URBAN EUROPE

Reports
Parallel workshops
Committee of the Regions, 30 September 2015

Launching the JPI Urban Europe Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda

Content

Accessibility and connectivity

Chair: Inger Gustafsson, Vice-chair of the JPI Urban Europe Governing Board, VINNOVA
Key note speakers: Prof. Cristina Pronello, Member of the JPI Urban Europe Scientific Advisory Board, Politecnico di Torino, Prof. Bert van Wee, TU Delft
Organizer/Rapporteur: Magnus Brink, Arjan van Binsbergen

Participants: Overall there were 18 people attending the session.

Christina Pronello, responsible for the 'Accessibility & Connectivity' part of the SRIA
Intro on the theme Accessibility & Connectivity as part of the SRIA

Defines accessibility as the ease with which activities and opportunities may be reached using a transport system. Christina highlights the link between accessibility/access and territorial cohesion and social in/exclusion.

Network connectivity is directness of routes, this might be achieved by using different modes. Policies for reducing travel times and costs should be rather aimed at enhancing connectivity ('more connected systems') than in making faster systems.

Some insights:

- Even when connectivity stays the same, the users' *experience* may shift – for example due to ageing population
- Accessibility/access implies an *economical (budget) aspect*; reduced incomes or increased prices might reduce accessibility
- *Social interaction* is related to connectivity and the fit of the transport system to the spatial, urban system.

Topics to be addressed:

1. Users' needs, behaviours and locational proximity – to better locate activities in cities and plan the transport system
2. Integration technologies – modern integrated transport systems should allow for improved accessibility through better network connectivity; technologies include advanced traveler information systems (ATIS) and integrated tariff (systems)
3. Bridging the gap between travellers' needs and behaviours; special attention for low-density areas and for elderly, disabled, people without access to a car, …

Possible points of discussion:

1. How will IT revolution affect travel behaviour
2. Role of sharing economy on mobility behaviour
3. What is the role of JPI UE

Bert van Wee, TU Delft
First: many positive aspects, with respect to the definition, the inclusion of public transport and the spatial differences in accessibility, the link with social inclusion, and the difference between 'accessibility' and 'mobility', and the balance between accessibility and sustainability.

Additional:

- Land use planning and planning for sustainable modes
- Important role of ICT as a mobility alternative/substitution and trip options
- Collaboration between travel providers
- Travellers needs'

Missing points:

- Limited attention to freight transport
- How to evaluate accessibility effects of candidate policy options
- How to value such evaluations; how to include them into evaluation methods such as CBA's
- Missing: perception of accessibility (for instance, quality of the route – especially for 'slow'/active modes
  > this could be tackled in the task of investigating the travelers needs

Discussion points:

ICT: substitution or complementary? *Net* effect is zero, however, the overall impact is quite big.
ICT as a 'pain killer' – thanks to ICT we're possibly less vulnerable for disruptions

Sharing economy/mobility as a service: today, a poorly understood phenomenon, hardly any literature > so a great need for research.
Note the importance of taking into account 'cohort thinking' instead of age-thinking.

Role of urban planners: they should be in the front seat, however we should be aware of the fact that they have multiple objectives and aims. We need to take into account differences in cultures and traditions between land use planners and transport planners.
Therefore, we need a combined, agreed-on evaluation and assessment system. Also we need to justly 'frame' discussions: laying the emphasis on easy and quality and immediate/direct effects – perhaps – not on restrictions and limitations, and high-order targets (like CO_2 emission reduction).

Important notes:

- advanced accessibility indicators tend to be hard to communicate, therefore we would need easy to understand and communicate indicators.
- the pain of measures is often not in the results, but in the change-process.
- We need robustness indicators
- We need to think about 'transport planning' in areas of shrinkage/population decline

Discussion

EU / Commission perspective:
One of the core ideas of the union is freedom of moment of goods and people, and the concept of fairness. This should be maintained.
A need for finding a balance between local circumstances (like urban roads) versus the interests of regional, national or even international operating companies.

It's important to share knowledge, experiences; POLIS and other networks can help to this end.

Accessibility/connectivity and sustainability are in fact to blades of the scissors, it's good that JPI UE recognizes this issue.

In H2020 (en FP7) the EC has supported the development of tools and models, now, attention should be paid to the application of these tools and the users' perspective (also the users' of tools!)

With respect to ICT: the net effects might be almost zero, the local effects might be differently distributed. (Self-driving cars in the same congestion than normal cars…)
With respect to sharing concepts: at the European level already some research has been done, but indeed, still more research will be needed.

It's not clear – to both the audience and the SRIA writer (Christina Pronello) – why 'freight transport' is dropped from the agenda. This should be an element in the agenda. There is interest to take up this issue.

An important issue for research is data availability and usability, especially real time data. Often these data are kept confidential for business and privacy reasons, even in public companies. It would be good if such data would become (a bit more) better available.

With respect to CBA methods, rail and even bus lines often score low; it's unclear whether this relates to wrong or missed indicators? During the discussion, it is argued that smaller and urban transit projects could result in positive CBA's; the large 'prestigious' projects – like HSR – are often negative. Further, we sometimes underestimate the 'option value' and maybe the CO_2 emission reduction value.
High transit costs might limit a sustainable urban sprawl; tariffs should therefore be taken into account in planning as well.

Mixing activities (shops, schools) can be beneficial for sustainable mobility, this doesn't work for 'work' facilities.

Conclusion

- The ideas put forward in the SRIA are largely recognized
  - Apply the integrated perspective (land use/ICT/social inclusion/…)
  - Strengthen the users' perspective
  - Stress the importance of balancing accessibility/connectivity to sustainable development
- Some additional, fitting ideas:
  - Include accessibility indicators better in land-use planning evaluation tools
  - Develop robustness indicators
  - Design for shrinking cities/areas
  - The balance between accessibility/connectivity and related socio-economic advantages at the one side and sustainability issues would need extra attention (some options might prove be beneficial for both issues, some other will induce opposite effects)
- It would be good when all type of data, especially real time data, could be made better available to scientists/researchers; it would be needed to overcome issues of business sensitivity and privacy
- Make (better) use of available knowledge (FP7, H2020) and networks;
  make existing models/tools better usable for end-users
- The SRIA/calls should pay more attention to freight transport in urban areas

Alignment of national programmes

Chair: Federico Cinquepalmi, JPI Urban Europe Governing Board
Key note speakers: Paola Clerici Maestosi, Vice-chair of the JPI Urban Europe Governing Board, ENEA; Diana López-Falcón, JPI More Years Better Life, Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research
Organizer/Rapporteur: Paul Erian, AIT

Joint Programming aims at coordinating research efforts, policies and resources among Member States through an alignment of programmes, priorities, activities towards a common Strategic Research Agenda, so to tackle grand societal challenges more effectively. Coordinating funding committed nationally, brings to important gains in terms of joint vision, better exploitation and efficiency of resources for research in key priority areas. The JPI Urban Europe is developing a comprehensive approach to alignment, based on consistent strategy and a portfolio of instruments, so to foster a major cooperation and coordination of research on urban issues.

The workshop has been conceived as an occasion to exchange approaches and methodologies, as well as benefiting from lesson learnt, thanks to the contribution to the discussion offered by the JPI FACCE and More Years, Better Life and the ERALEARN 2020 project, invited to present their experience.

Federico Cinquepalmi (representative of the Governing Board) introduced the meeting, emphasizing the importance of alignment to the extent of the implementation of the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda.

Paola Clerici Maestosi presented the results of the alignment process so far achieved within the JPI Urban Europe, illustrating the methodological approach. Main messages outlined are:

- Alignment is a process that relies on a reciprocal knowledge and therefore requires means (tools) and places (fora) to share information about national programmes, activities, priorities in urban research
- Alignment shall aim at bridging differences (things that divide) and build on similarities (things that join)
- Alignment needs a continuous exchange among Funding Agencies, and therefore mapping activities and tools are part of the process
- In the case of urban research, aiming at crossing borders among disciplines so to approach urban issue from a trans-disciplinary and holistic viewpoint, alignment is a far more engaging process, with multiple goals, different actors to involve, many research areas to address. Therefore it requires a strategy based on alignment pathways that encompass a set of actions to be implemented on a variable geometry scheme
- The JPI UE is moving towards a strategy of alignment based on a variable geometry: different pathways have been designed so far and will be finalized according to the SRIA.

Pablo Aller Moran described the approach to alignment in FACCE –JPI as a three-step process anchored to the Strategic Research Agenda and based on:

- Development of a Common Vision with long term objectives: How cooperation and coordination of research at EU level can address combined challenges
- Translate it into a Strategic Research Agenda (SRA): Establishing medium to long-term research needs and objectives

- SRA implementation: identifying and exchanging information; joint foresight and technology assessment; joint research activities/modalities, etc.

Pablo pointed out the relevance of the biannual Implementation Plan as then main means of alignment. FACCE-JPI Implementation Plan 2015-2016 is based on:

1. Alignment of existing national research
- Knowledge Hub on experimental climate change studies on crop and grassland systems
- Thematic Annual Programming Network: gather national funders to discuss major national research programmes, with the objective to align them
2. Co-funding: ERA-NET on Agricultural greenhouse gas research
3. Explore: Exploratory workshops

Diana López-Falcón presented the data mapping activity carried out in JPI More Years, Better Life, as a pillar of their alignment strategy. The data-mapping project seeks to map the range of data sources on ageing at the European and national levels, examine whether there are major gaps in the available data infrastructure, as well as provide statistical agencies with user-driven feedback on standard data sources. It provides scientists and policy-makers with a comprehensive overview of where to find appropriate data for cross-disciplinary approaches. The data project also helps to inform the development of the JPI's Strategic Research Agenda, and any calls or research proposals that follow from it, by identifying relevant sources, helping avoid repetition of work by individual projects, and ensuring that research proposals are well informed about possible data sources.

Luciano Catani reported some of the results of the ERALEARN 2020 activities related to monitoring and assessment of the various existing P2P networks (including the JPIs). In particular, one of the main objective of the ERALEARN 2020 is to assess and benchmark current approaches to alignment and explore options for new modalities that will better align national and/or regional activities under common research agendas, so to increase effectiveness of joint programming activities.

Main messages arising from the ERALEARN work are:
- There is no common definition of what 'alignment' means. There are a variety of definitions, approaches and tools
- Alignment is not only about organizing joint calls for research: Can be achieved via various (joint) actions
- Different actions are often complementary to each other. Some can be conducted in parallel (launch of joint call + sharing of research infrastructure)
- Successful alignment combines "bottom-up" (researchers, RPO) & "top-down" actions (Ministry, RFO)
- Key barrier at operational level are: inter-operability of national rules for funding & executing research

In the final wrap-up some key messages have been pointed out and put forward to the alignment process for the JPI UE:
- Alignment is a long term process and requires commitment from the Member States and Funding Agencies
- Alignment actions must consider the entire research programming cycle and spread across it with different actions/modalities
- Alignment shall involve institutional actors at different levels but also research and stakeholder and open to the cities

Social innovation in urban development

Chair: Soraya Zanardo, Eurocities
Key note speakers: Koos van Dijken, SEiSMiC/ Platform 31, Erna Bosschart, Arjan Biemans, Innovation factory/SEiSMiC
Organizer/Rapporteur: Paul Erian, AIT

In recent years social innovation has been placed prominently on the agendas of policy makers, urban practitioners, social entrepreneurs and researchers. The hype around social innovation is partly due to a reaction on a retreating welfare provisioning and a need for alternative forms to provide these services. Social innovations and innovators are also seen as important catalysts to accelerate urban transformations and to find new ways of tackling urban challenges by experimental approaches and co-creative working models. The session aims at (1) exploring how social innovation actions and processes can be better integrated in JPI Urban Europe future activities (2) identifying framework conditions that can support and foster social innovative ideas and innovative actors to play a role in urban transitions (3) to explore the idea of SEiSMiC being an "incubator" for JPI Urban Europe.

Agenda

Soraya Zanardo explains the aim and the format of the session
Koos van Dijken introduces SEiSMiC, its objectives and ambitions
Erna Bosschart & Arjan Biemans – Key note on Social Innovation Acceleration in Cities

Participants
Overall there were 29 people attending the Session. 2 out of them were representatives of the European Union. One person was a representative of a city administration of a mid-sized city. 2 attendees represented Non-Governmental Organizations. Last but not least 24 attendees were researchers of affiliated with research.

SEiSMiC
Koos van Dijken presented the project SEiSMiC. SEiSMiC (Societal Engagement in Science, Mutual learning in Cities) is a FP 7 funded project dealing with social innovation within an urban context. The objective of the project is to build up a network of urban stakeholders who share knowledge and mutually learn from each other in the field of social innovation. These stakeholders include researchers, practitioners and city administrations as well as NGOs, grassroots movements and locals. The platform, which is being build up parallel in 10 partnering countries (AT, TUR, BEL, HUN, CZ, GER, SWE, UK, NL, IT) regularly meets in workshops on national, transnational and international level and provides recommendations for research and policy. Since SEiSMiC is strongly linked to the Joint Programming Initiative Urban Europe (JPI UE), these recommendations are directly integrated into JPI UE´s Research Agenda. He further stressed that not every citizen is able to clearly voice policy needs. Thus SEiSMiC plays a role in translating discussions with locals into clear policy needs.

SIAC

SIAC, Social Innovation Acceleration in Cities, is a 'joint venture' of 16 people from six countries. With background in practice, research and accelerators to establish new kinds of social innovation accelerators and to build a transnational learning network, to connect research to practice.

SIACs mission is to boost social innovations by offering the innovators the support they need to thrive by building local networks that will grow to be sustainable and self-enabling. The SIAC network aims to found such Social Innovation Accelerators in different European regions and cities. In contrary to many other accelerator programs we are open to all ideas and concepts, no matter if it's about founding a social business or tackle a problem through an civic initiative. A transnational learning network is the basis for a mutual learning process on how to boost social innovations most effectively. Different backgrounds bring different solutions. In cooperation with universities, accompanying research and joint efforts with other European programs like TRANSIT. This stimulates the exchange between researchers and practitioners and contributes to an often claimed intensified exchange between theory and practice. Together we can make change really happen.

Conclusions
Following a brief discussion with the panel the following conclusions could be drawn:
- New forms of professional relations are needed: i.e. people act together differently in order to find solutions for social problems
- Cross sectoral solutions are needed for today´s challenges. These solutions can be found through interconnected approaches.
- In order to boost social innovation and help to make it become mainstream "accelerators" are needed

Social innovations are often way cheaper than (technological) innovation

Sustainability and resilience

Chair: Rafaela Matos, Hydraulics & Environment Department, LNEC
Key note speakers: Prof. Dr. María Máñez, Climate Service Center Germany (GERICS), Prof. Göran Finnveden, Member of the Scientific Advisory Board JPI Urban Europe, The Royal Institute of Technology
Expert from the EC: Marco Fritz, Directorate General Research & Innovation
Organizer/Rapporteur: Paul Erian, AIT

Cities are subject to external and internal influences that can have transformative impacts on their fortunes, even for human life. In an era of globalization, climate change and cultural diversity cities need to be agile. They need to be able to accommodate and proactively respond to disruptive events. The session will discuss approaches to necessary infrastructural and regulatory changes to manage urban transitions in the light of these conditions.

Agenda
Rafaela Matos explains the aim and the format of the session
Göran Finnveden introduces the thematic priority of climate and resilience
María Máñez – Key note
Marco Fritz – reflection from EU point of view

Participants
Overall there were 18 people attending the Session. One person was a representative of a city administration. 17 attendees were researchers of affiliated with research.

Discussion
Göran Finnveden who is a member of the JPI UE Scientific Advisory Board gave an thematic introduction to the topic. He stressed the main climatic challenges such as Climate change mitigation, Climate change adaption, Air quality, Water quality and scarcity, Maintaining ecosystem services as well as their dependencies with and from each other. He further stressed pressuring research questions such as "How to integrate new and smart technologies for a sustainable city, without causing new problems?" and "Interaction between resilience and sustainability. What are the synergies and conflicts?"

The following presentation given by María Máñez from the Climate Service Center Germany (GERICS) focused more on the resilience of urban areas. What is it and how can it be defined. It has been stated that resilience is the "capacity of a city to survive, adapt and grow in the face of turbulent change".

The brief discussion lead to the following conclusions:

- "Perception is the driver of management", meaning that if challenges are perceived as such, management plans will be developed quicker.
- Climate change and resilience must not be understood as 22 separate disciplines but in an integrated manner

More information on the session can be found in the thematic presentations.

Governance and participation

Chair: Jonas Bylund, Member of the JPI Urban Europe Management Board
Key note speakers: Dr. Olivier Coutard, Vice-chair of the JPI Urban Europe Scientific Advisory Board, LATTS; Prof. Diana Mangalagiu, Oxford University
Expert from the EC: Dionysia Lagiou, European Commission, DG for Research and Innovation
Organizer/Rapporteur: Jonas Bylund, Member of the JPI Urban Europe Management Board

Introduction

Jonas Bylund briefly introduced the session on the SRIA thematic priority on urban governance and participation (UGP). Three conceptual 'agenda-setting' points were made:

1) All roads lead to governance, the other SRIA thematic priorities and the longitudinal programme as well as many other related issues (such as the current refugees' situation) double-back to the question of how to enable, plan, and govern urban areas.

2) However, integrated urban governance is more an art than a science, and how to make the participatory approach 'stick'?

3) JPI Urban Europe welcomes constructive reflexivity and challenges on these issues, since the session also kicks off a format, ethos, or atmosphere of how to continue the dialogue during SRIA implementation.

Panel

Olivier Coutard (vice-chair SAB, LATTS) introduced the main lines of the UGP thematic priority in the SRIA: contemporary societal context calls for more and variegated participatory forms of governance because of increasing technicisation and decreased trust in experts [technocracy is out of fashion]; representative democracy deficit invites new kinds of mediations; communication infrastructures transformed drastically recent decades which begets new forms of mobilization. Friction in diverse forms for urban policymaking and implementation: increasingly wicked issues; 'real-time' issues complexities by crisis events and long-term trends; calls for more agile, distributed, and open urban governance.

Overall this situation calls for a focus on the *politics of knowledge* when these are an acknowledged plurality. Questions on what knowledges (knowledge practices) are taken into account as 'useful', 'relevant', and 'legitimate' and which are dismissed as 'not useful', 'irrelevant', and 'non-legitimate' should be foregrounded – particularly in how lay, expert knowledges, and vested interests can be combined in decision making (including how they are commercialized, e.g. big data). Since urban R&I need to articulate the processual (how?) and substantial (what, and with what results?) dimensions of governance; as well as inter- and trans-disciplinary research and innovation need on governance and participation ("participatory research" to study participatory governance!) topics proposed as:

- Plural forms of knowledge, policymaking and urban responses to major contemporary changes (esp. Climate change)
- Participatory policymaking and distributive justice
- Policymaking and the material transformation of urban spaces, landscapes and infrastructures

Diana Mangalagiu (Oxford University) reflected upon three issues:

1) Participation as concept and 'hinge'/approach to urban governance: how to ensure maturation and irreversibility; reflexivity and values; not necessarily synonymous to 'engagement'; develop (codified and formalized) knowledges in the field: what constitutes 'success'? Scalability a necessity?

2) Friction between 'have' and 'have nots': global increasing divide between elites and marginalised groups, how does UGP reflect this? Urban injustice and inequalities (gender issues, age, ethnicity, religion, disability issues, etc.)? European urban areas' youth unemployment issues?

3) Urban R&I still tend to focus on 'technology fixes' and side-line SSH and e.g. digital social sciences/digital humanities: how to connect multi-scalar 'real-time'? How to deal with 'algorithms against human rights'? Foreground the issue of open data and how to engage 'hard to reach' groups (e.g. urban poor) for citizen technologies, urban living labs, social innovation, etc.

Dionysia Lagiou (EC DG R&I) commented on transdisciplinary and co-creative challenges to R&I, particularly a longstanding discomfort in the academe to involve non-academic actors; on the possible support to responsible research and innovation (RRI) to increase shared responsibility and egalitarian benefits across the board; on open innovation to enable citizens' initiatives to play a key role to shape pathways; and, in the light of these remarks, foregrounded the SRIA as a catalyst in public service innovation.

Three questions or issues put on the table for UGP to pursue:

1) New forms of normativity, regulatory devices and their implications?

2) The global dimension with a European model of urban governance? There's a distinct European urbanity, approach to urban issues, which could be worthwhile to cultivate and communicate around the world.

3) It is important to foreground how the SRIA in this perspective (governance and participation) also supports 'the right to the city' (David Harvey).

Discussion

Three questions in audience.

Michael Keith, UK SEiSMiC NANET representative: The keynotes are too narrow in a conceptualisation of participation as citizen–government relations. There are more kinds of actors and this has regulatory implications.

Mart Griesel, EUKN / Platform 31: Links to EU Urban Agenda will be exciting. But too little attention on urban inequalities? The EU Urban Agenda discussions do not lack this dimension. Also more a 'political' view – in the sense of empathy to everyday political work practices – on the topics. Since the SRIA may be put to good use informing the EU Agenda and Habitat III, there are important differences between scientific and political knowledge practices: e.g. research takes time, politicians don't have time.

Ania Rok, ICLEI: Where are the gender issues in UGP and the SRIA in general? And how can this be more developed in the implementation?

Key messages

Three key messages we extracted on the go, and these may have to be revised in the light of a slightly more rigorous analysis of the session's input and discussions.[1]

1) Work with different kinds of inequalities, not just the 'conventional' socio-economic (Weberian marginalization/exclusion from big table in civil society). The other vistas of inequalities may e.g. be: gender; digital divide; accessibility; urban conviviality (more-than-human urbanity); 'articulatory' inequalities (publics' various competencies to participate and raise concerns).

2) broaden the sense of 'participants' and knowledges for co-creation. The theme needs to break out of a narrow sense of citizen-government relations into a broader implementation sense (more 'heterogeneous engineering' and 'emerging publics').

3) cultivate a sociotechnical process approach instead of fuelling the opposition between 'social' and 'technical' issues and 'solutions'. This also pertains to the issue of how to deal with wicked issues and silos in the UGP, not to propose a total deconstruction of silos but still increase exchange and connectivity between them.

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[1] The key messages were instantly tweeted by @LearningWoB as 'Key msgs: 1 how to work w diff kinds of inequalities 2 broader sense of participants 3 how to deal with silos #SRIAlaunch'

Urban transition pathways

Chair: Margit Noll, JPI Urban Europe Management Board, AIT
Key note speaker (and rapporteur): Darren Robinson, Chair of the JPI Urban Europe Scientific Advisory Board
Key note speaker: Dr. Niki Frantzeskaki, DRIFT
Expert from the EC: Domenico Rossetti Di Valdalbero, DG RTD
Organizer: Johannes Riegler, AIT

Introduction and aim

JPI Urban Europe aims to promote a more comprehensive approach to urban research and innovation in urban sustainability, building on urban transition pathways, taking into account that integrated systems approaches and inter- and trans-disciplinary collaborations are necessary for successful solutions and to support transition processes.

This session aimed at discussing and exploring new ways of dealing with the complexity of sustainable urban transition pathways and ways of bridging the implementation gap; since ideas and theories related to transition pathways and their practical implementation are not necessarily linked together today.

Summary of Presentations

Dr. Niki Frantzeskaki, DRIFT – Urban Sustainability Transitions
Taking stock and moving forward

For the transition towards sustainable urban futures it is of great importance to take people and their connections into account. Social innovations can help to unpack society's potential by looking at how people relate, how they are organised and organise themselves as well as taking into account the role of sustainable businesses. In this regard, local governments can be innovators such as the City of Ghent which establishes new relationships with a wide range of partners including civil society for supporting transition processes by a fostered engagement. Local governments can take the role of the facilitator for innovative actions for supporting the transition towards sustainable transition. Therefore, the role of the citizens shifts from being consumers to be prosumers – actors who produce services. Universities and research and technology organisations can take the role of being the mediator in these processes between local governments and civil society. Experimentation and testing of ideas as instruments are of great importance for such endeavours and living labs can be a useful took therefore. Especially temporary usages of space offer the environment to test and experiment. The scaling up of successful models and projects supporting the transition towards sustainability might in many cases not the most desirable process. Local and regional initiatives are very often context depend and might work because of the local circumstances and realities. Instead of a scaling up in economic terms and in size a scaling across and the translation from one case to another is

For successful transition the balance between planning, regulating, testing, empowering, participation and investment in infrastructures is incremental for a success. Furthermore, the knowledge sharing between projects and cities will be facilitated within the JPI Urban Europe in the next years to exchange experiences, eventually scaling them up and to scale them into the local contexts.

Domenico Rossetti Di Valdalbero, DG RTD

For the European Commission, the replication of research results and innovation from local to European level is of great importance. In general, there two trends can be observed in society: (1) individual empowerment: citizens have never been faced with such a strong empowerment to change their surrounding and habitat by taking action (2) collaborative and sharing economies: new ICT tools and apps provide the ground for exchange of knowledge and goods easily. Both dynamics are developing and spreading fast which put challenges as well as opportunities on urban areas. While these things might be understood as being in opposition to each other, cities are the places where both trends become connected. For the European Commission it is very important how to make better use of these dynamics and to incorporate them into common frameworks.

The European Commission has allocated 400Mio € in the work programme 2016/2017 for urban issues in various fields: Smart Cities and Communities, Nature Based Solutions, Transport in urban areas, climate change, energy and Social Innovation.

Discussion

Cultural heritage has an important role to play in the transition of cities towards sustainability. Therefore, it should be seen as a burden but as an instrument and a ressource for sustainable development. Across Europe we see different directions how urban development dealt with cultural heritage as in countries in Central-Eastern-Europe in many cases it has been destroyed for progress and for building something new. The JPI Heritage offers to exchange and discuss the role of heritage in urban development with the JPI Urban Europe.

In order to archieve sustainable urban futures, emphasis has to be put on developing long-term targets. Often cheap investments have been taken to eg. Reduce carbon emmission which set aside the actual problems. The complexity of the problems has not been dealt with sufficiently in this sense. Holistic and long-term targets provide the basis for change and the transition.

For cities, it is very important to see what strategies work for the transition towards sustainability. For this reason, a sustainability rating would be very helpful in order to analyse when a city is actually sustainable or in the transition towards sustainability. Successful strategies of cities should be highlighted. The JPI Urban Europe is going to invest in this issue over the next years to facilitate the learning from and across cities and projects.

Besides considering factors supporting the transition towards sustainability, also the factors increasing unstainable patterns should be taken into account for a research programme in order to have a holistic view on the matter. One example is the sharing economy which found a broad reception in recent years. Although the idea of many of these endeavours are increasing sustainability in social, economic and environmental terms, it has to be taken into account that in cases a few big companies benefit without actually supporting society. In regard to cities, certain businesses of the sharing economy have big negative effects on the urban dynamics. For supporting cities in becoming more sustainable it is essential to also have a look at the negative effects certain ideas and businesses have.   Compared to other regions of the world, European cities are dealing with 'luxury' problems. The JPI UE should also have a look at how it can address urban needs in developing countries and how knowledge from Europe can help to support urban development there. In this regard, it is important to take into account the local context which means that when supporting developing countries we should not sell them a solution but rather help them in the finding of solutions in their contexts.

Urban areas across Europe are very different due to the development pathways of the past and the present. Therefore, not every city can learn from each other. A typology of cities might be needed to provide a concept of typologies of pathways.

The results of the projects funded by JPI Urban Europe need to be communicated to cities. This might be a challenge especially for smaller cities. We need a language which is not too academic therefore to make cities aware of the solutions JPI UE might have to offer.

JPI Urban Europe should keep and extend close links to policy. One example would be the link to the EU Urban Agenda. The question in this regard is how research can inform politics, how it can support policy making and provide the evidence for the policy agendas.

Vibrant economies

Chair: Sigrun Kabisch, Member of the Scientific Advisory, Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research
Key note speakers: Pieter Hooimeijer, Member of the Scientific Advisory Board, Dr. Vlad Mykhnenko, University of Birmingham
Expert from the EC: Pia Laurila, DG RTD
Organizer/Rapporteur: Johannes Riegler, AIT

Description and Aim

Although the urban fraction of Europe's population is not expected to grow significantly (it is already large), there is and will likely continue to be significant migration from cities in shrinking economies to those in growing economies; particularly from countries in Southern and Eastern Europe to their Northern and Western counterparts. New strategies are needed to support shrinking cities to prevent excessive decline as well as to support cities in taking advantage of the increasing cultural diversity. The session intends to discuss how the SRIA will help to find new ways of achieving and sustaining socio-economic vibrancy and equality in cities with changing economies.

Summary

Cities are engines of economic growth. But some cities are economically more successful than others. Speaking about vibrancy in changing economies implies the focus on how urban areas are able to deal with dynamics and shocks. While some cities show great economic and population growth, some are struggling with stagnation or decline while others changed directions from stagnation to growth again. It is important to see both directions combined, to link it and to see it as one phenomenon. If we look more closely some interesting details come afore: for example during the recent economic crises, from 2007 to 2014 cities in Eastern Germany increased their rate of employment while in the Mediterranean especially young workers suffered from unemployment. In southern Europe the loss of jobs caused the shrinkage of population numbers in the regions. Therefore, certain dynamics cause the fact that in some countries we see that economic and population growth goes hand in hand while in other the opposite can be observed. For analysing these divagating dynamics the governance should be liked with research on economic and population change for being able to draw comparisons. However, the local contexts are very important for the directories of cities and regions and should carefully be taken into account.

There is a clear and very important regional dimension in the European Commission's (EC) work. The research theme vibrant urban economies shows links with what the DG Regional and Urban Policy is working on. The structural funds, in which research is a part of, make deal with these issues. Furthermore, in 2008, the EC introduced the Smart Specialisation policy concept which underlined that it is key for local governments to take into account research and innovation for their economic development. The EC has funded a big number of projects dealing with likewise issues which build up a solid knowledge base.

The aim is to strengthen the role of cities and their competitive advantages (e.g. Barcelona as capital of innovation). In addition, in regional or agglomeration context, cities can be successful if they use the complementary of neighbourhood cities, in terms of partnership. However, the challenge of making this research available and applicable for policy makers remains.

Welfare and finance

Chair: Paola Clerici Maestosi, Vice Chair of the Governing Board, JPI Urban Europe, ENEA
Key note speakers: Federico Cinquepalmi, JPI Urban Europe Governing Board, MIUR (Italy), Peter Karl Kresl, Professor at the Bucknell University
Expert from EC: Corinne Hermant-De Callataÿ, Senior Policy Officer, European Commission, Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy
Organizer: Rachele Nocera, ENEA
Rapporteur: Daniele Ietri, Associate Professor at E-Campus University

Stimulated by post-2008 austerity measures, civic services and the size of the welfare state are reducing as "big society" is being increasingly called upon to fill the void through bottom-up voluntary efforts. This leads to changing roles of public services and the need to redefine the contribution of and cooperation with community-based activities. It also results in the call for new business models to finance sustainable urban transitions. The role of social entrepreneurship, local economy and shared economy is under debate and frameworks are needed to tap the full potential of these opportunities.

The session will focus on (1) changing roles of public services; (2) need to redefine the contribution of and cooperation with community-based activities; (3) the call for new business models to finance sustainable urban transitions. The session will in particularly focus on silver age perspective – against the background of an ageing population in Europe – and the macroeconomic perspective that increased participation of older people in gainful employment is essential for future prosperity in the European Union.

The aim of the parallel session was mainly to present the Thematic Priority "Welfare and Finance" and give inputs for a discussion on how to drive urban transition in order to successfully tackle the manifold challenges of sustainable urbanization. The workshop was intended to outline the transition of urban economies and the consequent need for a new welfare and new business models in the delivery of public services.

The focus of the discussion was, in fact, on how to respond innovatively to, inter alia, the changing demography of European cities, to pressures and constraints put by migration, raising urban poverty, social inequalities and other divides that the economic crisis showed off with dramatic evidence.The discussion adopted the "silver economy" or "aging society" perspective as starting point and a viewpoint to better reason on a new model of welfare as long as civic services and the size of the welfare state are reducing whilst social demands are increasing.

To this regard cities and the urban environment are, without any doubts, either the problem or the solution. While cities are under pressure, there new answers are emerging with big society filling the void of a downsizing State. Social entrepreneurship, collaborative and sharing economy, community-based activities are the seeds of a new welfare at the urban scale.

Federico Cinquepalmi in his introduction to the topic of the workshop remarked the impact of the economic crisis on current models of welfare state and organization of public services, noting that alongside with the crisis cities are called to tackle new challenges related to migration and demographic change. The risk of the widening of social divides and of urban segregation was addressed as one the challenges ahead that cities have to cope with and contrast by unleashing the potential of the big society.

The SRIA issues were therefore positioned within this framework and punctually illustrated.

Peter Kresl focused his speech on the ageing of population in Europe, provocatively asking whether this is a threat or an opportunity. Demographic trends show that the age dependency ratios are raising in Europe, that is to say that the working citizen of the EU countries will have to pay for his/her own living costs as well as an increased burden for those who are no longer working. That is a 'ticking time bomb', with the fiscal situation blowing up in Europeans' faces. However it is the position of the author that this is to some extent a mistaken fear. Aged people will be richer, wealthier and better educated than in prvious age. Therefore they are a resource. Not only they will contribute to urban economies (as they ask for recreational and caring services), but they will devote their time and money to voluntary activities in the framework of a new social economy.

Corinne Hermant-de Callataÿ commenting the SRIA and the scenario depicted in the keynote, pointed out the urgence of a re-design of public services and agreed with necessity, for urban planners and policy makers, to consider the active seniors as a resource whose potential can be usefully tapped within a model of sharing economy. Of course, seniors will increase the demand for care and welfare services (health, assistance etc.), but the answer cannot be focused on technologies for the ageing (e.g. development of e-services such as telemonitoring etc.). On the contrary, people, and in particular the elderly, are asking for more community services and integration. The transition shall consider therefore also the community dimension, invest in enhancing social capital, redesign public spaces so to allow also inter-generational encounter, re-design buildings. The move should forward to a community-based urban agenda. A final remark was referred to EU strategic framework outlined in the Urban Agenda and to initiative fostering networks and exchange among cities so to share new solutions and practices. To this regard URBACT III is a remarkable opportunity to link and share knowledge and agendas.

The discussion focused on:

- Lack of public resources: where do we find the needed resources for transition and how to use them in an innovative way; how to use the new financial instruments?
- assessment of existing experiences
- Changing of regulatory frameworks: for example, experiences of civic society engagement in Germany with senior volunteers that are sustainable within the frame of "the project" but cannot be spread and replicated beyond the borders of the project because there are not conceived within actual regulatory frameworks.