

Newsletter no. 1 'Testing the Reference Framework for Sustainable Cities' , April 2011



Progress in testing

Launching event 16/16 March

The chair of the plenary session Ms Veronica GAFFEY (European Commission, Director for Policy Development) opened the plenary session on March, 15th by pointing at the impressive number of participants in a packed plenary room of the Centre Albert Borschette. Ms. Gaffey explained that the main goal of the Launching Event is to inform and familiarize all participants with the RFSC tool.



After the introduction by the chair European Commissioner for Regional Policy Mr Johannes HAHN delivered the welcome speech. Commissioner Hahn addressed the relevance of cities for the coming decades as 70 percent of the European citizens live in cities or urban areas. Moreover, cities are at the forefront of our efforts to live up to the key challenges of our days – whether we think of climate change, migration, social inclusion or the economic challenge of building sustainable growth. Our objective in cities should be to find formats which allow us to engage

as many people as possible with issues that affect them. Good governance means co-operation to bridge gaps that can threaten competitiveness. Even the most powerful city cannot afford to be introspective, short termist or narrow minded about such co-operation. European cohesion policy can certainly be a vehicle to help cities to move in the right direction and to get their voices heard. We do this in two ways. Firstly, we address urban issues by providing a policy framework which can finance concrete actions in our cities. We will, in the future, see an increased emphasis on the policy's urban dimension and its funding. Secondly, we provide incentives for sustainable urban development and good governance. We do this both through dialogue and networking activities, but also through promoting, integrated, tailor-made solutions which empower our citizens. In working closely with the Member States we promote the principles of integrated and sustainable urban development in Europe. One concrete outcome of this cooperation with the Member States – and with the cities themselves – is the Reference Framework for Sustainable Cities. “We have come a long way from the first ideas at the Marseille Ministerial in 2008 to the sophisticated web-tool we have today”. With great pleasure he now officially launch the Reference Framework for Sustainable Cities. The European Commissioner thanks also everybody who has actively involved, especially the French authorities. But his special mention goes to the 66 cities, which will test this tool in their local contexts in the coming months. He thanks the cities for taking this challenge onboard for acting as pioneers. “I am convinced that the Reference Framework will be a valuable tool for all cities in the future. It can help our cities to identify strengths and weaknesses and to move forward in their strategic planning”. “I would like to invite you to grasp this opportunity and make the tool your own. Please help us to improve the Reference Framework according to your needs, demonstrate its usefulness for cities and keep in dialogue with us.”

Margit TÜNNEMANN of the European Commission (DG REGIO. Urban Development and Territorial Cohesion Unit) gave a detailed presentation of the RFSC, its origins as a joint European initiative and the possibilities of the four tools. She pointed to the twenty-five central questions on sustainable urban development that are the core of the four tool. These 25 questions (and sub-questions) grouped by the four pillars of sustainability (economy, social affairs, environment, governance) will stimulate debate in the administration and with external stakeholders about sustainable urban development. The main goals of the RFSC are to stimulate better communication and to achieve better results. Furthermore, ms. Tünnemann highlighted that the multi-level governance institutional framework (CEMR, Eurocities, Member States, DG Regio, UDG, MSI group, Management Team with joint leadership of France, CEMR and DG Regio) that is responsible for the development of the RFSC is a perfect example of international and inter-institutional cooperation.



Very concrete and practical were the presentations of Daniel KAMPUS (Lead expert LC-FACIL), James DEVITT (Kirklees, LC-FACIL) and Jonas ANDERSSON (Gothenburg, LC-FACIL). The URBACT II working group of LC-FACIL cities (Leipzig, Bytom, Kirklees, Rennes-Metropole, Vitoria-Gasteiz and Gothenburg) served as a local testing ground for an earlier version of the RFSC. They tested the ergonomics and functionality of the webtool, proposed a simplified and aligned structure of the tools (this became the 25 main objectives of sustainable urban development) and gave comments to the recommended key indicators in the RFSC. The three speakers came with very concrete results and a positive but critical

approach to the tool. Mr Kampus invited also all participants to the LC-FACIL Final Conference (Implementation of the Leipzig Charter from a cities' point of view) in Leipzig on the 10th and 11th of May, 2011.

Mr Andersson explained why Gothenburg decided to participate in testing the earlier version of the RFSC. They see sustainable development as the main challenge of the city. This is a complex task with conceptual challenges and a lot of communication, planning, measuring and improving). In Gothenburg they are also curious to learn and eager to share what they know with other cities. In Jonas' opinion the RFSC is best used in group discussions to bridge silos and focus on an integrated, holistic approach. The further success depends in his opinion upon intensive user feedback so that the RFSC corresponds to user and city needs. And that is exactly were the testing of the RFSC in more than 60 European cities is about. Mr Devitt told why Kirklees Council got involved. They are busy with a reorganisation of the public sector with to goal to get more for less. An more integrated approach of urban development could be one of the answers. Kirklees also want to strengthen their reputation of sustainability and low carbon. An assertive, pro-active approach and learning from good practices elsewhere will help to attract investments. In James' opinion the RFSC is a bold and ambitious initiative that is a good opportunity to share practices and to collaborate. The RFSC needs to be used as part of a process of facilitated discussion and a source of encouragement and motivation. It is no silver bullet and should not be used as a ranking exercise.



As NICIS Institute will give technical support to the test cities in their testing efforts. Mr. Koos VAN DIJKEN gave a presentation on the testing phase and testing tool. The Nicis team wants to obtain a maximum of useful feedback and they provide to the test cities many feedback opportunities. Mr. Van Dijken asked all representatives of the cities to send as many observations as possible. "We love you when you will give as much feedback as possible" was one of the main messages of mr. van Dijken. We also hope that you sent in your results

from using the RFSC with your comments about usefulness and added value for your city.

The morning plenary session of March 16th was opened by the Head of Unit for Urban Development and Territorial Cohesion (European Commission, DG REGIO) Mr Wladyslaw PISKORZ. He started the plenary session by thanking the French government for the initiative and the (financial) support for developing the RFSC.

Rik BAETEN (Belgium, representing the Trio-Presidency of Spain, Belgium and Hungary) explained the commitment of the Member States to the RFSC. The Marseille, Toledo, Poznan Reference Framework Express. With formal and informal meetings the Member States representatives have met to prepare the informal interministerial meetings in Leipzig, Marseille and Toledo. National contact persons coordinated the test phase on national level, presented the member states in the MSI group and answered all questions from cities et cetera. During the testing phase national support groups (member state, city

networks, experts, test cities, candidate cities) will provide information about the RFSC, report to MSI and exchange experiences during the testing phase. In Belgium the national support group (federal and regional administrations, three test cities, four candidate cities, other cities and municipalities and experts) will meet three times and discuss different parts of the RFSC. Delphine GAUDART (France) informed the test cities about the French national approach to the RFSC testing phase. In France 21 cities applied to take part in the European testing phase. Only five could be selected for the testing phase. The French national support group made a programme of five workshops of one day with all interested cities in France. The workshops will be held between April and September and will focus on the local Agenda 21 (and the RFSC), the planning tools (and the RFSC), the local projects of urban development, the social development and inner cities strategies and the monitoring and assessment tool. The end results will be a booklet of recommendations.

Angelika POTH-MÖGELE is Director of Policy of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions and chair of the MSI group, and therefore actively involved in the RFSC process. She encouraged the test cities to the 'peer learning' possibilities of the RFSC. You can share information on a voluntary basis, learn from each other and adapt others experiences to your situation. There are several peer learning possibilities in the RFSC: characterise your city, define your city's challenges, identify the issues that you are interested in sharing with other cities and provide examples (illustrations) from your city for other cities. According to ms. Poth-Mögele the test cities are the pioneers and the front-runners that are now starting with an adventurous 'boat trip' with many uncertainties and challenges.



Thereafter, there was the possibility to pose all kind of questions to four persons who participated intensively in the development of the RFSC: ms. POTH-MÖGELE, ms. TÜNNEMANN, mr. CAUBEL (webmaster RFSC) and ms. GRIMA (French representative). The panel gave the test cities suggestions for stimulating dialogue. Furthermore, the panel gave a clear message that it is up to the test cities themselves to take the initiatives and that the RFSC tool can be seen more as a tool of questions than a tool of answers. The time that should be planned to filling in the RFSC is of course dependent upon the number of projects that will be added. However, it will take at least a couple of days to get a grip on the RFSC tool. Furthermore, the panel gave the advice to start with a 'simple' project to understand the tool before starting with complex and extensive projects.



After the answers of the panel mr. Koos VAN DIJKEN explained the test cities the possibility of adding 'illustrations'. It took mr. van Dijken on average one hour to add an illustration or practice to the RFSC tool. He added two illustrations to the RFSC. You can add information about your illustration stepwise to the RFSC. He experts that at the end of the testing phase at least 60 illustrations will be added to the RFSC. For each of the cities the value added of the RFSC increases with the number of illustrations in the catalogue of illustrations. The illustrations you sent in should be in English, precise, complete and linked to some of the 25 key objectives of

sustainable urban development. Also, there should be some (preliminary) results. Practices that are still in the planning stage only, will not be included in the catalogue of illustrations.

From now on Nicis Institute will support the test cities in their testing activities. You will be a star tester for Nicis Institute when you make intensive use of the feedback button on each page, involve different persons in your administration in the testing, discuss about priorities, actions, characteristics of strategies and project with others, involve the political level, send in illustrations and send in your city results obtained with the RFSC with your comments. Furthermore, mr. van Dijken asked the test cities to inform the NICIS Institute as soon as possible but at the latest on April 1st 2011 when it is possible for NICIS Institute to plan an on-site visit to you. In the monthly newsletter NICIS Institute will tell about the progress in testing, the experiences of the test cities, the organisation of testing in some city and the organisation of the on-site visit in some cities.

At the end of the Launching Event Mr GARCÌA PATRÓN-RIVAS also thanked the independent experts that will give their opinion on the RFSC and the testing phase. The Deputy Head of the Unit Urban Development and Territorial Cohesion (DG REGIO, European Commission) once more returned to the overarching reason of the RFSC, namely the implementation of the Leipzig Charter, aiming for an integrated approach in urban development, with a special focus on deprived neighbourhoods.



All in all, the RFSC Launching Event was a good start-up event for the testing phase of the RFSC with many questions answered in the workshop, informative and inspiring plenary speeches and dedicated test cities. Also the low number of no-shows for the launching event indicates a high motivation to participate in the testing and learn more about the RFSC. With the help of much feedback, questionnaires, surveys and on-site visits the testing phase has the potential to make the RFSC a success. As commissioner Hahn puts it: "I believe that the Reference Framework for Sustainable Cities can be a crucial element in achieving our common goals".

Some test cities are already very active in testing

At this moment the test cities in Czech Republic, Poland and Greece seem the most active. Followed by the test cities of Spain, France, United Kingdom, Romania and Finland. At this moment the average number of testers per city is the highest in Finland (almost five). Until now the test cities in Austria, Cyprus, Estonia, Malta and Slovenia seem not to have started yet.

We see substantial testing activities for a substantial amount of time in Hradec Kralova (Czech Republic), Dzierzoniow (Poland), Helsinki – Espoo (Finland), Rethymnon (Greece) and Sochaczew (Poland). Most of the test cities started testing the parts 'city profile' and 'characterize your city' of the RFSC. This is a logical first step that was also suggested in the leaflet 'Practical information for the testers and test-cities'. Until last week no test city sent in an illustration to the webmaster.

Useful information coming in by the page feedback button

Fortunately, test cities are using the feedback button at each of the pages. Nicis Institute needs this feedback from the test cities to be able to draw conclusions about the usability of parts of the RFSC for the cities. An important part of the Nicis recommendations to improve the RFSC and to make the RFSC more useful for the cities will be based on these feedbacks by page (button right under of each page). Already, useful remarks and suggestions are coming in about the lay-out of some of the pages, the (mis)understanding of some of the

buttons, the phrasing of questions and the clarity of the information provided. This is a good start. We hope that in the next four weeks the number of feedbacks of the pages of the RFSC will substantially increase.

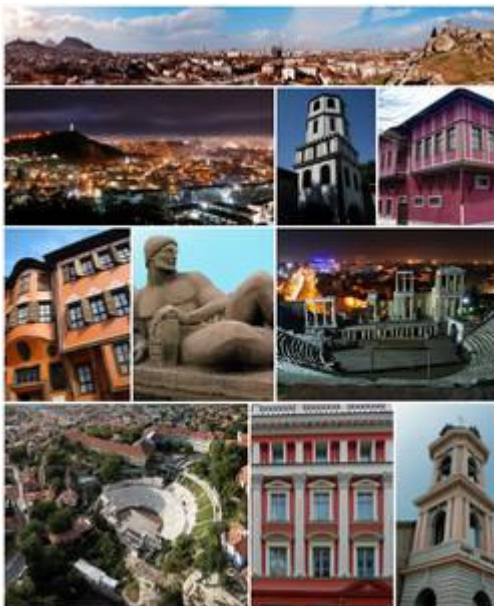
News from the testing team

Fixed dates for on-site visits

With the German test cities (Ludwigsburg, Munich, Trier, Düsseldorf and Arnsberg) a common on-site visit is planned in Munich on April, 13th, 2011. In the following week all Romanian test cities will be visited: Zalau (18 April), Deva (19 April), Craiova (20 April) and Braila (21 April). The on-site visit to Belfast (United Kingdom) is planned on 31 May and to Umea (Sweden) on 8 or 9 of June. In Portugal (beginning of June), Hungary (second or third week of May), Latvia (half of June) and Poland the test cities are busy organizing on-site visits.

How Plovdiv in Bulgaria is organising the testing

Vanya Genova is the contact person of Plovdiv for Nicis Institute during the testing phase. She told us that during the launching event she understood that involving different departments of the Plovdiv city administration in the testing of the RFSC and stimulating a dialogue between them with the help of the questioning grid of the RFSC is important. She discussed this with the Deputy Mayor after the launching event. He decided that for each of the departments an expert should coordinate the testing in his or her department (priorities, strategy, projects).



The four economic, social, environmental and administrative experts will organise a small working group of 4 to 5 staff members in their departments. In the social working group for example an expert on housing, an expert on education and an expert in social welfare are involved. In the environmental working group for example an expert on waste, an expert on water, an expert on air emissions and an expert of energy production and consumption. For each of the coordinating experts in the departments Vanya asked to the webmaster (webmasterrfsc@developpement-durable.gouv.fr) a personnel login and password to test the RFSC.

Vanya will coordinate the testing of the RFSC in the different departments. She will organise a meeting where the four experts of each of the departments will discuss together the usefulness of the RFSC for their daily activities. This will lead to clear feedback to Nicis Institute. During the testing she will

regular inform the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and City Council.

How Umea in Sweden is organising the testing

Albert Erdman, strategic development officer and contact person of Umea during the testing phase, organized a meeting with all Heads of Unit. They decided to test the RFSC with two recent projects in Umea.

Firstly, the Heads of Unit are currently revising Umea's monitoring system. A small group of 4 to 5 staff members from different departments – including Umea's statistical office – will evaluate how their

monitoring system fits into the RFSC and how their monitoring system could eventually benefit from the suggestions of the RFSC.

Secondly, Umea is finalizing its strategic plan. They will check their strategic plan with the 25 key objectives of integrated urban development of the RFSC. Eight people from different city departments will be involved.

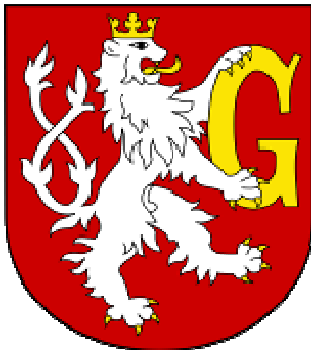
In Umea there is a strong commitment to carry out the testing. The City Council decided to participate in the testing phase and the Heads of Unit took up the order. In all departments they allocated time for staff members to do the testing.

In August 2011, at the end of the testing phase, they will provide feedback to the City Council. Maybe they could improve their monitoring system and their strategic plan thanks to the RFSC. And in any case with their experience they will be able to provide all kind of feedback to Nicis Institute about the RFSC and the usefulness for Umea.



How Hradec Kralove (Czech Republic) is organising the testing

With the information of the launching event still fresh in their minds, many urban colleagues visited <http://rfsc.test.tomos.fr/> early the next morning. So did the city of Hradec Kralove in the Czech Republic. We asked them to share with us their first experiences and also their ratio behind volunteering to be a test-city.



“Our city is currently planning to update its development strategy, and therefore we welcome the opportunity to participate in the RFSC testing. The RFSC will help us to translate our ideas and principles on sustainable development into practice for our city’s strategic planning” so stated Jana Svobodova, Officer at the Department of strategy and city development projects of Hradec Kralove.

During their brief familiarization with the instrument, already some ideas for an improvement of the RFSC came to their mind. A summary document that would clearly describe the overall philosophy of the RFSC and how to work with the different tools in the framework (preferably using an illustrative example step by step) would be very welcome in Hradec Kralove. We hope of course that our Czech colleagues also used that so important feed-back button to share this idea with the testing-team! Jana Svobodova concluded by stating that the team of Hradec Kralove appreciates the opportunity to share examples with other cities by using the "Best Practice" section and they appreciated the flexibility, rate of response and the proposed solution to a technical problem that Nicis pointed out during the testing.

How Helsinki-Espoo in Finland is organising the testing



Until now Helsinki-Espoo is also one of the most active test cities in the RFSC testing phase. We came into contact with Mr Markus Lukin (Senior Environment planner) who answered our questions regarding the organization of the testing phase and the potential added value of the RFSC for the city of Helsinki-Espoo.

“We have only started the testing, and had some discussions inside the Environment Centre” according to Mr Lukin. The idea is to integrate the testing of the RFSC with already ongoing projects on the Sustainability Action Plan and the

City and Sustainability indicators of Helsinki-Espoo. The follow-up report of the Sustainability Action Plan of the city is a process where all departments of the city administration are involved, so all departments are also ‘indirectly’ involved in the testing phase of the RFSC tool.

The testing is coordinated in the Environment Centre, but the Urban Facts Department will also be strongly involved in the process. According to Mr Lukin the RFSC Launching Event in Brussels has helped a lot to understand the idea of the tool: “I think most of all it will help us to see which sectors of sustainability are managed in a good level and which sectors need more attention in the future”.

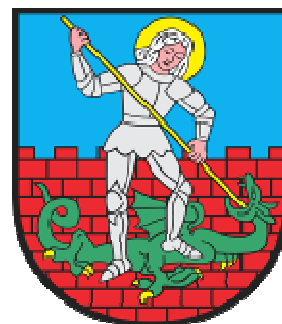
Furthermore, the Launching Event made it clear to the city of Helsinki-Espoo that all comments to the tool are more than welcome, so the city will focus on having a look at things to develop in the tool. Regarding things to improve on the website, Mr Lukin pointed out that it would be very useful to see the sustainability indicators of other cities to see in which areas the city has a good score and where improvements are needed. Furthermore, in the field of environmental sustainability the city would like to propose some additional indicators to be included in the list. These kind of comments are more than welcome for the Nicis institute and further improvement of the RFSC website. Thus, please use the ‘feedback’ button!

How Dzierzoniow in Poland is organising the testing

The city of Dzierzoniow in Poland has also been very active in the testing phase of the RFSC until now. We called Ms. Malgorzata Krupska (Economic Development Department) to hear how they organized the testing phase of the RFSC and what their feelings are on the RFSC after the Launching Event.

“We mostly filled in all this information before the Launching Event” according to Krupska Malgorzata. After the Launching Event on 15 and 16 March 2011 in Brussels the deputy Mayor of Dzierzoniow, Ms Wanda Ostrowska, organized a meeting to involve representatives of many city departments. These representatives will work together in a working group. They will divide the website as regards their expertise and check with each other. Therefore, the information filled in before the Launching Event will be checked in the working group in two weeks time.

The RFSC website is not always very clear and there has been some difficulties in understanding. Therefore, there has been frequent contacts with other Polish cities like Warszawa, especially how some English sentences should be interpreted. In relation to this, the deputy Mayor of Dzierzoniow is actively striving for a Polish version of the RFSC website. The feedback of all European cities as regards difficulties in understanding the website is very helpful in analyzing the testing phase of the RFSC. The ‘feedback’ button can be found on the right bottom page on the RFSC website.



When something is not working in the RFSC?

Probably, this has to do with the choice of your web browser. Pop-ups and tick cells in the RFSC do not work properly in the web browser or navigator system Internet Explorer versions 7 and 8. This problem is not occurring in the other web browsers (Firefox, Chrome, Safari and Opera). When you are working with Internet Explorer and you have problems with ticking cells and pop-ups please change your browser. You can download for example Firefox at the following weblink: <http://www.mozilla-europe.org/en/>

The recent insights of the webmaster are that the RFSC works without any problems on the following navigator systems on a PC and Apple Mac:

- Internet Explorer Versions 7, 8 (with the exception of pop-up and tick cells);
- Firefox Versions 2, 3.5, 3.6 and 4;
- Google Chrome 3.0;
- Safari 4, 5.0;
- Opera 10.10.

FAQ

Regularly we will answer Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) that our helpdesk is receiving.

Q. How much time and capacity is needed for testing the RFSC?

A. The RFSC is for the cities and the cities decide themselves what is useful and how much testing time result from that. Cities can test one or two tools of the RFSC or they can test all tools. They can check only one project within the RFSC or several projects. Cities that have already a monitoring system can easily check their monitoring system with the suggested key indicators in the RFSC and provide their comment from the comparison. Cities that do not have a monitoring system of sustainable urban development can built one with the RFSC and discuss the results with all city actors involved. The latter option will of course demand more time than if monitoring systems already exist. Among the cities there will be a large variety of people from different sectors and departments involved in using the RFSC and contributing to provide testing feedback. Cities can add several illustrations to the RFSC. All these variations will influence the time and capacity used for testing the RFSC. Of course, the more cities test the RFSC the more feedback they can provide and this is very important for further development of the RFSC.

A rough estimate could be: 2 weeks of work for the contact person and project leader of testing in the city, 2 weeks of work in total for 12 – 20 people in several departments trying and judging different parts of the RFSC, 2 days of work selecting and adding illustrations and 2 days of work for different meetings and discussions about the results of the RFSC. Several cities indicated in the application form that they intend to devote much more time than this rough estimate for testing the RFSC.

Q. Why are these 25 key questions that form the core of the four tools in the RFSC selected? What is the foundation for this selection?

A. The 25 questions - grouped by the 4 pillars of sustainability (economy, social affairs, environment, governance) – comes from the Leipzig Charter (2007). They cover the main objectives and principles for sustainable urban development in Europe as defined by the Ministers for Urban Development and Territorial Cohesion of all Member States.

- Q. *What is the usefulness and the necessity for my city to use the RFSC (and to test the RFSC)?*
- A. The usefulness of and necessity to use the RFSC is depending of the type of problems the city is coping with, the stage of development, the already existing tools in the city, the internal discussions that took already place about sustainable urban development etc. The functionality of the RFSC as a whole and its benefits will probably become clear only after a while and rather at the end of the testing phase. During the testing phase testers can concentrate on specific parts of the RFSC that are interesting and of relevance in their local context and for their specific strategy or project. Testers are not obliged to test everything of the RFSC. The whole purpose of testing the RFSC is exactly to find out what is useful for each of the test cities. The sum of the 66 test cities' feedback will give sufficient results about the usefulness and added value of the RFSC for European cities as a whole.
- Q. *Does each civil servant have to fill in the complete questionnaires? Is it not possible to share parts of the questionnaires (e.g. city characteristics) so that not everyone has to fill in all parts?*
- A. For the moment, testers cannot 'copy' or share their information across different logins. But they can share through downloading or printing the information of and in the RFSC. It is not necessary that everybody fills in the questionnaires. You can discuss with your colleagues and agree who fill in the questionnaires for which specific part so that you do not need to duplicate the work. Another possibility is to fill in the same parts individually at the same time and to compare and discuss the results afterwards to agree on a consensus for your city. Or you can work with different colleagues with only one login after each other and not in parallel. In the comment fields in the RFSC you can post comments, questions and discussions points for your colleagues working with you on the RFSC.
- Q. *Sectoral projects seem less fitted for the integrated approach. There seems to be a warning (enhanced by the red sign) that the project is not balanced and that this is not good. For a sectoral project large parts of the RFSC questionnaire are of no relevance four our city. Does the RFSC indeed mean in that case that my sectoral project is bad and unbalanced?*
- A. Sectoral projects covering only a part of the 25 core questions of the RFSC are not bad as such. The warning only supports eventual decision making about projects. It says: are you sure that all key elements of sustainable urban development are taken into consideration in your project? In this way the tool gives ideas and asks questions that could improve projects. If you and your colleagues are sure about the characteristics of the project vis-à-vis the 25 key objectives of sustainable development you can simply neglect the warnings and signs. Of course, city projects with economic, social, environmental and governance elements should give less warnings about unbalances while filling in the part 'characterize your city' . We are very curious about the usefulness of this part of the RFSC in your case. Therefore, we encourage you to use the feedback button.
- Q. *How are privacy and personal data protected?*
- A. During the testing phase, cities deliver feedback and add information to the RFSC. This information is very important for a good testing of the RFSC, for good testing conclusions, for the testing phase's reports (conclusions and recommendations) and for the development of the final version of the RFSC. The RFSC webmaster and Nicis Institute guarantee that each tester will be able to decide, at any stage of the testing phase, which information given in the RFSC will be visible not only for him/herself but also for others (within the same city or amongst all other test cities). All information/data (projects, examples, indicators, illustrations etc.) added to the RFSC website will

be visible only for the tester him-/herself. You can decide yourself what you want to share with others and you can always delete parts of your own information.

During the testing phase, the NICIS Institute might ask testers from time to time whether they would volunteer to send some of their own information/data that they added to the RFSC to the NICIS Institute. This would enable the NICIS Institute to look at some concrete results that the testers achieved with the RFSC (e.g. checks of integrated approach, use of recommended indicators for monitoring) and ask their comments. This will help to enhance the test results and to improve the RFSC.

All users of the RFSC agreed in the license and use requirements to treat information received confidentially. Every user agrees to respect the protection of information/data shared by other testers/test cities during the testing phase (illustrations, find peer cities, city profile, indicators uses, city project saved in the RFSC website, testing material feedback, etc.).

The RFSC Webmaster and Nicis Institute guarantee the confidentiality of all the testing feedback and the inclusion of all information/data added by every tester (projects, examples, indicators and illustrations) to the RFSC website. And guarantee to use any information from the testing phase for the testing reports or for other publications (i.e. examples in the final report, illustrations, examples for presentations, pictures, etc.) only with the agreement of the respective tester/test city.

Q. What is the deadline for the testing phase of the RFSC?

A. The deadline to provide testing feedback to Nicis Institute is 2 September 2011 at the latest. Feedback sent to Nicis Institute later than 2 September 2011 cannot be included in the analysis.

Contact with Nicis support team during your testing

You can contact the Nicis team by telephone +31 70 344 09 66 or email "testingRFSC@nicis.nl"