

Strategic Planning Tools

Conclusions & Recommendations



As society becomes more complex and there is a growing need to make our cities more sustainable, strategic decision making in urban planning becomes more important. In this report, tools for making decisions up to 20 years ahead have been assessed. These tools address issues such as transport, urban sprawl, economic policies etc. In particular, there is a focus on three software based scenario planning & simulation tools - MetroQuest, UrbanSim and CAST.

The report found that there is a need and desire to employ more tools and, in particular, ICT tools in the strategic planning process, with emphasis on tools for devising scenarios and analysing their associated consequences, as well as for facilitating stakeholder engagement. These tools would enable us to take a strategic approach to environmental planning, which is addressed in INTERREG IVB North West Europe (NWE) Programme Priority 2: 'Sustainable management of natural resources and of natural and technological risk'. The Priority targeted at enhancing the environmental quality in the region.

The three tools described and assessed in the report, i.e. MetroQuest, UrbanSim and CAST, scored well in terms of these parameters. It was concluded that city and regional authorities in the North West Europe would definitely benefit from using such tools when devising their

strategic plans. As argued in INTERREG IVB Programme, our environment is under pressure from social and economic uses, as well as the implications of changing environmental conditions, caused by high density of people and activities. These tools have the potential to manage these pressures in order to maintain the value of our environment for the benefit of future generations.

Recommendations

- More experimental assessment or case studies, essential for analysing the potential benefits of using such tools in real world situations
- More research into finding and implementing ICT tools that can be used at key decision points in the strategic planning process, with respect to sustainable urban development issues emphasised in INTERREG IVB Programme
- Closer cooperation between research institutions, who are involved in developing e-planning tools, and public authorities, who actually use such tools as part of their planning processes, as encouraged in INTERREG IVB Programme.

Further information

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