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## 1. Context

SEMAEST is Paris Municipality's semi-public operator in charge of commercial revitalization. This medium-size company (50 employees) manages 465 tenants and does its best to implant quality and innovative shops.

As 2008 economic crisis and ecommerce competition had weakened local businesses, SEMAEST launched in December 2014 a new program to help small independent shops use digital tools, in order to become more attractive and successful: this is the Connected Stores program (or CoSto).

CoSto program offers free training workshops regarding digital communication, and free experiments of digital solutions developed by startups. CoSto developed its own social media (website, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) to inform shopkeepers about retail news and CoSto events.

This program is completely free for the shopkeepers; this action is at a loss for SEMAEST whereas it needs several people to keep it alive. That's why SEMAEST accepted to join the Integrated Territorial Investment project co-piloted by Paris City Hall and Ile-de-France Region. It is financed by the ERDF. SEMAEST has been assigned a subsidy of 40% of the cost of the project in this perimeter from February 2016 to December 2018.

**SEMAEST's ITI-ERDF action plan** is to develop CoSto activities in the north-east of Paris (18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> districts), which are districts with more social difficulties.

### The original CoSto ITI ERDF action plan included:

- To create a digital platform B2B to inform shopkeepers
- The training sessions
- The digital experiments
- Assistance in the shops by young unemployed people trained to digital by Semaest's partners to create the Google my business pages, Facebook pages, help the implementation of the experiments
- Write articles about the nice shops in this perimeter
- Create retail tours in this perimeter and try to help touristic attraction
- Assign a shop to a project holder by inhabitants' participatory process on line

The Interactive Cities network found this CoSto project coherent with their subject: "How do social media change public policies?" In January 2016 they invited CoSto team to join their group for the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the project.

## 2. Focus and objectives

SEMAEST created its URBACT Local Group within CoSto ecosystem.



Through these 2 years, the **guiding specific objective** of this ULG has kept linked to the ITI ERDF CoSto action plan:

*“How helping promote local businesses in the north-east of Paris and give reciprocal visibility to each partner’s actions through social media?”*

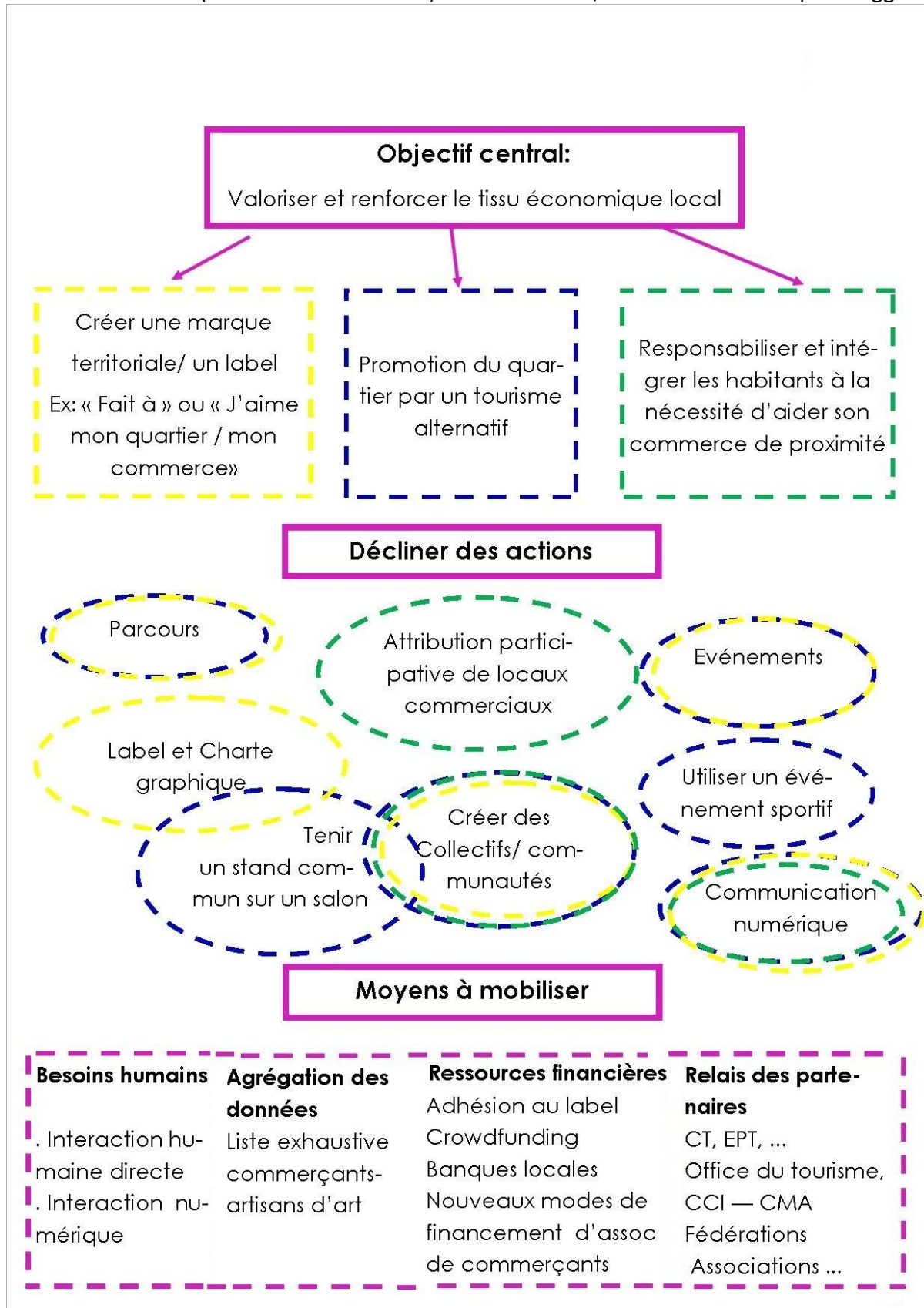
The ULG became a SEMAEST “think tank”, imagining the retail of tomorrow through URBACT’s tools. A fake article launched the debate about northern-eastern Paris tomorrow. Benchmarking was offered in corner discussions.

ULG members were divided into 3 groups:

- **Citizens’ inclusion:** shopkeepers are important local actors; they create the urban aesthetic setting; they ensure a social link and their presence secures the streets. They enhance the wellbeing feelings => How to get people aware of this role and make them support their local economy rather than to buy on line or in supermarkets or world brands? How to improve the relationships between the shopkeepers and local people into more insecure areas?
- **Hybrid retail:** How to adapt local businesses to the new tastes of consumers (research of a human experience, quality of service, use of social media, hybrid activities)? How to create communities?
- **Alternative tourism:** how to promote the shops in Parisian popular areas that suffer of



Common ressources (human & social media) were identified, some collective outputs suggested.





### 3. Actions and agenda

#### 3.1. Actions

. A **first integrated action plan project** was designed during Paris ULG meeting on 15 June 2017, when SEMAEST team came back from Interactive Cities meeting in Helsinki and Tartu: test an integrated interactive platform gathering all local information in a neighbourhood in the 20<sup>th</sup> district.

A survey was circulated from July to September, some Paris City Hall services interviewed. Semaest realised in October 2017 that it was a too big project for itself and not mature enough for Paris Municipality.

. Meanwhile, in September, **a bilateral project in participatory urbanism** was launched with one of the members of the citizens' inclusion group in Paris ULG, **CMaRue**: their digital responsive platform (readable on a smartphone like an app) asked to the inhabitants what kind of activities they would like to see in the vacant shops around their place in the 19<sup>th</sup>, and which project holders they would prefer.



. In November 2017, a 2<sup>nd</sup> **more realistic Paris "Interactive Cities" ULG's integrated action plan** (for SEMAEST financial capacity) emerged:

=> **The Integrated Action Plan** will be a common communication campaign on social media for CoSto partners.

It was coherent with the 2-years learning about communication strategy in Interactive Cities meetings and "Costo on the road" trainings.

SEMAEST developed partnerships with different kinds of local economy actors who provide services to shopkeepers. SEMAEST edited a "CoSto Pack" in forms of checks that shopkeepers can cut and get with it a special offer.



These **CoSto Pack partners** are:

- Actors of alternative tourism in new Paris areas. They can promote the shops that SEMAEST indicates to them as interesting (CIWY, Bastina, ParisolidariThé)
- An investment company in small businesses (P.I.E)
- A startup specialized in crowdfunding, (ex- Bulb in Town / TUDIGO)
- A charity association that asks shopkeepers to be helpful with homeless people (Le Carillon)
- A startup that provides a platform to give visibility to nice little shops (petitscommerces.fr)

- An association that develops digital training centers in deprived areas, to give a new professional chance to unemployed people. They can propose communication strategy to enterprises (SIMPLON.Co).

A ULG meeting was organised on **10 January 2018**. The ULG members were reduced to a **core group**: representatives of association of shopkeepers, Paris and Plaine Commune Tourism offices, Paris municipal servants in charge of local development and CoSto Pack partners.

They were divided in **2 sub-groups**:

- The ones working on tourism and local economic promotion;
- The other ones offering services to businesses in CoSto Pack.

Targets and social media channels were defined in both groups.

### **Action plan – Objectives, outputs and indicators**

#### **Retail services group**

**Specific objective:** advertise shopkeepers about the interest of CoSto Pack partners

**Output indicators:** to be identified by more shopkeepers

**Result indicators:** numbers of new followers for each partner; new CoSto customers for CoSto partners

**Actions:**

- A video introducing the startups in a partner shop
- A launching event: a speed dating between shopkeepers and CoSto partners.

**Leader:** startup petitscommerces.fr

#### **Tourism group**

**Specific objective:** Promote unknown or disliked areas in Paris 18<sup>th</sup> district; Advertise alternative tourism guides and local shops

**Output indicators:** reassure visitors to come in these areas; invigorate businesses

**Result indicators:** numbers of new followers or new customers for each partner; new CoSto customers for CoSto partners

**Actions:**

- A video around the 18<sup>th</sup> introducing CoSto tourism partners.
- A launching event: an official walking tour would launch the event. If there is enough budget, a paper map tour could be printed.

**Leader:** Semaest and Simplon.

### 3.2. Schedule

- “Retail services” group

#### January-February:

Budget modifications have been asked to Ile-de-France Region in order to concentrate 2018 CoSto ITI-ERDF project’s expenditures on communication budget. These video projects are subdued on this condition. IDF Region hasn’t answered yet.

**22 February and 1 March:** 2 ULG meetings to define the specifications with ULG partners for video and speed dating event

**1-15 March** Estimates for video and selection

**16-31 March** Making of the film

**23 April** Edition of the film and release of the film on each one’s social media

**4 June 2018:** Speed dating event

- Tourism group

**9 March and 27 March:** 2 ULG meetings in order to

- Define the video specifications and the sites chosen for the tour

- Think about the event: which stakeholders (elected members of Paris City Hall, Press, bloggers/igers)? Which locations?

**April or May** (condition: sun and spring vegetation)

Making of the film and Producing video

Release of the video

**May or June:** official tour

## 4. Funding scheme

- Retail services video

#### Budget:

1<sup>st</sup> quotations: around 7 000 € for 12 mini videos of 1’30” each

**Financial ressources:** 40% by ITI-ERDF (conditional agreement)

Partners didn’t offer to pay a little part of the video, which means 60% for SEMAEST.

- Tourism video

**Budget:** 7 000 €

#### Financial ressources:

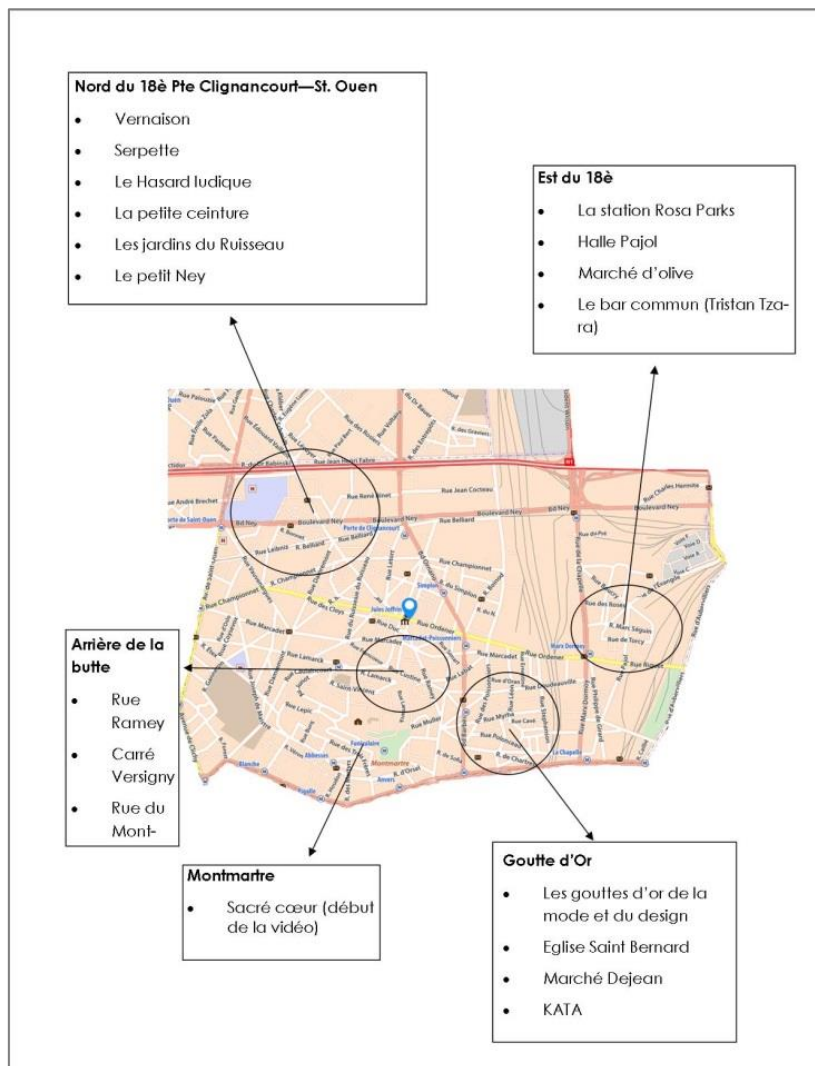
40% by ITI-ERDF (conditional agreement) for the video and paper map

Partners didn’t offer to pay a little part of the video, which means 60% for SEMAEST.









## 5. Framework for delivery

Some partners accepted to share the governance on the video project: Petitscommerces.fr and Simplon student took part in the definition of the video specifications.

Each CoSto partner is in charge of finding a shopkeeper (talkative, nice shop) to testify about their digital solution in front of a camera. Each one will be the intermediary with the film production team.

The speed dating was the idea of the president of the association of designers located in Goutte d'Or (18<sup>th</sup>) "Les Gouttes d'Or de la Mode et du Design". He'd like his network to get advantage of these CoSto pack services and he hopes it would generate buzz for the Goutte d'or district, which is in an uneasy situation. He commits himself to mobilize this network to come and to help SEMAEST find a place in this area for the meeting.

## 6. Description of the process - Impact of transnational exchanges and learning

SEMAEST team is very positive on their participation in Interactive Cities meetings and URBACT's summer university.

- **URBACT's summer university** in Rotterdam (August 2016) was fundamental to organise the ULGs, SEMAEST couldn't have succeeded on their own without this methodology transfer. It created enthusiasm through the partners.



- **During transnational meetings**, SEMAEST learned all about the processes in communication strategy. The lectures and feed backs from the partner cities' experiences were accompanied by useful **exercises** asked by the Lead Experts:

- Target your audience
  - Influencers map
  - Storytelling
  - Stakeholders map
- **Alba Iulia** offered very rich lectures of great **brand marketing** experts and the tips to have an efficient message. We learned also about **inbound marketing**, **gaming** tricks.
- **Liverpool, Genoa and Ghent** shared their methods to **generate users' content** on their websites and social media and how they searched to attract **influencers** like the "igers".
- **Tartu and Helsinki** showed to the rest of Europe how advanced their countries are in **e-governance**, **political transparency**, **open data** and **integrated information on digital platforms or applications** (app Helsinki). In a few years, they turned their societies into a modern administration used to design thinking and participatory processes with citizens involved. Every 2 months Helsinki gathers the web developers' community for new challenges, to be always more useful to people.

- **All this has influenced SEMAEST in its practises of social media.**

The entire group was influenced by the others' main topics.

Tourism IC focuses influenced SEMAEST to develop links with small tourism agencies in order to promote local businesses.

SEMAEST commercial revitalization inspired Lisboa for instance. This partner was very interested by SEMAEST “Testeur”, a shop rented only for a short term lease, which allows project holders to test their commercial idea before to rent a permanent shop. During Lisboa IC meeting, Lisboa organised a meeting between SEMAEST, Petitscommerces (Paris ULG members) and local actors who fight against commercial vacancy (Res do Chao).



At that point SEMAEST is reshaping its CoSto strategy, searching how to generate users’ content for instance. SEMAEST IAP is directly inspired by this IC program: expand our visibility by cross-media campaign with CoSto partners.

Our 1<sup>st</sup> IAP project, which planned to experiment a local integrated digital platform, was inspired by Tartu and Helsinki’s visit. But it was unrealistic for the ability of a medium-size company that hasn’t the budget of a city and it wasn’t its role to do it.

This IC network reinforced also European friendships. The exchanges between partners went on informally through emails or Facebook private pages to get feedback of their own meetings and to get some personal news.



## **7. Risk analysis**

SEMAEST can’t afford any risk right now. Its business is in deficit. Its experience of ERDF funding doesn’t give the company the desire to apply for another European help.

Even this project of videos seem too expensive to the General direction. The partners don’t seem to be ready to share the cost of them even though. It’s quite possible that this project will be reduced.