

STUDY ON THE ADDED VALUE OF EUROPEAN COHESION POLICY TO INTEGRATED URBAN DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

The *Commissariat Général à l'Égalité des Territoires* (CGET) and *Régions de France* ordered EDATER consultancy to measure the added value of the urban integrated dimension in the European cohesion policy and in the operational programmes (OP) for the 2014-2020 period.

Thanks to a reference document describing potential added values, along with interviews, meetings gathering seven managing authorities (MA) characterized by various strategic frameworks and sixteen of their urban authorities (UA) (see figure 1), and a survey of projects holders, fourteen added values have been identified.

This summary is not only aimed at pinpointing observed added values, but also at identifying the difficulties of implementing urban integrated development, as well as proposals for the new programming period (see full report for further details). An in-depth study should be conducted later, especially at the regional programmes' level to perform a more complete evaluation.

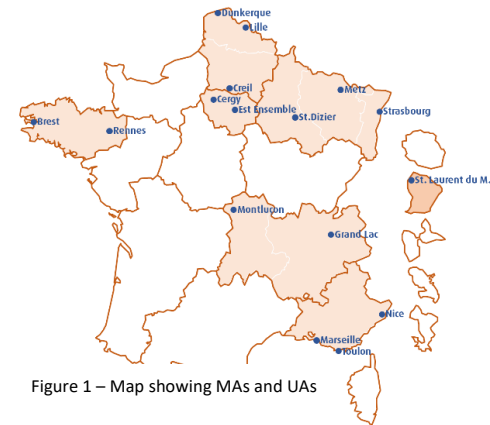


Figure 1 – Map showing MAs and UAs

ADDED VALUES OF INTEGRATED URBAN DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES (IUDS)

Fourteen added values have been identified, though, these added values depend on the conditions and the implementation of strategies and are different from one region to another (Integrated Territorial Investment or urban axis, territorial and thematic targets, means, implementation conditions, etc).

Effects on urban development strategies

1. The urban thematic is crucial in the ERDF-ESF Operational Programmes

The IUDS gave a dedicated position to urban issues in the OP through several articles from European Regulation (art. 7 from 1301/3013-ERDF, art. 13 from 1304-ESF) and national partner agreement. This dedicated position is dependent

on public policies, financial means and governance.

2. Diagnosis and territorial strategies production have been strengthened The IUDS have often enabled the conception of a regional shared diagnosis (used to define the selection criteria for territories). Therefore, this approach has helped develop bottom-up logics aimed at collecting the territorial expectations so as to take them into account within the OP. The IUDS have strengthened local diagnosis during the calls for application. These approaches have made possible a cross-disciplinary dynamic among intercommunal bodies (named "EPCI") and an involvement from elected representatives. They have been translated into a better coherence in local strategies (related to city contracts and in a context of territorial reorganisation) and into a fast-track appropriation of new European priorities for the 2014-2020 period.

3. Urban projects and the scope of intervention have been extended Regardless of the territorial or thematical priorities chosen by the UA, they have helped strengthen territorial policies. Focusing on a particular priority neighbourhood (named "QPV" (*Quartiers prioritaires de la ville*) or widening their intervention as a complement to city contracts, has helped urban projects to strengthen, putting urban priorities (such as energy

efficiency, digital technology and innovation) high on the agenda. Other MAs have promoted broader interventions, local urban planning strategies and more unusual issues (town-hinterland relationships or city-to-city cooperation for instance).

4. Long-term strategies have been defined The IUDS have been established for six years. Therefore, it makes long-term strategies possible: many territories have scheduled their action plans more easily thanks to a significant visibility of their investment's ability and perspectives.

5. Co-funding has been mobilised The IUDS tacitly help the search for co-funding and the strengthening of several contractualisations' forms (through CPER-*Contrats de plan Etat-Regions*, as a complement to other contracts, with aids from state, regional or other institutional partners, or sometimes with other European structural funds.)

Effects on the governance

6. Common management and dialogue between local authorities have been set up The IUDS design and/or enhance a common management. Indeed, they attribute a specific responsibility to conurbations and metropolis, giving them an intermediary body status. Thus, they institutionalise and promote partnerships and management dialogue between MA and UA and organise locally a stronger partnership between UA and projects holders (though, the inhabitants' mobilisation is quiet marginal). Finally, this common management is observable through the inter-unit dialogue within the UAs themselves.

7. Priorities regarding post 2020 have been politically supported in the territory The IUDS contribute to political support of EU priorities. They translate into elected representatives' involvement in pre-selection committees, in the promotion of European priorities, and in projects financed by European funds.

8. European technical skills have been strengthened or renewed within the UA Generally, preparation of the implementation of IUDS (2014-2015) has made possible a continuous increase in the acquisition of European skills as well as an acculturation of the units involved. Many UAs have structured themselves in terms of job creations, organisation in project mode, and so on. As well as creating new skills, IUDS have urged UAs to develop a meticulous process of research and use of funds, and a densification of the actor network on several issues (sustainable development, energy efficiency...). It is worth noting that these new skills are an asset in the long-run: the UAs reckon that having experienced the implementation of Integrated Urban Project in 2007-2013 increases the effectiveness of their actions during the 2014-2020 programme. The implementation phase (2016-2017) intensified these new ways of working within local administrations and with project holders (through a better appropriation of some EU rules, the development of the project mode as a process of reference, and through pooling and transfer of experiences). Today, they translate into higher-quality projects.

9. IUDS has helped territorial organisation renewal IUDS implementation goes hand in hand with territorial organisation renewal (MAPTAM and NOTRe laws, redrawing of the inter-municipal map, municipal elections, and so on). To some extent, it has contributed to the renewal of projects.

Effects on the projects

10. Search for project holders have been stimulated on specific issues Thanks partly to a specific thematic targeting, IUDS has stimulated the search for project holders active on new or specific strategic topics wider than urban renewal and social inclusion. Some UAs decided not to hold projects themselves, ensuring only the animation of their IUDS, so as to make the initiatives and credibility of the programme better.

11. Projects have developed and become more ambitious. Some of them have been revived Thanks to specific means and their distribution in the targeted territories, the IUDS have speeded up decision-making in favour of some projects. They also have implied a resizing of the projects, making them more ambitious or more cross-disciplinary (widening the topics to other related issues). Moreover, the IUDS have revitalised projects that territories had put aside for lack of financial means.

Fig 2 - Recurrence of the Investment priorities of the regional OP



12. Territories experience potential economic and social benefits Effects for the territories are still difficult to measure at this stage of the programming and with the method chosen for this study. Nevertheless, some IUDS local effects can be foreseen thanks to the actions' themes chosen by the MA (see fig. 2): economy (Thematic objective (TO)3), insertion and employment (TO9), sustainable urban approaches (TO4 and TO6) and numerical uses' promotion (TO2)). They should be clarified within the scope of a specific evaluation.

**Indirect effects,
more limited**

13. European networks have been strengthening, and access to other European programmes is made easier Although rarely observed during the study, the spread of a "European project culture" within the UA and among project holders has sometimes helped structure an actor network involved in European funds issues and helped enhance their ability to access other European programmes. This dynamic however has been slowed down because of reduction or lack of means (human or financial).

14. Communication actions about EU funds has been enhanced European dynamic has encouraged UAs and project holders to communicate about EU structural funds, sometimes even beyond the disclosure requirements. However, a few projects have ended, and therefore the communication dynamic is underused.