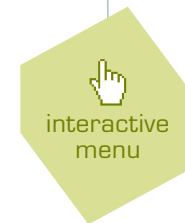


ROI
revitalization
of
industry ports

GUIDEBOOK FOR
WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT
IN SMALL AND MEDIUM-
SIZED CITIES.



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Revitalisation of Old Industrial Ports

Waterfront development in small and medium-sized cities

Urban port areas and old industrial ports have become desolate locations. Expansion drove away shipping, and waterfronts near the city centre languished. Quays, unloading cranes and industrial buildings were abandoned. These former industrial sites never really were part of the city in the minds of the people who lived there. Their decline cut the ties with the city completely.

In recent years cities have rediscovered the potential of their waterways. City canals are being opened up again, and during good weather banks are being occupied by residents and tourists. Old industrial ports have a magical attraction. Derelict ports in, for instance, London, Amsterdam and New York are turning into vibrant and creative city quarters.

For some time now many small and medium-sized cities have also been busy making plans for their old ports. Ghent has managed to convince seven other Dutch and Belgian cities to participate in a cooperation project based on the revitalisation of old industrial ports ('Revitalisering van Oude Industriehavens, ROI'). Ghent, Antwerp, Hasselt, Leuven, Ostend as well as Tilburg, Roermond and Vlissingen have become partner cities in the ROI Revitalisation project.

The eight cities are all seizing the opportunity to develop a new quarter in their ports. They are investing in their public architecture to make the sites accessible. These projects are funded by Europe, in the context of ROI. Hasselt, Tilburg and Ostend are restoring their quays, and Vlissingen its historic port. Ghent is connecting its Oude Dokken ('Old Docklands') with the city via pedestrian and bicycle bridges. Leuven is making the Keizersberg ('Emperor's hill') accessible via stairs and footpaths, Roermond has built escalators and lifts, and Antwerp is connecting the Museum aan de Stroom ('Museum by the River') on Het Eilandje ('The Islet') with the surrounding city quarters via the renovated London-Amsterdam Boulevard.

However different the details are, the cities all face similar challenges. Their biggest challenge is not only to integrate the waterfronts into the city, but to give them a new lease of life in the minds of the residents.

Knowledge exchange was one of the main driving forces behind the ROI project. As mayors, we are proud that our partner cities were able to play their part. We are very grateful to the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) for its financial support through the INTERREG IVA Programme. We are also fully aware of the added value of this cross-border cooperation with partner cities in Flanders and the Netherlands. We are confident that this cooperation will not only benefit the quality of the urban regeneration projects in our old port areas, but that it will also contribute to the cohesion between the two border regions.

And finally, as fellow mayors we recognise all too well that cooperation between all political echelons, the private sector and civil stakeholders is the key to the continued revitalisation of old port areas. This INTERREG IVA programme shows the way. We dare say that with this ROI Revitalisation project, the need for cooperation – be it internationally, regionally or locally – has been shown to be of the utmost importance.

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Learning together to revitalise old ports

This book is the result of years of collaboration. Since 2007, project workers from eight partner cities met regularly to think and learn about the revitalisation of their old ports. Right from the project proposal phase, there was a great desire to arrive at a more systematic exchange of knowledge. The partner cities made grateful use of INTERREG support to deepen their cooperation in the so-called ROI project, which stands for 'Revitalisation of Old Industrial Ports'. The goal of this project is for revitalisation to make an important contribution to the future economic and cultural vitality of each of the cities.

The partnership, however, was also characterised by an interesting struggle. Originally, mainly common features came to the surface. All of the projects were large and long-term projects for urban renewal in waterfront areas, located near the old city centre. As the ROI project progressed, however, it became increasingly clear that the differences between the cities should not be underestimated. This led to the creation of different needs in terms of knowledge exchange. In the course of the cooperation, we therefore sought out the greatest common divisor between the various partner cities. In this way, in consultation with all of the stakeholders, we delineated six priority areas for knowledge exchange. To this end, we also chose to appeal to various external experts. Based on a market survey, research groups were appointed to analyse the waterfront projects in the interested partner cities from different perspectives. In this way, the exchange of knowledge in the ROI project was given form and content in a demand-driven way by the various partner cities.

This book is more or less divided into three parts. In the first part, we introduce the

ROI project. The first chapter discusses the purpose and approach of the project, and in the second chapter, we provide our readers with an explanation of the revitalisation of the old port areas in the eight participating cities.

The second part deals with spearheads relating to knowledge exchange. In chapters three to eight, the six different research groups present their findings on the revitalisation processes in the partner cities. These six chapters largely follow the same pattern. In each chapter, the authors explain their approach (model or vision framework), its application in a selection of the partner cities, and their cross-project findings and recommendations. These texts often provide the reader with an inside look at the functioning of urban organisations and/or autonomous municipal urban development agencies. Both weak and strong points of the internal processes of these organisations are exposed in order to enhance learning. The site visits and analyses of the research groups took place in the first half of 2011. In the meantime, the cities have not stood still, and have adjusted their projects where appropriate and possible. The suggestions of the research groups and the mutual dialogue between the cities are merely one element among many others.

The last part of the book consists of a short and rather reflective chapter. Here we look at the uniqueness, complexity and potential sustainability of urban renewal projects in old port areas.

This book contains a number of valuable contributions that other small to medium-sized cities can use to develop their old industrial ports into vibrant urban neighbourhoods.



PHOTO | Roermond

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