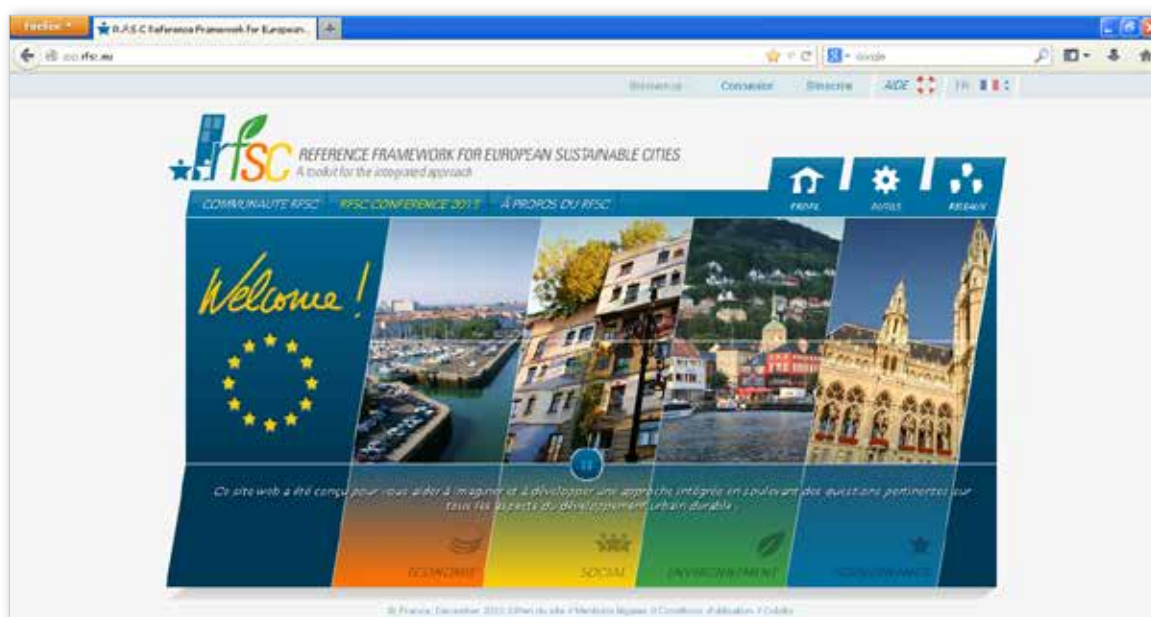


Reference framework for european sustainable cities (RFSC)



The RFSC: a tool for dialogue and exchange amongst urban development stakeholders

The Reference Framework for European Sustainable Cities (RFSC) is a web tool (www.rfsc.eu) designed to help cities and urban territories promote and improve their integrated urban development actions. It is available free of charge to all European local authorities and provides practical support for the implementation of sustainable development principles in local policies or actions. Accordingly, it offers a set of tools for evaluating and monitoring public policies, and an online space for cities to share their experiences.

The RFSC rethinks the basis for sustainable development of cities by proposing a grid of 25 common questions formulated based on the following four dimensions: enhance the economic efficiency of territories, foster social cohesion in conurbations, improve the environmental quality of cities, and develop integrated governance practices. To achieve this, it offers to use public policy assessment tools:



A customisable Profile section (data, photos enables you to find all the projects assessed and illustrations shared with other other RFSC cities.



Ask the right questions

The framework requests the local authorities to review their strategies or projects to reveal their strengths and weaknesses in terms of sustainable development. The grid of questions proposed by the RFSC is based on the practices of roughly 200 European cities



Opt for an integrated approach

The "Check the integrated approach" option is a simple means to review the attempt to operational transformation of the integrated approach, which at the level of urban territory, consists in si-

multenously taking into account the actions taken in the different sectors (transportation, housing, culture, environment...) that have so far been considered as more less independent.

Select the right indicators

The RFSC equally gives the user the possibility to set up their own system of indicators related to the 25 questions of the grid in order to monitor progress made in sustainable development efforts. The tool is based on a minimum base of indicators designed to monitor and assess the territorial breakdown of the sustainable development goals, completed with a list of secondary indicators provided to cities that intend to go a step further.

The RFSC: a shared European approach

The RFSC stems from a joint initiative amongst European Union member countries led by France, the European Commission and European organisations representing local governments - especially the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR). The aim was to develop an operational tool to implement the goals of the Leipzig Charter for Sustainable European Cities, adopted in 2007. The tool that is supported by the European Commission (Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policies) was tested in 2011 by 66 cities on EU territory, and thereafter, posted online in an enhanced version in February 2013. The different States had undertaken to translate the site into their respective national languages: RFSC is presently available

in 19 European languages.

The RFSC Secretariat is run by the Council of European Municipalities and Regions until [October] 2014, after which it shall be transferred to the Joint Secretariat of the URBACT III programme headed by France. URBACT is a European programme that finances and coordinates the networking and actions of European cities to promote sustainable urban development. The integration of RFSC into the European URBACT programme has several advantages, namely the mutual enhancement of both initiatives that pursue the same goal - improve the capacities of cities to implement a sustainable and integrated urban development, establish direct links and synergy with the upcoming "urban development network" set up by the Commission under the European Regional Development Fund (Article 9 of the ERDF) and easier dissemination of the RFSC and stabilization of its operation and porting.

Additionally, is a discussion paper recently published by the Commission during the 2nd European Urban Forum, the RFSC is presented as a shared support tool for the implementation of the upcoming "European Urban Agenda", which will enable the cities that so desire to freely embark on a drive for an integrated planning of their public policies.

A network to share practices and improve public policies:



The 'Networks' option helps to link up cities that wish to share experiences and practices

Some examples of RFSC applied in France and Europe

In France, the national RFSC focal point is the DGALN (director general for planning, housing and nature), in charge of planning at the Ministry of Territorial Equality and Housing (METL). In partnership with the FNAU (federation of French town planning agencies) and CEREMA (centre for research and expertise on risks, the environment, mobility and planning), a training-action programme was launched involving local authority stakeholders, town planning agencies, State representatives who worked together with using the RFSC on concrete strategic planning projects, and SCoT, Agendas 21, Ecoquartiers projects. From this work, feedback forms on utilisation in France were produced and posted online by CEREMA.

In Germany, deliberations are focused on how the RFSC can be used to cities to support the national portal in monitoring urban planning policies, where aggregated data is posted online in order to allow for comparisons between cities. Deliberations have also been held with support from the German national focal point on the advantages the cities can derive from a more structured use of the RFSC with social networks.



The cities of Umea in Sweden, Hradec Kralove in Czech Republic and the La Rochelle conurbation community have become RFSC 'ambassador cities' and each of them uses it in their local action programmes to evaluate and monitor public policies, while deriving from a network of peer cities shared learnings on new approaches to integrated urban development.

In an illustration of the "networks" section, the city of Lisbon describes its experience in implementing an integrated system for the management and planning of urban operations.

Several experiences of how the RFSC was used in Europe are available on the community website <http://www.rfsc-community.eu/>



Appendix: Forging ahead with the RFSC...

A toolkit to design strategy and projects with 25 questions and a self-assessment with 28 recommended indicators. To use the tool, key in the state of progress of your strategy, your local action or our project based on:

- 4 main thrusts: ECONOMY / SOCIAL / ENVIRONMENTAL / GOVERNANCE;
- 25 fundamental "1st-Level" questions (bearing in mind that the tool proposes 86 "2nd-level" questions);
- 28 key indicators are spread out amongst the RFSC's 4 sustainable urban development pillars (bearing in mind that the tool proposes a list of roughly 300 indicators)

ECONOMY	
Questions	Indicators (K)
1. Enhance the economic attractiveness of the city/region/territory	K1 - net migration (immigration minus emigration) - growing / declining city
2. Develop the local economy by providing the knowledge and skills needed	K2 - Intensité R&D
3. Guarantee the connectivity of cities and develop efficient facilities	K3 - Percentage of households with access to high-speed Internet (above 30 Mbps)
4. Develop/promote/support the sustainable production and consumption of goods and services locally	K4 - Number of shops selling local products
5. Meet the needs of the population as regards types of employment and access to employment	K5 - Activity rate for women and men aged 20 to 64 (benchmark: 75%)
6. Maintain or develop a more diversified local economy	K6 - Level of employment per sector (economic diversity indicator)
SOCIAL	
Questions	Indicators
7. Improve quality of and accessibility to public utilities for all	K7 - Percentage of journey covered by motorised transport (European Common Indicators (ECI), Urban Sustainability Indicators -USI), by automobile and motorcycle - Urban Audit (UA)
	K8 - Number of community utilities and basic utilities
8. Enable each person to have access to a proper	K9 - Percentage of early school dropouts
	K10 - Proportion des 30-34 ans ayant suivi une formation supérieure ou équivalente (valeur de référence: au moins 40%)
9. Promote proper public healthcare with no preconceptions	K11 - Espérance de vie
10. Provide good quality housing and surroundings to all	K12 - Indicateur de qualité des logements
11. Promote social inclusion and equal opportunities	K13 - Part de la population pauvre ou exclue
12. Promote cultural and leisure activities and make them accessible to all	K14 - Pourcentage du budget municipal alloué aux infrastructures culturelles et sportives

ENVIRONMENT	
13. Mitigate the effects of climate change and build the cities' adaptation capacity to the change	K15 – Greenhouse gas emission – in tonnes per capita
	K16 – Proportion of renewable energies in total energy consumption
14. Protect and promote biodiversity	K17 – Percentage of protected areas as protection of nature and biodiversity by municipal, council, national or local schemes
15. Reduce pollution	K18 – Number of times where the PM10 threshold authorised by the European directives on air quality is exceeded
16. Preserve the quality and availability of natural resources	K19 – Waterproofing of soil (in m ² per capita)
17. Preserve and promote the good quality and proper operation of the buildings, shared spaces and urban landscape	K20 - Rate of satisfaction with shared spaces

GOVERNANCE	
18. Develop an integrated sustainable development vision for our city	K21 – Last date of approval of a master plan containing an integrated vision of the city as a whole
19. Pay special attention to disadvantaged neighbouring areas	K22 - Percentage of local budget allocated to disadvantaged neighbourhoods on overall local budget
20. Organise the management structures of your city to achieve a sustainable urban development	K23 - Percentage of key urban projects managed by a cross-cutting team
21. Manage to provide an integrated sustainable development financing for your city	K24 – Debt service ratio: proportion of debt service spending on income of municipality
22. Monitor and assess progress	K25 – Does your local authority assess project or programme progress and make adjustments accordingly?
23. Work with other authorities at different levels	K26 – To what extent does your local authority promote cooperation and/or coordination with other municipalities and/or other levels of government?
24. Promote the active participation of partners and citizens	K27 – Level of satisfaction of local stakeholders with their involvement in local planning and decision-making
25. Promote networking and knowledge sharing	K28 –Do the employees of your administration attend training sessions and share views on integrated and sustainable urban development?

Possibility of a graphic view of your policy and strategy

After identifying a project, or a strategy to be examined under the RFSC, the city/institution may assess the project or strategy by selecting and assessing, not only the indicators, but also by using the qualitative assessment tools proposed by the RFSC: "Develop your strategy (Checklist) and Check the integrated approach of your project") You can then view the results of your qualitative assessment and share them with the stakeholders.

Illustration 1. Develop your strategy



Illustration 2. Check your integrated approach

