Case Study PC 07: The example of the City of Ludwigsburg in self-commitments, organizational structure and budgeting

In 2004 the City of Ludwigsburg (Germany) began to plan its future with a keen eye on urban sustainability and citizens’ empowerment within the political life. The overall programme is structured in three main phases:

1. a basic phase (2004-05) where the municipal administration and the town council agreed on the execution of the programme;

2. in 2006 the participation phase was aimed to the involvement and listening of citizens’ ideas towards a common vision; for this purpose the “Summer of Discussion” and the “Future Conference” were organised;

3. after that, strategic objectives for urban development in eleven areas were embodied in the Master Plan “Perspectives for Ludwigsburg”. This document was approved by the town council in 2006 with an overwhelming majority. It approaches the themes that contribute to improving life standards such as green areas, cultural life, economy & work, mobility, energy, etc.

The financial question is often limiting the potential activities administrations would like to implement. The city of Ludwigsburg recognized the existence of a public budgetary problem and quickly reacted upon. Thereby the city maintained the collaboration relationship with citizens and surrounding administrations. In doing so, inter-municipal cooperation helped in efficiently solving questions like supply and waste disposal, concentration of “back-office” tasks (i.e. data processing and auditing) and the creation of a greater networking of fire authorities and builder’s yard.

Pressure on local authority budget was lightened also thanks to the collaboration with citizens who are often experts in the various specific fields.

The case of Ludwigsburg is a clear example on how an intertwining long-term political commitment and a wide inclusive organisational set-up can contribute to
overcome difficulties in local finances for the benefit of private dwellers and the regional economy.

Source: Shaping the future of our town together, City Development Concept. City of Ludwigsburg. October 2006.