

## LOCAL SQUARES

### Connecting and training participation experts in Europe

*EU Leonardo da Vinci Partnership 2012-2014*

What happens if you put in the same room urban planners, activists, researchers, facilitators and community managers, architects, public administration officers – all with a passion for a participatory planning of public spaces in the city?

**LOCAL SQUARES: connecting and training participation experts in Europe** embraces this adventure with a two-years project that brings together seven organizations from five different countries (Spain, Germany, Netherlands, Belgium, Austria), working together and exchanging on strategies to involve a greater diversity of people and communities in the management of public spaces.

One of the assumptions behind this EU-funded Leonardo da Vinci project is that, in order to work on a sustainable and inclusive way on the future shape of public spaces, it is fundamental to gain awareness on the diversity of the actors who are active in the field, to better connect synergies among the different actors, by acknowledging their different roles in the field and by trying to combine the daily used methods and approaches. In other words, learning from each other. LOCAL SQUARES wants to recreate a micro arena of collaboration among different actors and find ways to bring this strategy outside of its circle as well, in order to promote a co-learning and co-acting culture.

When it comes to participation, LOCAL SQUARES aims at living it first of all within its own structure. The design of the two-years process has been co-designed with all the partners, who have been invited to identify their own resources, methods and ideas to be shared in the project. Each partner is hosting one meeting in its own city (Berlin, Madrid, Vienna, Amsterdam, Brussels and Twello). The division of tasks (e.g. documentation, tool-kit development, coordination) organizes itself around the principle of “taking initiative”, so that participants gather around small transnational working groups, on the basis of which aspect they are interested in cultivating.

Among the expected results, LOCAL SQUARES aims at benefiting of its focused local visits in order to map and offer a panoramic of participation processes in public spaces in different national context, by highlighting common patterns and identifying specific ways of coping with the national structures; it aims at keeping track of how the constantly evolving concept of public space serves the idea of fostering relationships and encouraging collective ownership inside the city. Moreover, the partnership wants to explore the potentialities of this multi-stakeholder collaboration and document its learning process in a toolkit for practitioners.

LOCAL SQUARES learning partnership is composed by:

basurama (ES) / [www.basurama.es](http://www.basurama.es)

Inca Deutschland e.V. (DE) / [www.inca-germany.org](http://www.inca-germany.org)

Interactive Workshop of Europe GbR (DE) / [www.workshop-of-europe.eu](http://www.workshop-of-europe.eu)

Local Intelligence (NL) / [www.localintelligence.eu](http://www.localintelligence.eu)

PlanSinn GmbH (AT) / [www.plansinn.at](http://www.plansinn.at)

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