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The Urban Lab of Europe !

# The TAST'in FIVES project Journal N° 2

*Project led by the city of Lille*



**URBAN  
POVERTY**

## The TAST'in FIVES project

The City of Lille, through the TAST'in FIVES project, wants to reverse negative trends of urban poverty in the deprived neighbourhood of Fives. As part of a larger urban brownfield regeneration development, the project aims at (re)introducing productive activities centred on food. At the heart of the brownfield, a building of 2050 m<sup>2</sup> will be renovated to host an innovative combination of activities in the fields of urban agriculture, production, culinary transformation and catering.

A central food hall will be created and will mix cooking, productive and food-services activities. As part of this project, a « community kitchen » will be established and is conceived as a tool for sharing and empowering, a place to gather for the simple pleasure of cooking. Local residents will be strongly involved in the design and running of this “community kitchen” which will support new economic and social activities as well as training and job opportunities for the area. Unlike usual public infrastructure, this community kitchen will respond to an original collective governance and aims at becoming financially autonomous through an innovative business model building on the private activities generated by the food hall.

TAST'in FIVES will also integrate a technological dimension by developing an experimental module for vertical urban farming and “contact-free” technologies to design smart stock management systems. It will notably help reduce food waste and facilitate the distribution of meals in collaboration with social NGOs.

The content of this journal does not reflect the official opinion of the Urban Innovative Actions Initiative. Responsibility for the information and views expressed in the journal lies entirely with the author.

**Partnership:**

- Ville de Lille
- Métropole Européenne de Lille (MEL) - [Organised agglomeration](#)
- Société de Restauration et Rénovation de Lille (SORELI) - Public/Private Company
- Institut Supérieur d'Agriculture (ISA) - Research Centre
- Maison Européenne des Sciences de l'Homme et de la Société (Research Centre)
- Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) - Research Centre
- Association «Les sens du Goût» (LSG) - NGO
- Fédération du Nord du Secours Populaire Français (SPF) - NGO
- Maison de l'Emploi de Lille, Lomme, Hellemmes (MDE) - Public Agency
- La Sauvegarde du Nord (SN) - NGO
- Le Centre d'Innovation des Technologies sans Contact (CITC) - Private Company
- Rencontres Audiovisuelles (RA) – NGO

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# 1. Executive Summary

This Implementation Journal is dedicated to the TAST'in FIVES project funded under the Urban Innovative Actions initiative since March 2017. It aims at sharing what is happening, at local level, as an innovative and integrated urban project is being implemented.

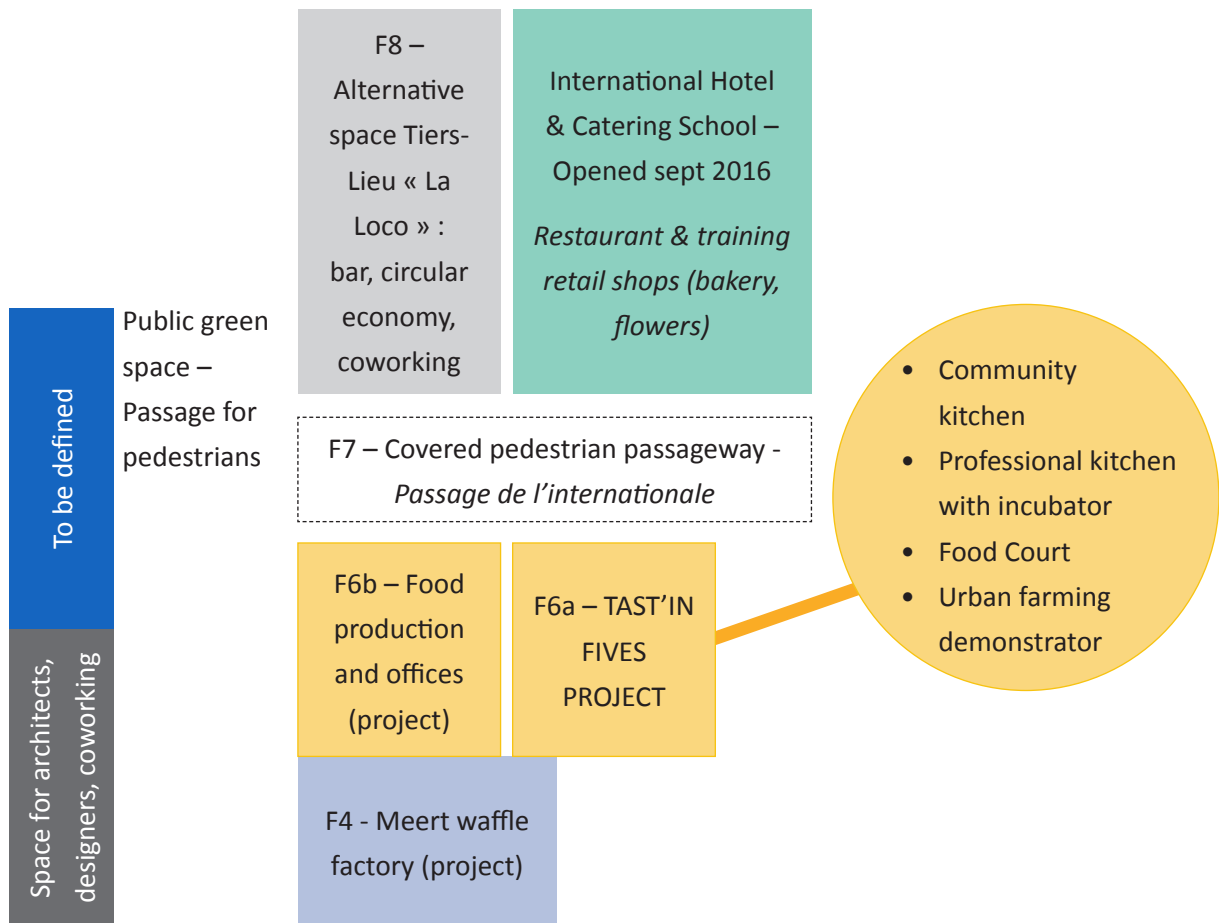
With the TAST'in FIVES project, the municipality of Lille has decided to address urban poverty issues in one of the most deprived neighbourhood of the City: Fives. As such, it aims to address an EU level priority, that is at the core of the Europe 2020 strategy and one of the 5 targets for 2020: 20 million less people at risk of poverty in 2020 compared to 2010. While it is clear today that this EU target will not be reached, cities like Lille are working hard to combat poverty and social exclusion at local level. TAST'in FIVES was initiated under the 1<sup>st</sup> call for projects of the Urban Innovative Actions in 2015. It is embedded in a wider urban regeneration project targeting the industrial brownfield site of the former Fives-Cail-Babcock (FCB) factory, located in the Lille district of Fives. Fives is a former working-class neighbourhood, heavily impacted in the 1990s by the closing of important industrial sites. Today, the district is among the most deprived of Lille, characterized by a high level of poverty (30% of the population below the poverty threshold), unemployment (22% of the active population) and exclusion.

The project aims at setting up an eco-system of food-related activities and facilities in one of the industrial halls of the Fives-Cail brownfield site,

composed of a community kitchen, a professional kitchen including an incubator, a food court and an urban farming demonstrator. The overall objective is to create a productive and inclusive ecosystem that will benefit first and foremost to the local population. More details on the project are available in the [1st edition of this journal](#) available on the UIA website ([www.uia.eu](http://www.uia.eu)).

In this Journal, we outline what has been achieved in the project over the past 12 months, the main challenges encountered by project partners, and how they have faced these challenges. We will see that a great deal of progress has been made since the launch of the temporary community kitchen on the “Avant-Goût” site, on the brownfield. A rich programme of activities (cooking workshops, conferences, cine soups, etc.) has been deployed on site by UIA partners and local stakeholders, building up attendance and visibility of the project. The temporary food court installed over the summer has been a huge success, attracting over 58.000 visitors from the whole metropolitan area on the Fives-Cail site. Work has been ongoing in relation with the future professional kitchen and the related incubator, with co-creation workshops in line with the strong participatory orientation adopted by the project...

In the meantime, and in the perspective of the opening of the future “Halle Gourmande” in the autumn 2019, challenges have become more pressing. Partners need to strengthen their outreach to local residents and stakeholders



so that they actually get on board the current temporary site. And most of all, they need to invent the governance and business model that will run the future eco-system, ensuring that the business components of the project (professional

kitchen, food court) support the social components (community kitchen, incubator, etc.). Let's see how far the TAST'in Fives partners have travelled in this regard!



## 2. Experimenting to find the right mix: Project Update

Over the past months, project partners have been busy with developing the different “ingredients” of the future facility and especially the community kitchen, the food court and the incubator. To do this, they could use the temporary site installed within the premises of the Fives-Cail-Babcok brownfield to experiment with the shape and taste of these different

ingredients. In the meantime, the City of Lille has been looking for the appropriate governance model and the organisation that could run the whole eco-system. This has been one of the most pressing challenge since our last issue and will be dealt with in the next section. For the time being, let’s explore the actual experimentation process!

### 2.1 A taster of the future community kitchen

The first journal of the TAST’in FIVES project ended with the launch of “L’Avant-Goût”. This temporary site and community kitchen were set up next to the great hall that was being refurbished to host the whole project from September 2019 onwards. For one year, the temporary facility has been operating as a taster and experimentation ground to define the components of the future “Halle Gourmande”.

The temporary site includes 3 main bungalows:

- A small office (28 m<sup>2</sup>) available to all partners who express a wish to use it;

- A polyvalent kitchen & meeting room, including storage rooms and bathrooms;
- An experimental farming unit made out of a metal container on top of which a glass house has been built (developed and run by the ISA, Institut Supérieur d’Agriculture, one of the TAST’in FIVES partners).

The developer, Soreli, also moved its own pre-existent bungalow to the temporary site and use it for other purposes than the UIA project (mainly as a meeting room and information desk about



Photo Melody Houk

the whole urban renewal project). This bungalow has been occasionally used by UIA partners.

The City of Lille administrates the whole temporary site and the different UIA bungalows, thanks to a detached civil servant in charge of the site daily management, who is supported by young people under the voluntary “civic service” framework. Activities are mainly initiated and managed by those UIA partners in charge of key work packages during this prefiguration phase:

- 4 NGOs in charge of delivering workshops and various food related activities to

develop traffic on site (Sens du Goût, Secours Populaire, Sauvegarde du Nord, and Rencontres Audiovisuelles);

- the ISA (Institut Supérieur d’Agriculture) team in charge of experimenting with the farming unit;
- The Metropolis of Lille, in charge of developing a food job incubator, and the Maison de l’Emploi (“employment’s house”) – training local young people to food-related jobs, also organized several workshops on site.

## A growing number of activities and a rapid diversification of users

While the experimental farming unit is showing sustainable methods to grow food in an urban setting (e.g. aquaponics), the community kitchen is clearly the engine of the temporary site. Over the past months, it has been available to UIA partners, local NGOs and institutions, as well as residents, and has been host to a great variety of activities: cooking workshops, meetings between local chefs and refugee chefs, neighbourhood parties and meals, NGO meetings, kids visits organized by local schools, etc. The local employment agency, which is partner of the TAST’in FIVES project, also used the premises for candidate interviews. A total of 350 events were organised at the Avant-Goût since the opening of the temporary site.

Figures from registered activities in the facility planning show that these have gathered around 6.900 people (nov. 2017-nov. 2018). They also show an increase in the number of activities organised each month, starting at 15 events

on average during the first 4 months to reach an average of 35 events in spring, most of the summer period (except in August due to the holidays) and in the autumn.

During this period, UIA partners organised the majority of the activities, with more than 215 events (62% of the events organized) as part of their UIA work packages. Yet -and this is a positive result of this experimentation phase, local NGOs and institutional players (public community centers, Lille’s kinder gardens, schools, district council...) have started to use the site and bring in their own publics, organizing up to 25% of the events (respectively 17% and 8%).

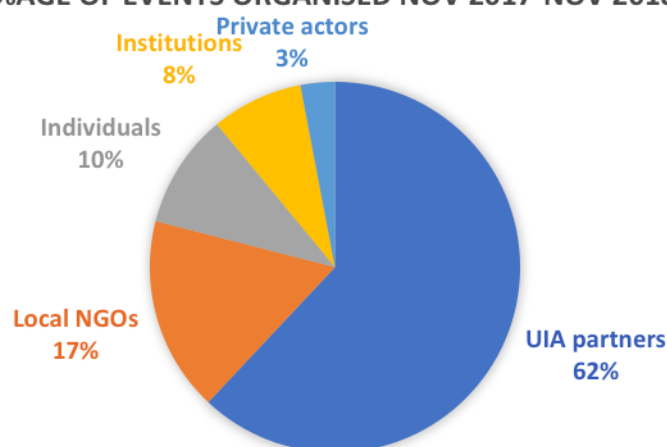
Last but not least, the temporary site also provided the opportunity to work with private actors, mainly individuals for the moment, willing to organize cooking workshops using the collective facility. These account for 10% of the events held on the Avant-Goût over the past 12 months.



### Typologie of main uses and users

- **UIA partners delivering TAST'in FIVES activities (City of Lille, Sens du Goût, Rencontres audiovisuelles, Secours Populaire Français, Maison de l'Emploi, MESHS) through workshops, project meetings, delegation visits, etc.**
- **Local NGOs organising meetings and cooking workshops**
- **Private individuals organising cooking workshops or selling produce, and other private actors selling local produce on site**
- **Institutional players such as local schools visiting the site or taking part in cooking classes; and the district City hall organising a district council meeting with inhabitants**

%AGE OF EVENTS ORGANISED NOV 2017-NOV 2018



## Drawing lessons from the experimentation phase

Experimenting with the temporary kitchen over the past 12 months has turned out to be very useful for the project. Activities initiated by the project partners allowed the site to gain in visibility. The constant increase in the number of visitors and in the number of activities/ events organized on site is an important result. It shows that the site is accessible and attractive. The fact that more and more local players outside of the UIA partners are requesting slots in the kitchen time table also shows that the community kitchen is increasingly perceived as a public space at the disposal of district residents, NGOs, institutions...

In this sense, some kind of ownership is emerging, even though the process is fragile and concerns a limited number of local players so far.

Whether it is about responding to a need for more free public spaces or creating an opportunity for people to organize social activities and gather people in a different space, the community kitchen and more broadly the temporary site are actually becoming a driver of social interaction in the neighbourhood. To be further developed but the potential is clearly there and being enacted!

Running the community kitchen for over a year also allowed UIA partners to actually experiment how such a facility could operate. The principle of free access to the kitchen was part of the initial concept. Yet some kind of contracting procedure turned out to be necessary to guarantee proper use of the facility, respect of the social objectives of the project, and set up insurance coverage for both parties.

Simplicity of the contractual procedure between the managing organization (the City of Lille) and users had been highlighted as a key criterion for the functioning of the kitchen by the working group in charge of co-producing the governance framework early 2017<sup>1</sup>. For this testing period, the procedure was defined as follow:

3. Request from user based on the kitchen time table and available slots, by means of a form sent to the facility manager
4. Validation of the request by the facility manager
5. Signature of a convention including the kitchen rules and user's insurance certificate to be annexed

For the time being, it seems that the procedure has allowed smooth operating of the facility.

As requests from private individuals started to flow in for the organization of cooking workshops for which participants have to pay for (approx. 15-20 euros/ person for the workshop plus dinner cooked), issues related to competition and market rules emerged. As this was considered to be an experimentation phase, it was decided that use of the facility would remain free for private individuals to facilitate access to a wider

audience, especially at local level to comply with the social objectives of the project. For those asking fees for participation in their workshops, an in-kind contribution is expected in exchange, food or equipment for the community kitchen. Moreover, the City of Lille decided to limit the use of the facility by private individuals to 2 slots per week (and a maximum of 2 slots per month per organizer). From the constant increase in the use of the facility, it is to be expected that demand will exceed offer and that refined rules of procedure will have to be put in place for managing requests (prioritization? selection criteria?).

Interestingly enough, the UIA partners who were initially offering free food-related workshops have recently shifted to asking participants to pay a financial contribution of their choice. The aim is to convey a sense of worthiness of the activities proposed, and accessorially to collect money to buy equipment for the facility: a new pan, child enhancers, Christmas decorations, etc. This touches upon the sustainability of the whole model of the Food Hall to be, with the business components (e.g. food court) supporting the social components (eg community kitchen). During this experimentation phase, this dimension could not really be explored.

Deploying activities on the temporary site allowed the City of Lille to have a better sense of the public "using" the facility. No systematic collection of data from visitors or participants to the workshops has been put in place. Yet observation from the MESHS (a research center, TAST'in FIVES partner in charge of the evaluation work package) and from workshop organisers shows two trends:

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<sup>1</sup> In 2017, a number of meetings gathering UIA partners and local players (representatives of NGOs, community center and other district institutions) have been dedicated to defining the design and terms of reference of the community kitchen to be opened on the temporary site in prefiguration of the future one of the "Halle Gourmande".

1) *NGOs organizing activities and workshops tend to bring along their own public*, thus a captive audience with whom they were/ are already working with outside of the Avant-Goût. This raises the question about whether the facility and related activities add to the existing fabric of “social inclusion players” operating at district level or not. One could consider bringing people on site is already a first step, yet partners should pay attention to that issue. It also raises the question of the impact of the project on local players’ activities and habits as they tend to operate, on the new site, as they usually do outside.

2) *Audience/groups of participants to the various activities do not mix*: precarious people coming to the Secours Populaire’s cooking workshops do not interact with people coming to attend a conference on organic food and local food systems. Of course, it may not be part of these NGOs or players’ agendas to promote social

mix and diversity within their own activities. Yet in light of the social objectives of the TAST’in FIVES project, it appears that allowing for different social groups/ communities to meet is actually a way to improve the quality of the social fabric in the neighbourhood.

Considering the social objectives of the project, these dynamics call on partners to take action in order to:

- improve their outreach in the neighbourhood and draw new persons to the activities;
- diversify collective players (NGOs, institutions, etc.) using the facility so as to enlarge the spectrum of visitors;
- ensure that a part of the activities organized on site provide the opportunity for different types of audience to meet and interact;
- revisit their communication strategy to support the above.

## 2.2 A food court in Fives? Really?

A key component of the future “Halle Gourmande”, alongside the community kitchen, is the food court that should be set up in the premises of the former manufacturing hall. Whereas food courts have been flourishing across large cities in Europe, usually as part of regeneration projects, these are mainly located in central places where urban life is already thriving. For the TAST’in FIVES project, the project location presents 2 challenging characteristics:

- the brownfield is situated in a former working class neighbourhood on the decline since the closing of the factory and known as a deprived district home to precarious populations;
- the Fives neighbourhood, even though easily accessible by metro (3 stops from Lille Flandres train station which is located in the

city center), is perceived as way out of the city centre, cut off from the urban fabric by a number of transport infrastructures (railways, expressways...).

**Is it then realistic to envisage a food court as the corner stone of the economic dimension of the project?** The question was haunting partners and more especially the City of Lille leading the project, when they were approached by 2 young entrepreneurs, Guillaume and Philippe. Recently graduated from a business school, these 2 friends had been thinking about setting up a food court in Lille after they experienced street food corners in various places when traveling around the world. Through initial discussions with the Chamber of commerce, they were informed about the ongoing activities at the temporary

site, the Avant-Goût, and advised to get in touch with the City of Lille to explore possibilities. That's how both parties met early 2018 and agreed to experiment with a food court on the temporary site, in front of the future Food Hall, to be opened for 4 months during the summer.

The City of Lille offered the site for free, not including electricity and cleaning services. The 2 entrepreneurs endorsed the financial investments to build the food corners, outdoor furniture, floors and lavatories. Their proposal included:

- a bar
- 3 food corners, attributed for a medium to short-time period (min 2 weeks/max 4 months) by means of an open call for proposals, and occasionally food trucks, food bikes...
- activities for the public: outdoor DJ-sets, concerts, broadcasting of the World Cup soccer games, foosball and pétanque tournaments, etc.



Both parties, the City of Lille and the entrepreneurs, shared a common goal: experimenting a new concept with a low risk, i.e.: a small investment, and on a short period of time. The objective was to have people come and spend time on the site. Yet while Guillaume and Philippe were also ambitioning to make some benefits out of this project and gain experience, the City of Lille was pursuing additional objectives in relation to the future Food Hall: to increase the visibility and the attractiveness of the site -and of what was already happening on the site in the community kitchen - in the district and beyond, and to experiment with the concept of food court (especially in terms of attendance).

As a matter of fact, the experimentation turned out to be a real success, both in terms of attendance and financial return on investment. Over 4 months, between June and September 2018, over 58.000 visitors came to the *Friche Gourmande* to eat, drink and enjoy various entertainments proposed by the food court managers and by the UIA partners as part of their TAST'in FIVES activities.



Photo Melody Houk

The economic impact has been measured in the following terms:

- 8 persons employed by the food court team, among which 1 from the Fives district
- 11 indirect jobs mobilized (cooking, security, cleaning services...)
- 2 of the cooks operating in the food corners were from the Fives district
- 7 restaurant/ food corner managers operating on site
- Additional private actors occasionally locating their business on site such as food trucks and food bikes
- A number of local retailers involved in activities such as selling boxes of fresh produce coming from local farmers, selling homemade cookies, plants, vintage pop up sales, etc.

Beyond the overall figure of 58.000 visitors, detailed figures regarding the geographical origin of these visitors are unfortunately not available. From observation on site, by the 2 entrepreneurs, city staff and UIA partners present at various moments, visitors were clearly diverse:

- Inhabitants from the districts of Fives and Hellemme
- Inhabitants from farther districts and the wider metropolitan area
- Tourists
- Families and students
- One-shot visitors and regular customers
- Schools and NGOs (special events, workshops...)
- Firms (for private events)

For the City of Lille, attracting audience from the metropolitan area was an important result,

showing that people are mobile and consider coming to the neighbourhood for leisure activities. The initiative helped to increase the visibility and notoriety of the site and wider project at city and metropolitan level. Yet, even though detailed figures are not available to fully grasp the geographical coverage, it seems that the initiative did not fully succeed in increasing ownership of the project at neighbourhood level. Local residents were not among the most numerous visitors. Feedback to city staff and UIA partners included comments about the food court being mainly for young city center dwellers, hipsters and such, and not aimed at district populations. Even though the first beer on the price list was proposed for 2,5 euros (aligned to local prices), most of the drinks and food were considered as way too expensive for Fives residents.

The mitigated impact of the temporary food court at local level, in terms of image, also has to do with communication. It turns out that the communication strategy implemented by the two entrepreneurs for the food court did not include specific actions targeted at the neighbourhood that would take into account the social profile of the local population groups. Most of the communication relied on social media, which is not the most appropriate to reach out to deprived and isolated communities living in the area.

For the City of Lille, the initiative presented other shortfalls. Communication, in addition to the issue outlined above, was a bit too focused on the food court itself. It did not always clearly mention the wider perspective of the food court being embedded in an eco-system that was in the making, including a community kitchen, an experimental farming unit, etc. It did not always stress that the site had been developed as part of this project and put at disposal of the



entrepreneurs. The City of Lille quickly deployed measures to compensate for this “light” being shed on the food court mainly, adding signage everywhere, including big stickers on the tables with information on TAST’in FIVES and the Food Hall in the making, etc. Thus it appeared that the communication strategy could have been further discussed with the entrepreneurs so as to ensure it would benefit to both their business and the wider project.

Last but not least, considering the success of “La Friche Gourmande” and having the social objectives of the project in mind, one could question some financial aspects of the initiative. As a matter of facts, due to the tight calendar, it turned out impossible to fully explore all legal and financial options of the deal to be signed with the 2 entrepreneurs. As the City of Lille uses the site for free based on a convention with the developer Soreli, it was not possible to consider renting part of the site to the entrepreneurs. Yet, in the perspective of the future food court, and

on a longer period, it would have been necessary to consider how, above a certain level of benefits, some money could be retroceded so as to support some more social activities (e.g. workshops in the community kitchen). In this experimental phase, and over a 4-month period, the deal ensured minimum rewards for both parties. In the end, for the 2 entrepreneurs, the return on investment was much higher than expected. Yet the City of Lille ended up with a detailed market study on the potential profitability of the site, type of audience, type of businesses interested by deploying activities on the site, range of products and prices, parking needs, etc. And a strong argument to discuss with potential operators of the future “Halle Gourmande” and its food court.

All in all, lessons learnt from this experience will be precious for the future site in relation to the social dimension of the project and the “social inclusion” target when dealing with business partners.



*Photo DICOM Ville de Lille - JS*



*Photo DICOM Ville de Lille - JS*

## 2.3 Cooking a “food job factory”

The food hall to be opened end 2019 as a result of the TAST’in FIVES project shall include 4 main components: a community kitchen (including a video studio), a professional kitchen, an urban

farming demonstrator and a food court. As part of the professional kitchen, the project foresees that an incubator be set up to support the development of food-related businesses and



entrepreneurship. The European Metropolis of Lille (MEL), partner of the TAST'in FIVES project, is leading the work package dedicated to the incubator. The metropolitan authorities thus launched a call for tender to select a service provider that would assess the conditions and success factors of such an incubator.

## Lessons learnt from the territorial diagnosis

As part of their diagnosis, *Initiatives et Cité* completed a benchmark on food-related business incubators at national level. They also mapped all players operating, at metropolitan level, in the area of supporting individuals in getting back into employment or starting

As a result of the tendering process, *Initiatives et Cité* was commissioned to conduct a study and issue recommendations for the incubator in terms of target beneficiaries, services to be offered by the incubator, financial sustainability, etc. What are the key results for the UIA partners and their future “food job factory”?

a business as entrepreneurs. Last but not least, among the 35 persons involved in the study, 18 “project owners”, persons with a food-related business idea, have participated in co-production workshops and shared their experiences, needs for support, etc.



Photo Melody Houk

The mapping of existing players at metropolitan level confirmed that there was space for a new incubator to support project owners in the food sector while identifying complementarities and the necessity of fostering dialogue between all players. Demand is rather significant at metropolitan level and the offer of support including testing (cooking) facilities appears to be lacking.

Brainstorming with food project owners provided concrete insights into their expectations vis-à-vis the future incubator. The most pressing need is to have the possibility to test one's business idea, in a professional facility, where all sanitary norms apply and that allow production at a commercial scale. Additional needs for support are structured around the following topics:

Entrepreneurship	Management and technical aspects such as setting up a business (legal issues, economic model, etc.), business management... Professional training (access to training, funding schemes...) Business development/ change of scale (hiring people, finding investors/ shareholders...) Posture (self-confidence, setting priorities, making choices...)
Food sector	Knowledge and skills related to regulations (hygiene, health rules...) Equipment (equipped kitchen/ laboratory, spaces to test one's business or products...) Financial investments to buy material, cash advances for traiteur activities... Network to find work force for the enlarged business...

## Key recommendations for the future “food job factory”

Building on the benchmarking and on co-production process involving UIA partners and a group of individuals with food-related business projects, the study resulted in the following recommendations:

- **Target beneficiaries and related support services**

In order to take into account the social objectives of the TAST'in FIVES project and the diversity of profiles present on the territory, it is proposed to address 2 target populations with different types of support services:

- entrepreneurs with a specific business idea, for which they need support and production facilities to test, experiment and refine their business idea;
- individuals willing to work/ move into in food-related activities (including unemployed people), for which support is needed at a very early stage and differs from the first category.

For both targets, support services would be organised along 4 streams, with a collective

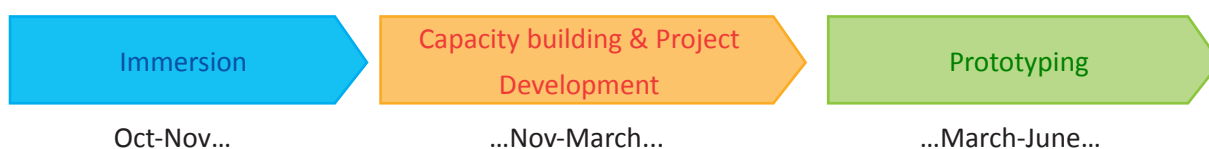
approach (activities dedicated to all incubated people) and an individual approach (tailored activities tailored to individual needs and to the specificities of each project):

- networking activities
- testing & prototyping
- training
- building a community of work

- **Proposed pathway into the incubator**

The process could be organized along 3 main phases:

1. Recruitment phase: April-August, information campaign and submission of applications
2. Orientation and selection phase: September-mid October, meeting with candidates and selection
3. Incubation journey for the selected candidates: 9-month support programme, along the following timeline:



- **The facility**

The “food job factory” proposal outlines a number of specificities regarding the future facility. The 240 m2 kitchen should include storage spaces (dry and cold), a vegetable processing area, hot cooking space, cold cooking space, dish washing area... As mentioned above, it seems highly relevant to provide project owners with the space and material to test their business idea, to prototype, to get familiar with larger scale production processes and professional kitchen utensils. The kitchen appears to be the cornerstone of the incubator and should primarily be available for “the incubated”.

The proposed model also foresees, in the main Food Court, a corner dedicated to selling products coming from the incubator. The food corner would allow to showcase incubated projects, test business ideas with real customers... This corner would be made available to project owners for free during low activity periods (eg Jan-July) and for a reduced fee during high activity periods (Aug-Dec).

Of course, the professional kitchen, the food corner and other areas used by the incubator (eg. meeting and training room) should be embedded in and interact with the wider eco-system of the “Halle Gourmande”. Bridges should be developed with the community kitchen, the food court, the network of businesses that will gather around the new site, etc.

- **Resources needed**

The study also outlined first hypotheses in terms of resources. It is estimated that 5 full-time staff would be necessary to run the incubator:

- 1 person for coordination and development
- 2 persons for technical support to incubated project owners (1 dedicated to business creation and development, 1 dedicated to food and cooking)
- 1 person for administrative purposes
- 1 person for maintenance and cleaning

Resources include external trainers to be paid, as well as local players that would contribute to the functioning of the incubator as partners. A first mapping of potential local partners identifies 3 main groups of players that should be on board:

- Community development institutions and NGOs operating at district level (including the district council, community centers, etc.)
- Employment counselling services at local and metropolitan level
- Community of inspiring chefs and business leaders supporting social activities

Adding to the human dimension, running the incubator and the professional kitchen will entail operating expenditures that are to be further estimated. Income can be generated from renting spaces, selling products, etc. The

benchmarking of food incubators at national level showed that in some cases, the collective working facilities (coworking spaces, professional kitchens associated with traiteur/ restaurant activities, training spaces, spaces for applied trainings such as selling points, food corners, bakeries, etc.) contribute to the economic model of the incubators. Yet they do not usually grant the incubator a real financial autonomy. Their primary purpose remains educational.

So far, the proposed model foresees a certain level of public subsidies from local, regional, national and EU authorities. This raises the question of the economic model of the incubator in relation with the wider eco-system that will constitute the “Halle Gourmande” for which the governance model is still being explored (see following chapter). In addition to the issue of financial autonomy, partners are also questioning the fact that, with the proposed model, the professional kitchen would be mostly used by the incubator, which was not part of the initial plans. To be continued...

## 3 The cooks' challenges

As well as supporting cities directly through the initiative, UIA also aims to identify and share the key lessons learned through these projects. Many of the implementation challenges are shared with other UIA cities, and in this section we

consider Lille's through a framework established by the UIA. In each journal we revisit the UIA challenge grid and assess progress made and lessons learned.

### 3.1 Overview of the UIA implementation challenges

The table below provides an overview of the identified *UIA Challenges* and how these challenges translate for TAST'in FIVES.

**TABLE 1: MAPPING TAST'N FIVES AGAINST THE ESTABLISHED UIA CHALLENGES**

Challenge	Level	Observations
1. Leadership for implementation	LOW	Since the launch of the project, TAST'N FIVES enjoys political support at the highest level. Through the participative approach and the governance model of the UIA partnership, collective governance has been established, through monthly steering committee meetings, gathering all UIA partners. Nevertheless, despite efforts made by the project team in the municipality, the city is considered as the actual leader and decision-maker on the project. Thus partners continue to turn to the Lille's project team for orientations and drive, which does not seem to be problematic for project implementation.

Challenge	Level	Observations
2. Public procurement	LOW	<p>The procurement challenge is limited for TAST'IN FIVES. Tenders have been launched to set up the temporary facilities of the "Avant-Goût" while the main building is being renovated, that did not imply complex arrangements.</p> <p>Yet two issues have emerged over the past months in relation to tendering:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) While the UIA initiative requires that a partnership be set up for project design and implementation, different partners are in charge of specific work packages. When a partner has to tender to deliver on their work package, how to ensure that the tendering process is embedded in the collective governance setting when that specific partner is legally responsible for the tendering process? This specific issue had not been anticipated ex ante by partners and the situation arose with one partner: the selection and steering framework did not formally make space for the whole partnership. How to make sure that the project objectives are taken on board and embedded in the tendering process?</li> <li>2) For the TAST'IN FIVES project, a temporary site has been set up to experiment with diverse project component while the future facility was being built. During this experimentation stage, some small scale activities have been implemented, with UIA partners and sometimes local residents/ businesses. For these activities, use of the temporary kitchen facility is granted for free while some users may want to a) sell the activity (e.g. a cooking workshop) and/ or b) sell the outcome of their activity (e.g. meals or cakes produced using the facility). At some point, issues related to market rules and fair competition will have to be addressed.</li> </ol>
3. Integrated cross-departmental working	LOW	<p>The Lille's <i>Projects Department</i> has established good working relationships with a number of other departments in the framework of TAST'IN FIVES. However, as with all relationship management, it requires ongoing attention and activity. The Projects team note that too often, services behave like service providers and tend to operate in a very hierarchical, top-down way. For the Projects team, it remains a daily challenge to develop innovative approaches in a framework that is not "accustomed" to different ways of working (especially by means of experimentation). In this case, smooth operation is ensured thanks to the Project team leader experience and capacities.</p>



Challenge	Level	Observations
<b>4. Adopting a participative approach</b>	<b>HIGH</b>	This is the cornerstone of the TAST'IN FIVES project. The project's success will largely rely on the city's ability to co-create the different components of the "Halle Gourmande" with future users and residents so as to empower them, turn them into active players of the district redevelopment (including by supporting social inclusion processes). Local NGOs and public services involved as UIA partners have played an important role in reaching out to local stakeholders and residents. They have managed so far to ensure they are on board during this experimentation phase. Yet all UIA partners agree more has to be done to enlarge outreach to the most excluded populations, which remains a pressing challenge for the project. This topic is further developed below.
<b>5. Monitoring and evaluation</b>	<b>HIGH</b>	Measuring the impact of TAST'IN FIVES presents a number of technical challenges. Although the project has clear targets, these relate to improving people's quality of life (e.g. improving access to healthy food) and tackling exclusion processes (e.g. improving people's employability, revitalizing social relationships). Beyond issues related to the definition of the evaluation framework, there are many factors in play that will influence the achievement of expected results. Consequently, attributing impact for the outcomes is complex and not free of risk. Progress has been made on this ground thanks to the work of the research center MESHS, in charge of this work package. Yet there is still some way to go to develop result evaluation framework that could be applied to the future facility.

Challenge	Level	Observations
6. Financial Sustainability	HIGH	<p>Financial sustainability of the future “Halle Gourmande” has become a more pressing issue over the past months. As a matter of fact, for the success of TAST’IN FIVES, it is crucial to ensure that the “social components” of the project (community kitchen, incubator) be supported by the “business components” (food court, professional kitchen).</p> <p>As for now, the temporary site has not allowed project partners to explore this issue by means of experimentation. It allowed to test the community kitchen, the way it can operate and be used, its attractiveness, etc. It also allowed to test the food court with the successful temporary initiative that was led during the summer 2018 by 2 young entrepreneurs. Yet the relationship between these 2 components has not really been explored. This was not built in the temporary food court initiative ex-ante and the 2 components have been operating in parallel, which was considered a missed opportunity at the end of the day.</p> <p>In the perspective of launching the future facility end 2019, partners should further explore this issue and maybe foresee some experimentation next summer if the temporary food court experience is renewed.</p> <p>In any case, many aspects of the financial sustainability will have to be explored once the community kitchen will be embedded into its real environment, in connection with the Food court and other food-related business players. The ecosystem will not be fully operational during the lifetime of the TAST’IN FIVES project, thus financial sustainability may still be an issue at the end of the project, when activities are transferred from the temporary site to the actual facility.</p>
7. Communicating with target beneficiaries	HIGH	<p>Communicating on the project is another pressing challenge for TAST’IN FIVES, since the inception of the project. The challenge relates to the target area and groups (deprived neighbourhood). It also relates to the very nature of the project itself as it aims at involving local residents and a wide range of stakeholders in the design and governance of the future “Halle Gourmande”. This topic is further developed below.</p>

Challenge	Level	Observations
8. Upscaling	MEDIUM	The upscaling challenge of the TAST'IN FIVES can be related to the transfer of the temporary activities developed in the Avant-Goût, to the actual "Halle Gourmande" when it is delivered in 2019. Partners are actually starting to consider this challenge as people attending activities on the temporary site and taking part in its development are getting attached to it. The experimental and <i>"in the making"</i> touch may be part of the attractiveness of the current site, which will have to be taken into account when shifting to what could be perceived as a more professional and institutionalized space. How to retain the current audience and the original spirit of the place? This questioning should be explored at this stage, especially in participatory processes for the design of the future components of the "Halle Gourmande".

In addition to the UIA challenges listed above, TAST'IN FIVES has been facing another complex challenge: defining the appropriate governance structure that could manage and operate the

future eco-system, "Halle Gourmande". We will further explore this issue below, along with the participatory and communication challenges.

## 3.2 Exploring the TAST'IN FIVES latest challenges

### Pushing the limits of the participatory approach

The participatory approach is the cornerstone of TAST'IN FIVES. One of the project's objectives is explicitly to empower residents, turn them into active players of the area's redevelopment, starting with the definition and governance of the "Halle Gourmande". While the site is being refurbished, most actions deployed on the temporary site have been dedicated to pursuing this objective.

Over the past 12 months, participation of local residents and stakeholders in the development of both the temporary site and the future "Halle Gourmande" has built on a combination of various activities:

- 1) Participatory workshops focusing on the design of the community kitchen, led by Baluchon, a consulting firm hired by the City of Lille to support the work on the future "Halle Gourmande". These workshops have involved local NGOS and public institutions of the Fives-Hellemme district. Once the temporary site was open, input has also been collected from people coming on site during public events, including local residents. This process fed into the design of both the temporary community kitchen, the "Avant-Goût", and of the future kitchens (community and professional kitchens) that will be part of the "Halle Gourmande".



Photo Melody Houk

2) Co-creation workshops for the design of the future incubator, led by the consultancy hired by Lille Europe Metropolis to work on framing this component of the future “Halle Gourmande” eco-system. In addition to institutional players, 18 persons with a food-related business idea have been engaged in the co-design workshops, women and men, just about launch a business or simply at the “idea stage”. This process has allowed to tap into the experience and needs of potential beneficiaries of the incubator (people with business ideas). It also allowed to associate some key players in the area of business/employment support (both local NGOs such as *Réussir ensemble*, and public institutions such as the local Chamber of Trade and Crafts or the metropolitan food job incubator *Euralimentaire*). Working with these partners, building on complementarities, will be key when the incubator will be set up and running. Having them on board at this early

stage should facilitate their engagement at a later stage.

3) Food-related workshops deployed in the temporary community kitchen in order to experiment with the different features of the future kitchen and attract people on the site where the future facility will be. NGOs that are partners in the project (Les Sens du Goût, Secours Populaire du Nord, Rencontres Audiovisuelles, Sauvegarde du Nord) have been key in setting up a rich offer of activities at the “Avant-Goût” (see section 1). They have attracted a growing audience and mainly benefited to a local audience, which represents an important achievement of the project at this stage. Furthermore, the kitchen was made available to other users willing to use the facility for food-related activities, provided these were aligned with the TAST’IN FIVES objectives. The growing number of non-UIA partners booking the kitchen for various purposes show that ownership is building up at neighbourhood level.



Some of these activities have evolved over time, showing a progressive approach in getting local residents on board. The NGO “Les Sens du Goût” started with cooking workshops where NGO

staff were delivering cooking classes building on people’s active participation. Recently, they have experimented a new type of workshops, “Chefs d’un jour” (chef of the day), empowering a local resident willing to deliver a cooking class. The NGO leader, Marion Subtil, clearly feels that there is an increasing impact of the site and activities deployed on the local population and that this allows the project to build up ownership:

*The work we have initiated in 2016 with local stakeholders and public institutions is yielding results now. I have very a diverse audience today. I have workshops with kids who have dropped out of school, refugees who do not have working permits and are looking for things to do, people with health problems such as anorexia along with their caregivers (...), very low income families, people who are not in a precarious situation but happy to come and share convivial moments.(...) In line with the social objectives of the project, I prepare the workshops depending on the audience, in order to have accessible and*



Photo Melody Houk

*healthy menus, easy to prepare back home. At the beginning of each workshop, we do a tour de table so that each participant can talk about his/ her situation, issues... I come with a question for them such as “the autumn vegetable you are longing for...”, and this allows us to raise more seriously issues such as seasonality, quality, anti-waste practices... At the end of each workshop, we discuss on the recipes which leads participants to discuss about the cost of ingredients, the best places to buy them, etc.*

*I have set up new workshops, Chef d’un jour, for which I meet once or twice with the voluntary chefs (local residents in general), we discuss about the menu, I take care of the groceries... and they deliver the workshop.(...)*

*And we have organised bridges with external events so as to relate to the wider environment. We have organised exceptional workshops with foreign chefs during the Food Refugee Festival, with a Lebanese chef during the inauguration of a new mural by a Lebanese painter in the neighbourhood, with an Italian chef during the Solidarity Festival, etc. This way, we are strengthening the emerging relationships between local populations*

Through these various strands of activities, the community using and shaping the site and its component has been significantly expanding over the past 12 months. Combined activities actually allowed the project to build on inputs provided during workshops by local residents, NGOs and public institutions operating in the district.

## Communication challenges to be addressed...

The experimentation phase on the temporary site, L’Avant-goût, has allowed partners to test their communication towards target beneficiaries. Communication has been channeled through the Communication services of the City of Lille

Nevertheless, this participatory approach has had limited results on two aspects:

- in terms of reaching out to the most excluded populations and to those publics who are not already enrolled through NGOs or public social services
- in terms of reaching out to NGOs/ institutions that are not involved in the project as partners or close to these existing partners, as these are mainly the ones to operate the temporary site and drive the process towards the future “Halle Gourmande”.

Additional efforts are thus needed to reach out beyond the existing clientele of UIA partners running activities on the site and enlarge the range of stakeholders involved in the overall project. While this relates to the communication challenge (see below), the City of Lille has also decided to “open up the play” by launching a call for proposals for the organization of social events on the temporary site. A total of 30.000 euros will be allocated to food-related projects, with a minimum of 500 euros and a maximum of 3.000 euros per project. Beneficiaries will use the community kitchen for free and receive support from the City of Lille’s services for their communication coverage. By targeting NGOs and groups of residents operating on the Fives-Hellemmes district, this call for proposals aims at boosting the involvement of the latter in activities on site to strengthen both the social fabric in the neighbourhood and the outreach of the project.

on one side (dedicated webpage on the city website, newsletter sent to people who have declared interest in the project and/ or taken part in activities on the temporary site), and through communication activities deployed by



UIA partners (NGOs and public institutions to their audience). Targeted communication on the project has also been ensured by the team of social scientists involved in the project under the “evaluation work package”. In the framework of this work package, students are conducting field work and enquiries among local residents and NGOs in the name of MESHS (*Maison des Sciences de l’Homme et de la Société*), one of the UIA project partners. This plays an important part in enlarging the audience of people informed about the project at neighbourhood level.

As a result of this first phase, it appears that communication has to be strengthened to go beyond the audience of those NGOs and institutions already involved in the project. In addition to reaching out to the most excluded population, it will also be key to stress the social dimension of the project and avoid the “gentrification biais”. As a matter of fact, projects like the temporary food court do not target specifically local residents. Attracting

a metropolitan – and wealthier - audience is a condition for profitability and success. There is a high risk that the project be perceived as “not for the benefit of local residents”, with a hidden objective of pushing local residents away from the neighbourhood via the regeneration of the brownfield, the building of new housing units, the “Halle Gourmande” and its food court, etc. Which would be hindering efforts to get local residents and stakeholders on board to create ownership of the future facility and make sure they are actual beneficiaries of the project.

Lille has thus decided to allocate part of its financial envelope to pay for a dedicated communication officer who will be in charge of tailoring communication with a stronger focus on: a) those stakeholders and residents that are out of reach of associated partners and stakeholders, and b) the social dimension of the project, which are trickier to communicate on and to integrate in “business related” communication.

## Looking for the appropriate governance model. An impossible quest?

In addition to the UIA challenges, TAST’IN FIVES has been facing another crucial challenge over the past 12 months: defining and setting up the “right” economic and governance model for the future eco-system of the “Halle Gourmande”. A model where economic benefits would be used to support social activities, and in which the city would be partner but not in control. This model should allow the local authority to be associated partner so as to guarantee that the general interest and the social objectives are taken on board, while allowing the facility to be financially sustainable. While refurbishment works have been going on in the factory building, TAST’IN FIVES partners have explored options and... the file is not closed yet!

**The first option to be explored was the cooperative society of public interest**, the French Société Coopérative d’Intérêt Collectif (SCIC), a status created in 2001. The SCIC is a company that gathers, around a specific project, employees running the project, beneficiaries (clients, users, residents, providers...) and contributing partners (NGOs, public authorities, volunteers...) to produce goods or services of general interest for the benefit of a specific territory or a specific supply-chain of activity. The idea was then to create an NGO that would be in charge of managing the temporary activities on the Avant-Goût and allow partners to test a collective governance of the site before the actual facility

would be ready. When exploring this option, 2 problems emerged:

- 1) As far as the “Halle Gourmande” is concerned, the developer SORELI has accepted to be in charge of refurbishing the building investing its own private funds, knowing that once the building would be ready, it would be immediately rented to the designated operator of the “Halle Gourmande”. With the city acting as a guarantor in case the operator would fail. In this context, with the SCIC cooperative model, the city would find itself in the situation of being a minority stakeholder in the company, while committing full responsibility in case of failure of the company to pay the rent to the SORELI.
- 2) In the discussion with the UIA partners, thus those most committed with the project, it appeared that none were actually willing to share financial and legal risks related to the SCIC model.

**The next step was then to try and differentiate property and maintenance issues VS daily management of the future facility.** On the first aspect, it was agreed that the City of Lille, being already committed with the developer SORELI, could become owner and in charge of maintenance responsibilities. It was acknowledged by all partners that this would not be detrimental to the collective partnership dynamic that was being built up in the perspective of managing the whole eco-system. As a matter of fact, all parties, the city and the other partners, were in favor of this arrangement. Then what was left was the daily management of the eco-system. At first, the idea was to find a unique operator that would be in charge of the whole “Halle Gourmande” and its various components (community kitchen, professional kitchen, incubator, food court, etc.). Lille’s project team went on a “tour de France” of

the most emblematic “alternative food courts and community kitchens” such as the Halle Charolais managed by Ground Control in Paris. This allowed to identify potential operators and inform them about the TAST’IN FIVES project. Then it was decided to launch **a call for expression of interest for the management of the eco-system** to be. The objective was to identify a potential operator or several operators with whom to discuss and design a relevant management structure for the project. Yet this process did not allow to find the solution.

As a result of the call launched in April 2018, eight candidates expressed interest, including:

- UIA partners who positioned themselves on part only of the activities (the one they were already delivering on the temporary site as an NGO);
- candidates expressing interest for managing the Food Court and/or the whole ecosystem.

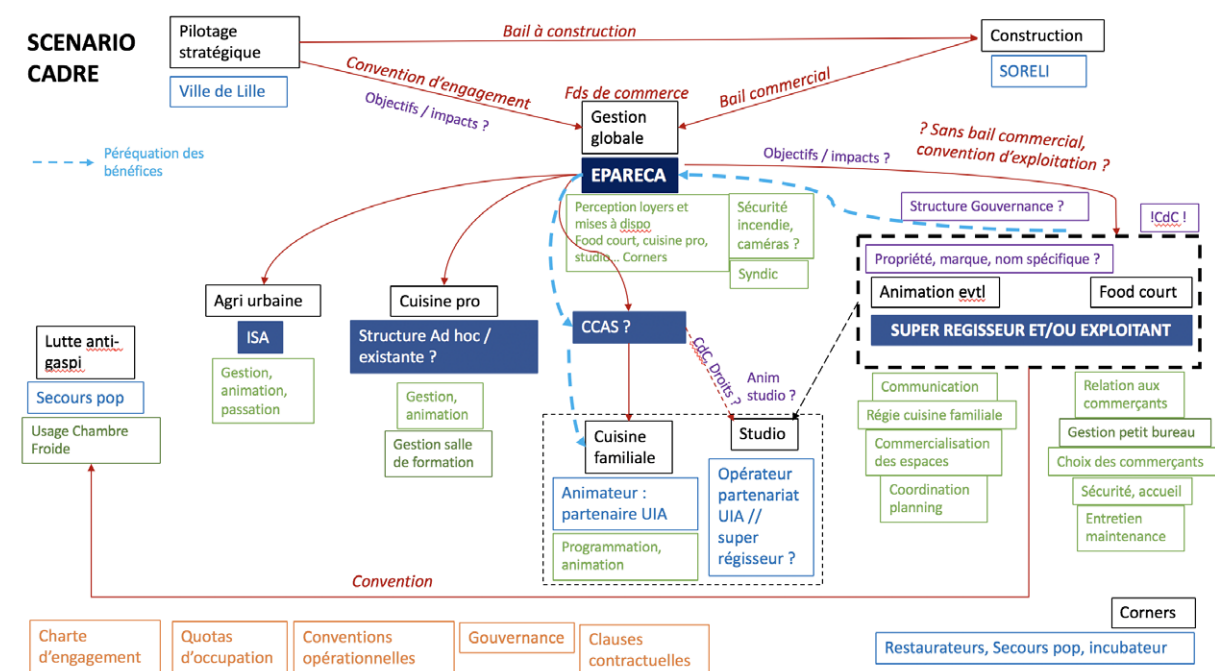
In their offers, none of the private competitors could provide strong enough guarantees that they would be able, in the given conditions (poor neighbourhood, unfinished urban renewal), to run a profitable business and to bring the expected social benefits. Yet it is clear that the future operator has to be able to cope with potential deficits in the first years.

**The third and latest idea was brought about in the autumn by the director of Lille’s project team. It builds on the intervention of EPARECA, a national public company (*Etablissement Public d’Aménagement*) for the redevelopment and restructuration of commercial spaces in deprived neighbourhoods. Under the supervision of the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Territorial cohesion, EPARECA supports local authorities in boosting economic activities (retail, shopping areas, craft and trade) within deprived areas that**

are targeted by the national urban policy, in order to improve quality of life and strengthen the social fabric. EPARECA does not compete with private developers. They intervene upon request from a specific local authority, when the private sector fails in maintaining or bringing back retail and trade activities in these priority neighbourhoods. Beyond the fact that the public company is based in Lille, EPARECA is currently looking to enlarge its scope of intervention towards innovative ways of supporting business creation in deprived areas. As a consequence, while managing an ecosystem like the “Halle Gourmande” is not part of their usual business, they reacted positively when contacted by the City of Lille. Could the company manage the infrastructure part of the

“Halle Gourmande” (i.e. the buildings)? That is the question currently being explored. From initial discussions, it was agreed that the first step would be for EPARECA to conduct a feasibility study to explore the business potential of the “Halle Gourmande”, the articulation between the business objectives and the social objectives of the project, and the impacts in terms of how to set up and manage the food court.

As reflected in the following scheme, innovation and complexity seem to be getting along pretty well in the TAST’IN FIVES journey... To be continued in the next edition of the TAST’IN FIVES journal!



Source: City of Lille, October 2018

Urban Innovative Actions (UIA) is an Initiative of the European Union that provides urban areas throughout Europe with resources to test new and unproven solutions to address urban challenges. Based on article 8 of ERDF, the Initiative has a total ERDF budget of EUR 372 million for 2014-2020.

UIA projects will produce a wealth of knowledge stemming from the implementation of the innovative solutions for sustainable urban development that are of interest for city practitioners and stakeholders across the EU. This journal is a paper written by a UIA Expert that captures and disseminates the lessons learnt from the project implementation and the good practices identified. The journals will be structured around the main challenges of implementation identified and faced at local level by UIA projects. They will be published on a regular basis on the UIA website.



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