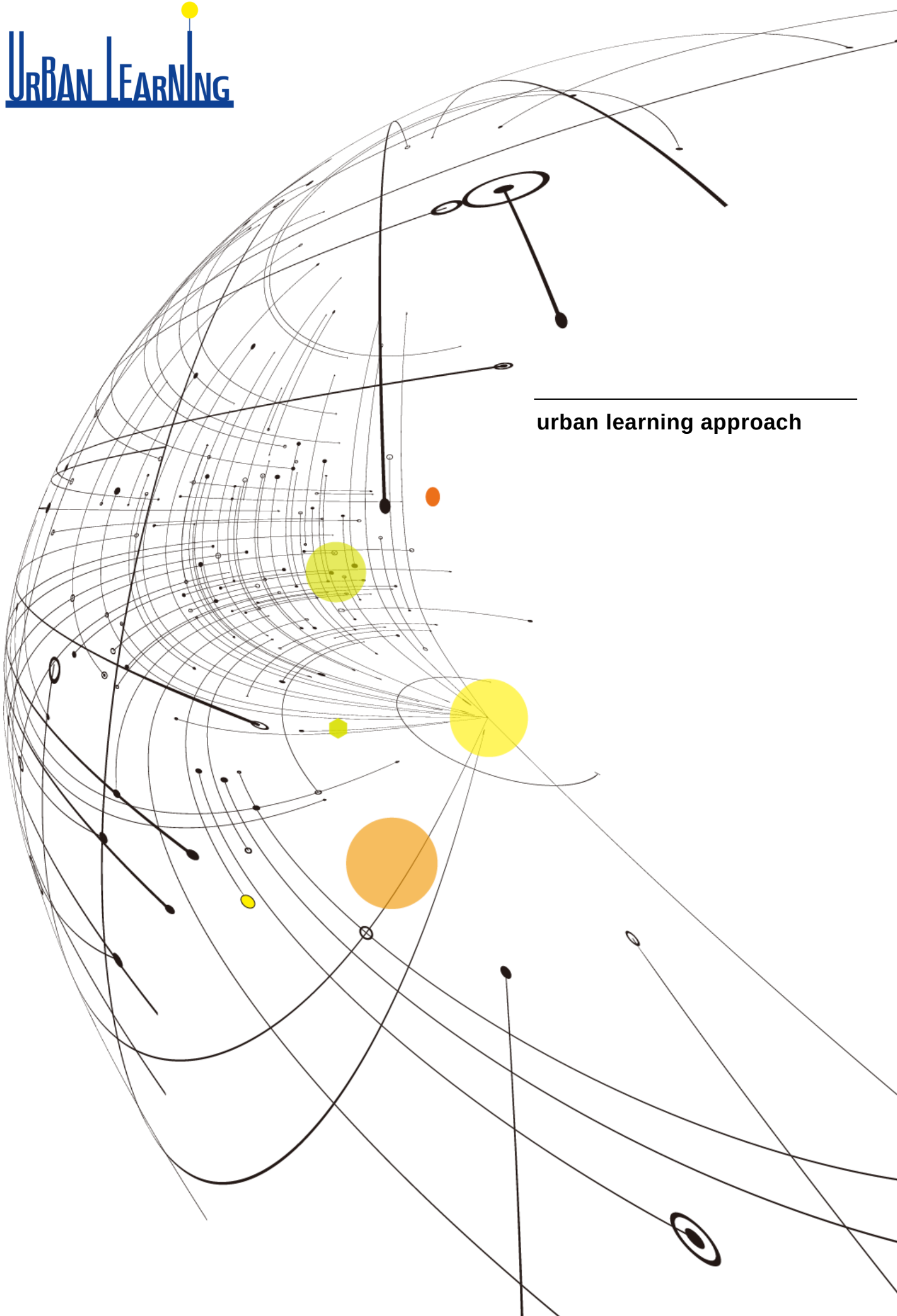
URBAN LEARNING



urban learning approach

# Urban Learning Approach

The project aims to mainstream and institutionalize integrative urban energy planning within city administrations and is designed as a project from cities for cities. The focus is on the governance processes related to the (re-)development of urban sites.

## As results the project aims to:

- involve key stakeholders for significantly increasing the dialogue and mutual understanding (city administration, utility, developers) on integrative urban energy planning in view of new societal, organisational and technological challenges;
- enhance the institutional capacity of administrations of leading European cities to plan urban (re-) development areas in an integrated manner – impacting directly on (re-) development areas for around about 3 million of inhabitants in the next 20 years;
- improved planning coordination between the city and infrastructure providers and energy suppliers;
- create lasting structures for necessary exchange between the key stakeholders in the participating cities;
- condense important best practices and insights from experiences in the participating cities;
- facilitate active learning by providing expertise to cities and transfer knowledge and models for replication elements.

## The project consists of three main steps:

1. **involvement of all needed stakeholders – different city departments, utilities, energy providers, planning companies, national institutions, government bodies;**

Involvement of all relevant stakeholders has a significant role in the successful implementation of project goals and deliverables. To foster that, a local working group (LWG) was set up in each participating city. LWG acted as forum for dialogue across departments and external stakeholders, and as a platform to discuss improvements to existing governance processes.

The frequency of meetings, topics discussed, and activities undertaken were specifically tailored to each individual city and their local circumstances.

2. **analysis of current processes and selection of best practices – analysis was performed in three segments – governance processes, instruments and tools that are being used in the process of urban and energy planning, new and innovative technologies;**

In the context of URBAN LEARNING the „**governance processes**" are understood as administrative management processes related to integrative energy planning as part of the design and planning of urban areas, involving various departments of the city administration as well as their respective negotiating and/or contracting parties. "Integrative energy planning" names the integration of energy aspects into the urban design and planning process(es), including energy aspects of supply and demand and involving all relevant parties as early as possible.

**Recommendations about the design of process maps:**

- Not too complex, not too simplified – tailored for the addressed focus groups (for instance three different versions for the politicians, experts of the departments and external stakeholders)

- Simply to read on one page with clear distinctions of the planning phases
- Use variations of shapes and colours to differ issues (e.g. for stakeholders, instruments and tools)

Each city project team, supported by the Local Working Group, analysed its urban an energy planning processes to find out how those two issues are dealt with and how they are intertwined. Furthermore, they analysed influential factors influencing these processes either at city level or above (regional or national level). Conclusions vary for between cities and its detailed description can be found out in the deliverables of work package 4. As a part of this analysis all cities developed both a descriptive report and a scheme of an upgraded governance process.

Parallel to the analysis of governance processes, cities undertook a stocktaking exercise in order to improve cities' understanding of **currently used instruments and tools**, and their relevance for integrating energy aspects into the planning process. Working on the awareness of gaps and missing links, the cities increased the knowledge on which instruments and tools need to be adjusted and how, and which innovative instruments and tools should be added.

Over 170 instruments and tools had been identified and 44 were selected and mapped by the cities. The analysis of each city's results has identified seven common gaps and allowed learning from each other.

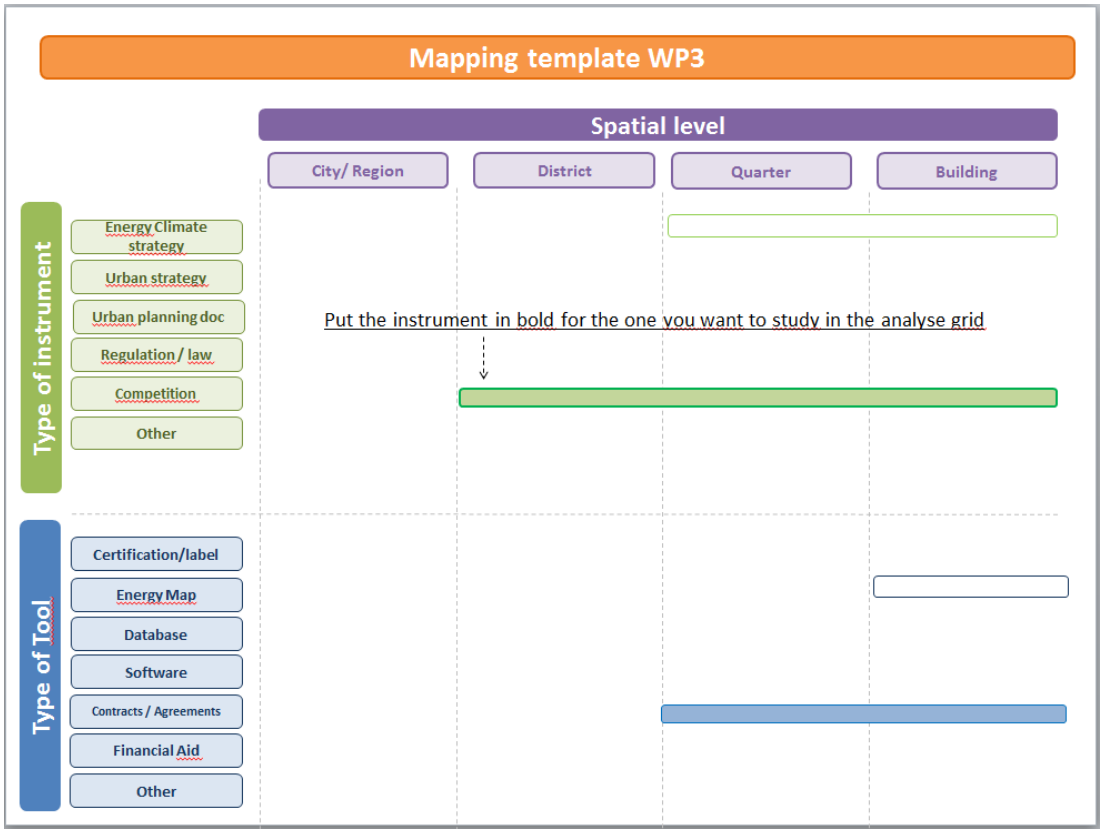



*Figure 1 Template mapping (WP3)*

The third step of the analysis included identification of **innovative technical solutions** for low-carbon development and analysis of the implications for the urban energy planning processes. The analysis was carried out in search for commonalities and differences relevant for future city developments.

In the context of URBAN LEARNING "innovative technologies" are not confined too tight, but should rather be understood as a focus on technical solutions with a high potential for low-carbon development in the respective cities, focussing on new building development and heat supply.

3. **upgrade and dissemination – upgrade of current processes, dissemination of best cases and other project conclusions among a wider audience of cities.**

After discovering the strengths and weaknesses of current processes and tools, cities identified steps and elements of the planning process that can be further developed, adjusted, and improved.

Collecting all lessons learned during the project, abstracting from concrete city cases to general recommendations, and clustering of similar issues and solutions was done to facilitate the dissemination of best practice and to improve knowledge transfer among different cities is a valuable output of work done within the project. That way the knowledge and insights accumulated within the project consortium are extended to other cities.