112% / 93.6%
	Vocational training activities	n°	12	80%
	Training to support socio-vocational integration	n°	1	50%
	People supported by actions to set up professional projects (men / women)	n°	1,916	384.%
	People helped out in search of employment / vocational training (men / women)	n°	996	455.8%
	Jobs created (men / women)	n°	124 / 131	190% / 101%
	Vocational training support structures created	n°	4	133.3%
Measure 4: Valorisation of local economic activities and promotion of entrepreneurship.	Awareness-raising activities undertaken	n°	3	25%
	Commercial activities supported	n°	15	100%
	Partnership actions supported	n°	2	100%
	Activities supporting local associations	n°	1	100%
	Events to promote local economic activities undertaken	n°	2	200%
Measure 5: Prevision of drug addition.	Awareness-raising / prevention activities undertaken	n°	162	405%

Priority Area 2 – Social Inclusion and economic and professional qualification				
Measures	Indicators	Unit	Accumulated Execution by 31 st Dec 2007	% of achievement
	Young people supported through the awareness-raising / prevention activities (men / women)	n°	2,705	450.8%
	Cases identified	n°	207	86.3%
	Drug addicted people supported through treatment programmes (men / women)	n°	122	152.5%
	Drug addicted – Alcoholic people supported through treatment programmes (men / women)	n°	155	103.3%
	Partnership created	n°	20	1000%

Source: 2007 Annual Implementation Report

Among the most successful projects carried out under this priority, it is worth mentioning:

- In the framework of the project **“Ludobus – Ludoteca Itinerante”** undertaken in the municipality of Gondomar, an important socio-educational work was carried out targeting “street children” (children not attending school) in the area. With a total cost of € 60,173 Euros and additional funding support from private promoters (an old bus given by the local transport company), a team of social workers provided psychological support to a selected group of children affected by severe family situations (domestic violence, drugs, etc) with the aim to motivate them back into school and generally back in to society.
- The project entitled **“Prevenir para não Remediar”** – An awareness raising programme to prevent drugs addiction consisting of a set of 5 awareness raising activities targeting young people in areas where there is a higher risk of drug trafficking and addiction. Among these activities, the “Café para Pais” provided a meeting point with teachers and other local agents to debate issues and solutions around drug addiction in an open and action orientated way.

In addition, a large number of projects have contributed to achieve the programme strategic objective to **Revitalise the socio-educational context for young people**. This project supported innovative education projects providing financial support to the educational centres (schools, high-schools, etc) located in the URBAN area to develop innovative projects related to sports, literature, creative writing skills, science, and to actually equip the school with new facilities (libraries, IT rooms, etc). The activities undertaken with support of the programme have contributed to a better social and intergenerational living together and a more strengthened local community spirit by improving access to cultural, sport and leisure activities specifically to young and elderly people.

Priority Area 3 – Promoting social, cultural and sporting activities.				
Measures	Indicators	Unit	Accumulated Execution by 31 st Dec 2007	% of achievement
Measure 6: Education.	Children that are Internet users	n°	5,820	582%
	Innovative education projects supported	n°	32	152.4%
	Participants in innovative education projects	n°	23,202	430.8%
	Environmental awareness-raising carried out	n°	17	340%
	Young people taking part in information / training	n°	1,730	144.2%

Priority Area 3 – Promoting social, cultural and sporting activities.				
Measures	Indicators	Unit	Accumulated Execution by 31 st Dec 2007	% of achievement
	activities for professionals projects			
	Training actions undertaken	n°	32	457.1%
	Education projects undertaken	n°	57	475%
	Internet access points created in schools	n°	46	164.3%
Measure 7: Promotion of socio-cultural life and sport.	Promotional activities undertaken	n°	9	90%
	Young people taking part in leisure activities undertaken	n°	7,650	255%
	Cultural activities supported	n°	30	200%
	Sport activities supported	n°	46	184%
	Participants involved in cultural & sport activities	n°	15,300	306%
	Elderly people involved in cultural & sport activities	n°	1,300	288.9%
	Cultural and leisure activities of permanent character created	n°	31	155%
	Sport activities of permanent character created	n°	17	170%
Measure 8: Active citizenship and participation.	Partnerships developed	n°	22	220%
	Interinstitutional meetings	n°	19	187.5%
	Awareness-raising activities	n°	12	400%
	Families supported	n°	27	90%
	Debating / information activities carried out	n°	11	275%
	Participants (men / women)	n°	665	738%
	Exchanges carried out	n°	2	40%
	Partnerships developed	n°	30	300%
	Meetings / sessions carried out	n°	9	112.5%
Autonomous families	n°	3	60%	

Source: 2007 Annual Implementation Report

Some examples of successful projects under Priority Area 3 are highlighted below:

- By the action “**Support to Projects in the schools**”, a number of innovative projects were carried out to prevent school drop-out at all levels, such as “School-Radio in Nicolau Nasoni School”; “Dynamiting Leisure time during breaks”; “Hip-hop festival in School EB 2/3 Areosa”. These projects were prioritised as they proposed sustainable solutions to the problems identified in the different schools and contributed to improve students’ motivation and performance.
- The **project “Interinstitutional Coordination”** provided key local actors in the field of education (schools associations, municipality services, etc) a platform to share knowledge and experience about innovative actions, methods and resources to give answers to the complex challenges faced by the school community in the intervention area. As well as improving local teachers’ training, the project managed to integrate a multidisciplinary approach and reinforce the partnership work among local actors.
- With a total cost of €77,229 (70% from ERDF), the project “**Seniors em Movimento**” offered recreational services (such as, aquagym, poetry lessons, basic gymnastic) to elderly people in some daycentres in Porto that complement the activities made available by the limited local financial resources. As noted during the case study visit, the daycentres in Porto experienced an increase in the demand and number of beneficiaries attending the centres thanks to the higher quantity and quality of leisure services offered. These figures have decreased again once the project came to an end.

Indirect Impacts

Working in partnership involving non-institutional actors may well not be innovative elsewhere, but in this part of Portugal the model applied in Porto is not found outside of the URBAN 'experience'. Typically, policy making is characterised by nationally centralised and sectoral approaches. URBAN II is the only urban regeneration initiative in the area that is based on broader consensus, empowerment and integrative participation model. Thus, the success of the programme in the intervention area is closely related to the ***“URBAN partnership model”***, as stressed by all interviewees.

3.0 Links with other programmes and policies

Given the limited financial size of the URBAN II “Porto – Gondomar” programme, it was important to link up with wider national urban regeneration and development policies and strategies – and maximise and align all available resources. Thus, two Global Action Plans were designed to support the national, regional and local urban regeneration initiatives by identifying the specific projects complementary to those foreseen under the Portuguese Community Framework and the Portuguese State Thematic Programmes. For instance, the National programme to combat poverty (Programme *Rendimento Mínimo Garantido*) aimed to tackle the problems posed by low average income and high unemployment rates in the area; the INTEGRAR programme was directed at fighting against social exclusion and the *Intervenção Operacional de Requalificação Urbana* focusing on the regeneration and renovation of urban areas.

Other additional examples of national, regional and local programmes and plans complementary to the URBAN II “Porto – Gondomar” programme are provided below:

- In the area of revitalisation of urban spaces, some interventions planned by the Operational Programme for “Accessibility and Transport” and the Regional Operational Programme for the “Region do Norte” (Measure 3.15), both within the Objective 1 Programme, have contributed to remove some of the “*ghettos*” located in the URBAN zone;
- In the field of social integration of the most vulnerable people, employment, equal opportunities between women and men and health, it is worth noting the following examples:
 - UNIVA programme (Creation of labour and social integration units);
 - Vocational Programmes dealing with employment and social integration centres, promoted by the Vocational training and Employment Institute;
 - Operational Programme on “Employment, Training and Social Development”;
 - Municipal programmes to combat drug addiction – “Happy Porto” (*Porto Feliz*).

Other policy initiatives and programmes in the country have been inspired by the philosophy and integral approach underlying the URBAN II programme. For example,

the new city development policy, the so-called POLIS XXI (2007-2013), which has influenced the Portuguese National Strategic Reference Framework (2007-2013), as it promotes:

- Interventions with a strong physical urban regeneration focus and a more integral vision to transform cities into urban spaces enabling more social cohesion, economic competitiveness and environmental quality;
- New ways for governance based on more active citizen participation and more involvement of the multiple local actors responsible for urban development policies (public, private and civil society organisations); as well as more flexible cooperation arrangements and mechanisms.

4.0 Factors of success

The URBAN II intervention area and programme have offered useful lessons learnt to be borne in mind for future initiatives dealing with these complex socio-economic problems, for instance:

- The use of a partnership (*parcerias*) model involving not only all institutions concerned at all levels (local, regional and national), but also local associations, civil society organisations, etc. The application of this model allowed all partners, irrespective from their legal status, to work together, apply integral responses jointly to the URBAN area's multidimensional socio-economic problems. As highlighted elsewhere⁵, working in partnership is not a widespread practice for implementing urban development and regeneration policies in Portugal. The experience with URBAN II, which is based on the expertise gathered in the previous URBAN I programme, has added a considerable value to local, regional and national policies and initiatives covering the target area.
- The implementation of the URBAN II "Porto – Gondomar" strategy on the basis of a joint action developed and agreed by local actors and the interaction of other complementary financial instruments. As a result, all resources and actors were focused towards a common strategy to tackle the intervention area's main challenges;
- Linked to the previous points, the application of intervention logic defined as "work *with* the population", as opposed to "work *for* the population". This philosophy was embedded in the URBAN II "Porto – Gondomar" strategy and partnership arrangements with the aim to implement a global and integral development programme to revitalise the URBAN zone and reinforce the role and capacities of local actors and beneficiaries.

The following key success factors have contributed to the level of achievement of the URBAN II "Porto – Gondomar" programme:

⁵ See Chapter 2 on impacts, chapter 4 on success factors and chapter 6 on management.

- *The process to define and establish the programme strategy* has been valued by all key stakeholders involved: The URBAN II programme strategy was based on the development of two “Global Action Plans” (Plan de Acção Global) for a period of 3 years (2000-2004; 2004-2006). The “Global Action Plans” were development plans jointly agreed by all key partners in the URBAN Programme (Comissão, municipalities of Porto and Gondomar, etc), on the basis of an in-depth analysis of the needs in the URBAN zone. The Plan included the list of projects and action programmes identified jointly by the municipalities to carry out during the given three-year period with the view to achieve the programme’s objectives. These Plans have also played an important role in articulating an effective and participative partnership both at programme and project levels from the very beginning. The preparation in partnership of these Plans on the basis of a diagnosis of the URBAN II zone most pressing needs and problems laid the foundations for the effective and positive cooperation between the partners that was corroborated at the interviews during the case study visit.
- *Good institutional collaboration between the key partners in the Programme;* as evidenced during the field visit to Porto, the good collaboration between the members of the Steering committee, particularly the *Comissão* and the municipalities of Porto and Gondomar, has largely contributed to the high levels of achievement by the Programme. Solid political back-up was provided by the municipality of Gondomar, and has enabled the Programme management to work smoothly and promoted a higher visibility of the Programme both at regional and local levels.
- *Taking advantage of URBAN I experience.* The composition and allocation of tasks within the Programme Steering Committee allowed the expertise gathered by the municipalities with the management of the previous URBAN I. In contrast to this positive note, the role of the national institutions represented at the *Comissão de Acompanhamento* could have added more value to the Programme management and results, for instance by sharing knowledge and by mainstreaming positive practices among other key Portuguese stakeholders in the country.
- *Close on-going monitoring of the projects and action programmes funded by the Programme,* by the members of the *Comissão de Acompanhamento*, in particular after the mid-term evaluation was carried out. The Global Action Plans and the strategy underlying the URBAN II “Porto – Gondomar” Programme were adequate to tackle the problems identified by the diagnosis.
- *Multidisciplinary teams both in the beneficiary organisations and the technical units* at the municipalities of Porto and Gondomar, in line with the integral projects selected for funding in the framework of the programme and the complex and multidimensional problems identified in the URBAN zone.

5.0 Level of an Integrated Approach

In Portugal as a whole, policy making and implementation for urban regeneration is rather fragmented across national, regional and local actors concerned and diversified by sectors (physical, social, etc). Many partnerships in the urban regeneration field are “non-inclusive” and sectoral policy agendas make it difficult to establish enduring processes which are “cross-cutting” or “cross-sectoral”. This applies not only to local level within the municipalities (a *horizontal mainstreaming or transfer of good practices*), but particularly to national level (a *vertical mainstreaming or transfer of good practices*).

Against this background, the integrated approach adopted in the URBAN II programme Porto – Gondomar can be considered a real achievement. It has brought together key stakeholders to work in employment, social inclusion and physical and environmental regeneration in the area. The programme involved a rather balanced and coherent set of physical and urban regeneration, social integration and educational measures based on local partnership proposals laid down in the Global Action Plans.

The URBAN II “Porto – Gondomar” integrated approach was also reflected in the membership of the programme management structures. Alongside the representatives of the CCDR-Norte and the municipalities of Porto and Gondomar, key sectoral stakeholders (employment, transport, environment, finances, etc) were involved in the *Comissão de Acompanhamento (Ministério do Trabalho e da Solidaridade Social; Ministério do Ambiente, do Ordenamento do Território e do Desenvolvimento Regional, etc)*.

However, the experience with URBAN II remains a rather stand-alone experience. It has led to continued partnership by some of the partner organisations in a limited number of cases. On the whole, the integrated partnership model applied in URBAN II will not be mainstreamed to other national, regional or local policies in the field of urban regeneration. In this respect, representatives of academia have also considered the case of URBAN II in Portugal in general and, in Porto in particular, to be a “of special interest because it clearly presents itself as an innovative episode as far as the promotion of more inclusive processes of networking and empowerment of agents of urban regeneration are concerned⁶”.

6.0 Programme management and partnership

The programme was managed by the *Comissão de Coordenação e Desenvolvimento Regional do Norte* (hereinafter, CCDR Norte) a deconcentrated service at regional level of the the *Ministério do Ambiente, do Ordenamento do Território e do Desenvolvimento Regional*, responsible for promoting regional development policies in

⁶ Isabel Breda-Vázquez, Paulo Conceição and Ruben Fernandez; “*Partnership Diversity and Governance Culture: Evidence from Urban Regeneration Policies in Portugal*” (2009); Urban Studies; page 2234; <http://usj.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/46/10/2213>.

the north of Portugal. Alongside the Programme's managing authority, the Steering Committee was composed of representatives of the Municipalities of Porto and Gondomar (*Câmara Municipal de Gondomar* and *Câmara Municipal de Porto*) and the *Fundação para o Desenvolvimento Social do Porto*. The role of the Local Coordinators appointed by each *Câmara Municipal* has been of paramount importance to keep the implementation close to the ground throughout the programme's life. The Local Coordinators have thus contributed to closely monitor the projects and action programmes carried out in each municipality, to effectively liaise with the CCDR-Norte and other members of the Steering Committee and dynamise the local community associations involved in the projects.

As Managing Authority for the URBAN II Programme, the *Comissão* has been in charge of the project appraisal, funding allocation, monitoring systems and project support, in close collaboration with the local coordinators at both municipalities in Porto and Gondomar. This public institution is also responsible for the management of other EU-funded programmes (particularly those funded by ERDF: ERDF-Regional Operational Programme; INTERREG, etc). Unlike the municipalities of Porto and Gondomar (actively involved in the previous URBAN I Programme), the CCDR-Norte's role in URBAN II programme was much more intense than it was in the previous one. Thus, the experience in managing the URBAN II programme has enabled CCDR-Norte to strengthen its internal capacities. Furthermore, the CCDR-Norte has played a key role as "arbiter" between the members of the Steering Committee and the *Comissão de Acompanhamento*.

Despite these efforts, some questions can be raised about the level to which the local community has been really involved in all stages. Field visits point to the fact that the empowerment of the local community was more focused on the implementation of the projects and action programmes, more so than being at the heart of the key management decisions at Programme level. After all, funding allocations and appraisal decisions were made by the Steering Committee members. The mid-term evaluation report called upon a more active involvement of the *Comissão de Acompanhamento*. Both interviews carried out and documents analysed (particular the 2007 Annual Implementation report) have provided evidence that the participation of local associations and NGOs has been strengthened lately.

The national authorities seem to have missed an opportunity to take advantage of the synergies created with URBAN II. They have not really built more permanent structures and channels for knowledge sharing and capitalising the gained experience in the different Portuguese URBAN II programmes to benchmark different approaches and methods in the future. Indeed, the lack of national networking structures was criticised by the programme stakeholders consulted. No contact was established by the managers of the URBAN II programmes in Lisbon and the ones in Porto.

The programme's participation in URBACT activities has been rather limited as well. The programme's stakeholders interviewed confirmed not to have profited much from the information on URBACT. Only one experience in a project application initiated by the city of Liverpool was known to interviewees, but there has been no follow-up since.

7.0 Sustainability and legacy

At **project level**, the case study visit has pointed to contrasting levels of success with regard to the sustainability of the activities supported by the URBAN II “Porto – Gondomar” programme. Most examples of projects being mainstreamed where URBAN II funding has been replaced by other local resources could be found in the municipality of Gondomar. This has not been the case for the majority of projects in Porto, where some beneficiaries (schools, etc) rather than the municipality, have mainstreamed some activities funded by the programme. The differing political commitment from the local policy makers in both municipalities explains this contrasting level of mainstreaming of URBAN II projects. The evolving local political context in Porto was simply no longer conducive – support for URBAN II became rather partisan, and elections have led to changing coalitions and an erosion of the support basis.

Alongside the mainstreamed services, it goes without saying that the social infrastructure projects have left a valuable legacy behind. Examples are the projects to renovate derelict neighbourhoods (like the one in Contumil, Pio XII) or to build new educational buildings (like the Jardim de Infancia do Triana; the Youth Centre in Gondomar).

As highlighted during the interviews, the Programme should not have left to the discretion of the national and/or local policy makers to decide whether or not to mainstream positive practices tested by URBAN II funded projects. With the view to avoid such situations, a well-founded explanation about how the project or activity was going to be continued post URBAN, should have been requested to all programme beneficiaries at the appraisal stage.

At programme level, the structures and staff involved in URBAN II at the CCDR-Norte and the municipality of Gondomar are still active in the programme closure and in other regional and local urban regeneration programmes. In the case of the municipality of Porto, the technical assistance team has been dismantled though. All stakeholders interviewed confirmed that it will be difficult for the same partnership to work under the same terms during the new programming period 2007-2013. A new instrument to provide funding support to local urban regeneration projects involving participative local partnership has been foreseen in the National Strategic Reference Framework 2007-2013 for Portugal, but it has not yet been implemented.

Some local partnerships with key stakeholders involved in URBAN II will continue once the programme comes to an end (by the 30th September 2009), in particular by the agreements with:

- Job Centres within the Employment and Vocational Training Institute (*Clube do Emprego e Estruturas Itinerantes Auxiliares na procura do Emprego*);
- Regional Directorate General for Education in the northern region (Innovative education projects, for instance the case of the “School Radio”);
- Porto Public Transport company (“Autocarro do Emprego e Autocarro das Profissões”);

- Centre Vocational Training in the Electronic industry; CISCO systems, Children and Youth Protection Commission in Gondomar; among others.

As noted above, the success of the Programme in the intervention area can be explained by the application of the “URBAN partnership model”. However, the programme should have included the obligation for the national competent authorities to mainstream the “partnership model” into its national policies and programmes upon completion of the URBAN II Programme. The infrastructures put in place could have been valuable for a broader range of initiatives benefiting the area. However, the results of the programme would have been better guaranteed in the longer term if the programme had foreseen the mainstreaming of positive practices and results and the “partnership model” itself into national urban regeneration policies and practices.