

Integrated SUREURO Approach: Sustainable, consumer-oriented urban renewal

Several years ago, Sweden launched an idea for a European project within the framework of the European Commission. It involved an international study to develop and demonstrate environmentally acceptable housing renovation. TNO Building and Construction Research got involved in the idea through the European Commission. SUREURO started up in March 2000, combining the philosophy of open and sustainable building and renovation.

Says Karel Dekker, scientific project co-ordinator at TNO Building and Construction Research: 'The project involves seven districts in as many European countries, which are addressed at the same time. The Dutch part of the project focuses on buildings owned by housing corporation WonenCentraal in Alphen aan den Rijn. We examine the best practices in all seven countries, which then determine the approach in the various countries.'

'In Europe, some 170 million people live in post-war, industrially built apartments, many of which will require renovation in the near future', he adds. 'The housing companies initiated a plan to tackle this problem together at the European level. It's an important challenge for TNO Building and Construction Research to play a leading role in this gigantic urban renewal operation.'

Each of the different countries is highly interested in new ideas towards a suitable approach. This explains the budget volume that is available for SUREURO – with a total turnover of approximately EUR 9.6 million and a duration of some four years, this is one of the largest projects ever to be co-funded by the European Commission.

Inspiring and practical

SUREURO is executed within the Fifth Framework Programme of the European Commission, whose theme is 'The City of Tomorrow'. The principal roles in the project are played by seven large housing companies in France, Sweden, Finland, the Netherlands, Denmark, Great Britain, and Germany. Together with a number of consultants and an international construction company, research institutes such as TNO, BRE UK, CSTB France and VTT Finland are involved in the project to support the housing companies.

SUREURO focuses on developing management tools and inspiring,

SUREURO on the Internet

SUREURO owns a project site and a public web site. The latter, accessible at www.sureuro.com, contains general information on the project, the partners, press information, information on core-references, and the seven national projects. The project web site was created to: internal communication, electronic archiving (BBMS), mail functions and budget information.

practical models for housing companies and their advisors. The project's objective is to integrate sustainable development and occupant participation into the management of the renewal process. The intention is to achieve this without the costs for occupants increasing more than in the case of traditional renovations. TNO makes an important contribution to the project, especially in the development of the required knowledge system.

Bundling and dissemination

SUREURO bundles the joint knowledge of renewal and sustainable building to translate it to strategic and technical management tools. This knowledge will benefit housing companies, architects, consultants, contractors and occupants during the restructuring of post-war residential districts. Thus emerges a unique combination of strategic management for companies, operational and technical management for architects, contractors and consultants, and technical know-how for consumer-oriented building and sustainable building.

Design and testing

At present, the consortium is founding a commercial organisation to further disseminate the acquired knowledge throughout Europe. In the upcoming period, SUREURO will also focus on the development of models for Strategic Management, Problem Analysis, Building Specifications, Design & Construction, and Technical Knowledge Databases. The housing companies are also currently testing the concept tools for management and design and construction processes, as well as the technical tools for sustainable renewal.

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