

where: Bremen, Leipzig, Nuremberg
policy areas: Cooperation and participation
when: 2008-2015

Koopstadt is a joint initiative involving the cities of Bremen, Leipzig and Nuremberg. It began in 2008 and is seen by the partners as the ideal model of integrated strategic urban development policy across all city departments.

The project arose from the need for a national urban development policy, an idea which came about in the context of the Leipzig Charter, which promotes sustainable urban development.

The project's ongoing aim is to generate an incorporated set of instruments for a strategic urban development policy in the three cities. As regards Koopstadt objectives, the three cities focus on generating new approaches to current challenges in urban development, testing tailor-made working methods, sharing experiences and implementing concrete urban development projects.

Urban revitalisation

All three cities have tackled these objectives differently.

Bremen

Through Koopstadt, the city of Bremen has developed 'The Weser. River for life' programme, which is being funded by the European Regional Development Fund. It

involves projects and measures aimed at improving the ecological conditions of the Weser river, its tributaries and banks as well as encouraging greater recreational use.



Weser river Bremen

"The three cities' cooperation has reinforced the importance of the urban development blueprint and reinvigorated the sharing of experience."

Reinhard Loske, Senator for Environment, Construction, Transport and European Affairs, Bremen

Leipzig

The city of Leipzig in 2009 adopted the urban development concept of 'Leipzig 2020', meaning the Koopstadt projects were defined in the context of this process. One concrete output of Leipzig's participation in Koopstadt is its Wächterhäuser scheme which aims to maintain and protect the city's existing and endangered buildings by populating them with new occupants.





“In Leipzig, we would like to use Koopstadt to implement and advance innovative and exemplary projects based on the integrated city development concept together with various stakeholders from the business and science fields.”

*Martin zur Nedden, Deputy Mayor
for Urban Development and Construction, Leipzig*

The basic principle of Wächterhäuser is that by introducing tenants to these properties, the city can help prevent vandalism, limit weather damage and ensure their general maintenance. The scheme has been so successful that several other German cities - Dresden, Gortitz, Chemnitz, Magdeburg, Halle - have replicated it.

Nuremberg

Nuremberg has formed area teams in six city districts that showed development potential from an urban strategy point of view. This area-based approach assumes that each area has its own specific problems to be dealt with. For example, once a thriving large-scale industrial zone, the now abandoned western district of Nuremberg is being used for new dwellings and business enterprises to

provide new jobs. Public participation is a major component of this revitalisation process.

“With Koopstadt we converted West Nuremberg into a ‘research laboratory’ for new strategies of integrated urban development. Most important, the project has inspired huge public interest and involvement during at a time of economic difficulty, job cutbacks and company closures.”

Ulrich Maly, Lord Mayor, Nuremberg

Citizen and partner involvement

Cooperation is not exclusive to these cities as it is also happening among the project agencies outside the administrations. This helps to maximise networking opportunities. All three cities have also involved the local public, universities and industry. The cities’ businesses have committed to cooperating both within and between the cities, through for instance, departments for social, environmental and cultural affairs and education.

Time to reflect

As the project has continued, steps have been taken to ensure progress is carefully monitored. A board of trustees was established with experts from various fields and external offices are charged with coordinating the project. Many events and workshops are held between the cities in order to reflect on the work’s progress and make adjustments where necessary.

It is clear that Koopstadt is representative of innovative city management, both in the type of cooperation it adopts and in the approaches taken to challenges faced in urban development. The cooperation between these cities and the broader network of partners has demonstrated how successful the project can be. The project will run until 2015.



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