

Project title: Enable Private Owners of Residential Buildings to integrate them into Urban Restructuring Processes

Acronym: EPO Urban

Budget: 2.07 mil. €

Lifetime: 39 months starting July 2011

Project Partners: City of Leipzig (DE / Lead partner), Aufbauwerk Region Leipzig GmbH (DE), City of Sopot (PL), City of ... (IT), Prag 11 (CZ), Regional Development Voitsberg (AT), City of Celje (SI), City of ... (SK), Academia Istropolitana Nova/SK

Background

Rapid social and demographic change in Central European transformation cities exposes **residential areas** to an extreme pressure to adapt. As a consequence, most of the cities have some dysfunctional residential areas and are in urgent need of integrated development strategies. The deprived city areas are seldom interesting for large private investors and individual owners do not possess capacities for action. A great lack is identified in sufficient informational, conceptual, **financial capabilities** for a convenient development of their property. These obstacles aggravate as the location of a building is problematic (magistrals, instable neighborhoods) or as the ownership structures are complicated. Hence a market failure in the housing-market can be observed, which at the same time is an important **bottleneck in the revitalisation** process. The integration of private owners of residential buildings into the overall revitalisation strategies is therefore essential for urban development. The EPOurban Project will attempt to remove this bottleneck by the implementation of innovative methods in combination with well-established instruments.

Objectives and Goals

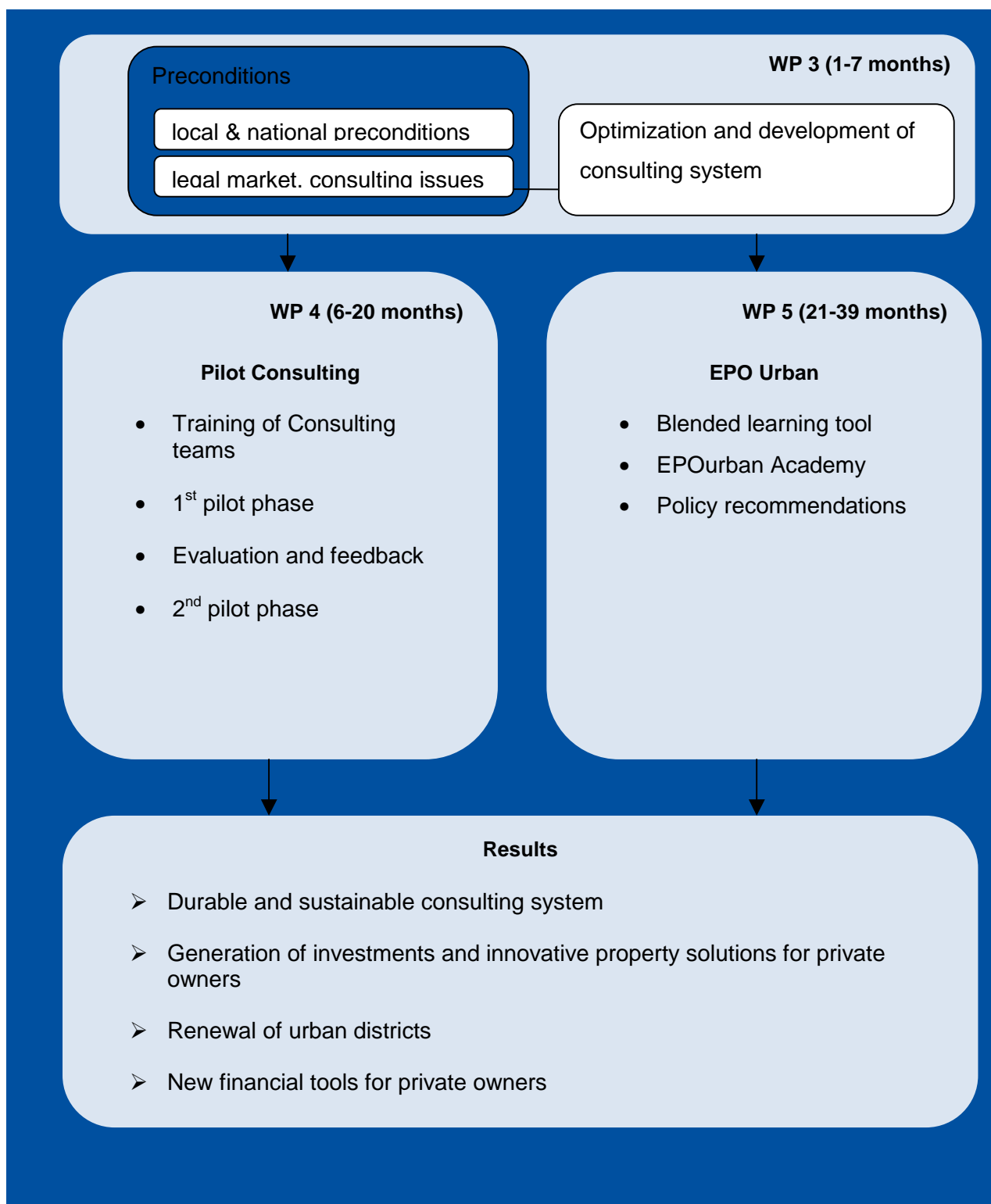
The primary objective of EPOurban is to build **capacities of private owners** of residential buildings, to take adaptation measures and to generate private investment into the residential building stock. This is embedded in the overall **urban-revitalisation** strategy and is a proactive approach to tackle issues such as empty buildings and deprived districts.

The secondary objectives are to foster social cohesion and to remove a critical market-failure in private housing as a key bottleneck for urban-revitalisation. This is in line with strengthening the competitiveness of out-city areas and to counter social segregation.

Methodology

A key instrument to realize the objectives is the municipal consulting system. It is a multi-focus and a high performance consulting system with the specific target group of private owners.

The consulting applies instruments, which will deliver use concepts, financing and funding possibilities, renovation plans, marketing and management strategies for individual residents, innovative approaches in ownership solutions, as well as cost-effective solutions for building maintenance. The consulting tools will be jointly elaborated and customized in order to be context sensitive (e.g. to local and national preconditions & public renewal strategies).



Work Packages (WP)

The project is divided into five work packages. These follow a chronological and logical design thus ensuring a methodologically sound and smooth project implementation.

WP 1 Project Management and Coordination

The sound management and coordination of the project activities will be realised through the establishment of the following structures: the development of the Interregional Steering Committee (ISC) and the Coordination Unit (CU).

As for the financial management, each partner names a responsible finance manager distinct from the implementation of project to manage the accounts and to prepare and accompany the external audit of expenditures (extensive support given by the Finance Manager PP2).

WP 2 Project Communication, Knowledge Management and Dissemination

The dissemination activities will address the following target groups: private property owners, architects, public authorities, external experts, but also small companies working in the urban renewal sector and the general public.

On the basis of a target specific communication strategy a detailed communication plan will define specific messages addressing the different target groups and the most adequate means of communication to use for each target group.

WP 3 Definition of Local and National Preconditions and Consulting Needs

In order to have customised consulting tools, a concise analysis of national and local preconditions is put in place. The standard of the consulting is jointly defined (e.g. on indicators of Total Quality Management). This includes the current real estate market conditions with respect to financing and funding conditions as well as the legal setting. Parallel the existing consulting instruments are evaluated with regard to their input-output performance on the basis of an international benchmarking. These actions are put together in order to define a clear-cut picture for a joint development of new consulting instruments and organisational improvements.

WP 4 Pilot Consulting

The consulting teams are trained and first consulting cases are handled. In each partner city the teams have to provide cutting-edge solutions for private residential owners in order to generate investments. The consulting will include an evaluation along the way at key milestones with an international peer-review (on site). After the first pilot phase, the evaluation results will be used to optimize the EPOurban instruments and to coach the consulting teams. The consulting cases are structured in order to meet the needs of private owners, such delivering solutions for specific problems, e.g. investment opportunities for privately owned historic buildings, usage concepts for houses at large streets, complex ownership structures, emptiness, energetic deficiencies etc.

Private home and property owners are targeted and receive a free of charge consulting. The consulting teams are trained and quality standards defined. The consulting itself will include organizational and economic advice as well as constructional consultancy services. The results are action plans for the private home and property owners. Thus direct investments by the private owners can be realized.

The consultancy has two dimensions:

1) Organizational consultancy services

- Forming homeowner communities as precondition for building renovation. E.g. joint approaches make renovations possible, as financial resources are pooled.
- Information, sensitization and activation of property owners
- Support of the homeowners in the renovating process

2) Economic consultancy services

- Cost/ benefit – expense / return on capital
- Accurate renovation approaches according to the financial possibilities
- Support in the acquisition of suitable financial resources (credit, promotions, etc)
- Development of complementary funding with the city

WP 5 Sustainability

A blended learning system is designed and launched in order for other stakeholders to make use of the instruments on a long-term basis. The most effective and efficient instruments of WP 4 will be made available online. On a policy dimension it is the aim to channel decisive results of urban renewal necessities into regional policy making. Also an annual Academy will disseminate and aggregate the results from the project.

Budget Overview for the Slovakian project partner

Total Budget:	269.600,00 €
ERDF funding:	229.160,00 €
Cofinancing:	40.440,00 €

The budget can be spent for External, travel, own staff costs, meeting costs, promotion and equipment.

