



9 MAJOR IMPULSES

MUNICIPALITIES
- ARTISANS
SHAPING THE
FUTURE

GIVEN BY MOUVEMENT ECOLOGIQUE





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The present publication contains 9 major impulses for a sustainable municipality. A printed version in French and in German can be ordered by phone (tél. 439030-1) or by email (meco@oeko.lu). The German, French and English versions are also available as downloads on www.meco.lu.

Available is although a detailed brochure of 172 pages in German with concrete proposals for a sustainable municipal policy. Price: 18€ (incl. mailing costs), 15€ (pick up price) 15 or more copies: 16€ (incl. mailing costs), 13€ (pick up price). Orders via email: meco@oeko.lu or phone: +352 439030-1

A summary of 40 pages that is available in German (online) and French (printed version and online) as download and can be ordered by phone on 439030-1.

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Breathing life into the project of sustainability... this project joins a range of initiatives that are supported by the Oekofonds Foundation:

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9 MAJOR IMPULSES

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A municipality that dedicates itself to sustainable development, can and should assume a role model in its own work, support new social projects, work on ideas together with citizens and encourage them to go new ways in shaping a sustainable future.

The opportunities for action of a municipality are extremely diverse: they range from a broad civic participation through a good planning of mobility to an active role in the housing policy.

The fulfilment of legal obligations has highest priority; this is also true in the environmental field. Unfortunately there is a certain bottleneck in some municipalities - probably due to the diverse areas of competence - when it comes to fulfilling these obligations.

But, in carrying out the 'classic' obligations, the municipality can set out targeted focuses in terms of enhanced sustainable development, often without any additional expenditure. For example by giving preference to regional and organic products when drafting specifications for invitations to tender, by buying environmentally friendly cleaning products, by using energy-saving appliances a.s.o.

The special attraction of a future-oriented municipality leadership resides also in addressing innovative



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projects and in setting clear accents in terms of a future-shaping community with model projects. In this context, Mouvement Ecologique would like to highlight the following central ideas - in addition to the variety of ideas presented in the detailed brochure on the municipal elections.

According to the Mouvement Ecologique they are symbolic and representative for others in the sense of a future-oriented municipality leadership:



A MUNICIPALITY THAT HAS DEDICATED ITSELF TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IS A MUNICIPALITY THAT ...

I

... PUTS A FOCUS ON CITIZEN'S PARTICIPATION AND CITIZEN'S PROJECTS!

An extensive information policy is the best basis for a good community leadership. But still this alone is not sufficient in order to be a municipality that is truly close to its citizens. Moreover, a broad participation of citizens is a necessity, so that residents can actively bring in their knowledge and their concerns, so that different interests are discussed and people from different social backgrounds can meet.

It's a modern claim to get support for projects initiated and carried out "from below", i.e. from citizens (exchange networks, neighbourhood assistance, community gardens...). Committed citizens can greatly promote community life and cohesion and motivate others to join.

Therefore, the municipality should

- set up - at the beginning of a new legislative period - **clear guidelines adopting a Charter for a broad participation of citizens**, publish it and provide a corresponding budget for its implementation (basic principles, how to involve citizens, kinds of moderations);
- create **solid structures of participation**;
- consider the "**outreach participation**", i.e. the municipality not only invites the citizens to information sessions, but it reaches out purposefully to people of different age and social groups;
- provide a **contact point for citizens** as well as support for citizens who want to carry out projects in the municipality.

Future-oriented municipalities distinguish themselves by the fact that they involve citizens in many ways and that they actively support projects that are brought to their attention by citizens.

II

... TAKES CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SERIOUSLY AND INVOLVES THEM ACTIVELY IN MUNICIPAL LIFE

Involvement of children and young people and their awareness of issues for the future are to be taken seriously and should be sharpened. They should be involved in the development of projects as well as their planning, in an appropriate manner. For example, the municipality should

- address them directly when there are **projects** that affect them, such as : designs of footpaths to school, to the sports facilities and the cultural centre; the organisation of public transport;
- appeal to children and young people also for general questions concerning the **development of the municipality**;
- create a **contact point** where children and young people can actively bring in their own ideas;
- plan to establish a **children and youth Council** (whereas the rights and obligations of the latter must be clearly defined, and a continuity through a contact person should be given);
- care for a **practice-oriented education for sustainable development** in the primary school, as well as in the "Maisons relais". Talking about values, different opinions on current issues can help with this, by an active exploration of the municipality and the region and their development and by many more.



A MUNICIPALITY THAT HAS DEDICATED ITSELF TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IS A MUNICIPALITY THAT ...

III

... ENCOURAGES NEW SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC MODELS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE „TRANSITION“ CONCEPT

New social initiatives, which more and more appeal to people, are a further core element of future-oriented municipalities. Thus the municipality encourages new forms of togetherness, of cooperation and economic activities: for example solidarity-based agricultural projects, housing cooperatives, community gardens, exchange networks...

The municipality should therefore:

- **advise and support** (be it on logistical, legal, or financial level) **citizens** who would like to initiate a project and, if necessary, provide the premises for this purpose;
- inform on "**public projects**" in the municipality/region and try to win people for an active participation;
- bring people together and help with the **construction of networks**;
- promote **new initiatives of cohabitation**, particularly in the field of housing construction: from multi generation houses to the design of common indoor and outdoor spaces in new residential projects or projects led by cooperatives.



IV

... SETS CONCRETE GOALS FOR THE MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT AND GENERATES POSITIVE FUTURE VISIONS TOGETHER WITH ITS CITIZENS

A future-oriented municipality is aware of the fact that it cannot control everything and that therefore it is important to realize the development together with the citizens, in the best possible deliberate way. This also means that

- the municipality aims **at a sustainable development**, i.e. that - on the basis of the current situation concerning the use of resources (such as energy, land and water consumption) and the state of environmental pollution (including noise, air and water pollution, loss of biodiversity) - it sets clear goals and directions. Further to adhering to legal limits, a **best possible protection of the quality of life** should be ensured: i.e. a guarantee for a good air quality, a preventive health protection through attractive recreation areas a.s.o.
- The same applies to the **conservation of biodiversity** and **the protection of water!** In both areas, the municipality should assume its responsibility and take into account e.g. the biodiversity in the PAG, establish collaborations with farmers, actively promote the designation and protection of drinking water protection zones, ensure good clarification of wastewater.
- This of course also applies to **climate protection!** In times of increased climate protection, medium-term energy self-sufficiency is as important as the local contribution to the reduction of CO2 emissions and of the dependence on fossil energies.

New forms of living together, of economic activity represent the future. And if they are embedded in common objectives pursued by the municipality as well as by the citizens, this can be qualified as optimal, also in regards to the quality of life in general.

A MUNICIPALITY THAT HAS DEDICATED ITSELF TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IS A MUNICIPALITY THAT ...

V

... TRANSFORMS INTO A GREEN MUNICIPALITY WITH ATTRACTIVE PUBLIC SPACES THAT PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR THE PRESERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY

Green municipalities are an essential basis for the quality of life, for a better air quality (in particular in times of climate change): they offer an attractive local image and social meeting places... Green towns stand in many ways for social change ... away from the sad uniform grey to more diversity, vibrancy and togetherness.

Therefore, the municipality:

- creates a **truly green concept**, that it implements in different phases;
- ensures the remodelling of the **public spaces** so that the latter become again inviting recreational areas;
- ensures an **urban greening**, especially for new projects (residential areas ...);
- creates **green "corridors"** within the settlement area and thus connections between existing green structures, which will benefit the animal world.



VI

... DEALS WITH THE HUMAN SIDE OF ROAD SAFETY AND PUTS FORWARD THE "LIVING SPACE" ASPECT

A juggernaut named „traffic“ has taken possession of our roads - also intra-urban: parked cars everywhere, and a continuous avalanche of cars and trucks - with their noise and air pollution, as well as the related security problems. We need to return to the "good old days" when children used to play football on the streets - we need soft mobility and streets that are places of exchange and togetherness for the people. The recovery of the street as a "living space" for human beings must be a main aspect of municipal politics. The following initiatives are possible ways to achieve this goal:

- The municipality calms the traffic - if possible in the context of a local or regional mobility concept - by imposing **speed limits** such as **20 kph**, or **30 kph** or "**shared space**"-areas. This should be carried out together with the citizens and implemented according to a **priority plan**, with the necessary equipment and greening. Local roads should also be included;
- Other road sections should also, as far as possible, be traffic-calmed and greened, with a priority on the sustainable mobility (pedestrians, cyclists), which increases the **quality of this living space** area as well as the **traffic safety**. The transformation should be addressed within the framework of a multi-annual plan;
- New residential projects should be **conceived traffic-free** and a **restrictive parking space management** should be pursued.

The recovery of the streets as a living space for human beings ... could actually be a slogan. Green villages offering many attractive places and streets where people are the focus of all innovation progress should be an objective of every municipality that claims itself to be future-oriented.

A MUNICIPALITY THAT HAS DEDICATED ITSELF TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IS A MUNICIPALITY THAT ...

VII

... WALKS NEW PATHS IN AREAS OF SETTLEMENT AND HOUSING CONSTRUCTION

The housing problem is certainly one of the most pressing questions in Luxembourg. Therefore, every municipality has to assume its responsibilities. This means that the municipality must

- promote **new forms of housing**: “dense” housing forms (adapted to the towns), car-free areas, housing communities ...
- become an **active player in the housing sector**, founding a building company and creating land reserves on local or regional level (i.e. alone or with neighbouring municipalities). This with the aim to help determine, as far as possible, the building of settlements and to enable new forms of living and to reduce prices.
- develop a **strategy for the mobilization of empty houses, as well as unused designated building land**. This includes e.g. to address the owners, to motivate them to become active and to renovate those houses, or even to develop construction land, by inviting the State to impose taxes on unused houses/construction plots.



VIII

... COMMITS ITSELF TO COOPERATION AND PARTNERSHIP ON ALL LEVELS

In the 21st century, the times of “parish-pump politics” should be definitely past... This in all respects: partnership with the municipalities in the region is the line to follow, also: taking over responsibility for global issues. Luxembourg is not an island. Therefore, the municipality should take the following initiatives:

- it agrees upon residential development, the planning of mobility with the **neighbouring municipalities** and collaborates on cultural projects and other initiatives with them;
- it commits itself to fair trade, actively works with the “Klimabündnis Lëtzebuerg”, **raises awareness about issues of global trade**;
- it takes position also about **controversial social issues** which may have effects on the local level, as it was the case e.g. with the free trade agreements CETA and TTIP;
- it raises **awareness that global prosperity** - and thus prosperity in Luxembourg - is not by definition related to (more) material goods, but that it is characterised by solidarity, togetherness... This also means that given the limitations of the planet, a substantive growth in Luxembourg is critically debated.

A proactive municipal policy in the field of affordable housing is one of the top priorities of the municipality leadership.

A MUNICIPALITY THAT HAS DEDICATED ITSELF TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IS A MUNICIPALITY THAT ...



Municipal credibility requires that the municipality provides a good example in its own operating method, for instance in relation with public purchasing.

IX

... IS AWARE THAT OUR SOCIETY NEEDS PIONEERS AND ASSUMES ITS RESPONSIBILITIES

Is it really possible to fulfil the requirements for a sustainable future? Yes it is! The municipality should be a pioneer and raise awareness for it, by doing the following:

- respect sustainability **criteria when presenting calls for tender**, serve vegetarian and organic appetizers at local events, buy local products, provide bicycles for the municipal employees;
- **inform the citizens in the best possible way, provide advice and raise awareness** - by informing on local model-role projects, by introducing special subsidies (e.g. for rainwater systems), by supporting or initializing information campaigns (e.g. for the renovation of old buildings) and others.

