Learning Together: the Peer Review methodology

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6Aika
Peer Reviews are about mutual learning

Friendly (yet critical) discussions that allow us all:

- focus on specific challenges and objectives
- build shared cognitive frameworks (common understanding)
  starting from personal and professional views on problems/issues and integrating expertise and knowledge from a variety of sources
- discover good practices as well as bad experiences (!)
The **Peer Review learning process** in the frame of Sustainable Urban Development (art.7 Reg. 1301/2013)

- from Research & Innovation to **Integrated Sustainable Urban Development**
  This peer review methodology was originally developed by the Joint Research Centre for regional Research & Innovation Strategies for Smart Specialisation proven to be an effective tool in sharing, exchanging and integrating knowledge

- towards the definition of a **tailor-made peer-review methodology**
  building on two previous peer reviews in Seville and Ghent in 2016

- developing further an innovative way for the European Commission to **engage with cities**
  thanks to the contribution of policy makers coming from various parts of Europe, with different working methods and expectations
Peer-review actors: what do they do?

Representatives from the cities under review
SIX CITY NETWORK, TOULON and ALBA IULIA
• present their strategies for review
• identify 3 challenging questions they want to discuss with peers and for which they ask their advice
• reflect on the key outcomes of the peer discussions for the implementation of their strategies.

Critical friends
All peers have the role of a critical friend. Critical friends are at the core of each peer review:
• reflect on the issues posed by the cities under review
• provide independent critical evaluation
• share their knowledge and experience.

Invited experts
• make available their specific knowledge in plenary sessions and offer their advice to peers
• assist the UDN in the preparation of the workshop.

Urban Development Network – UDN (DG REGIO)
• the UDN team manages and facilitates the entire peer review process.

Joint Research Centre (JRC)
• the JRC team supports the UDN and monitor the development of the peer review methodology.
At the core of our workshop: peer discussions

Presentation of the **integrated urban strategy** from the city

3 questions prepared by the city

3 rounds of discussions in small groups (table discussions)

**Round 1 – Common understanding of the issue**

*What is the issue at stake in your view?*

**Round 2 – Share and discuss policy suggestions**

*What can be done?*

*Your suggestions for how the underlying issue can be addressed*

**Round 3 – Collective learning**

*What are the relevant lessons you take home?*

Sharing the results - **Reporting back from tables**
1. Common understanding of the issue

What is the question behind the question?

How do you understand the issue that is at your table? How would you frame it according to your view of the problem and your experience?

Purpose of this session:
To go deeper with the question, make it sharper and workable.

Group exercise:
Discuss and agree as a group your new question behind the original question posed by the city.
How should the city under review tackle this/these policy issue(s)? Do you have any practical advice or recommendations based on your own experience? What could be done and what should be avoided? Do you know any other good example that could help?

Purpose of this session: to identify possible solutions for the specific situation and to share good/bad practices

Group exercise: discuss your experiences and write down (as a group) three collective recommendations
3. Collective learning

What are the main lessons you will take home?

What have you learnt from the experience under review? What have you learnt from the peer exchange?

Purpose of this session: to fix your personal investment in the discussion and strengthen collective policy knowledge.

Individual exercise: write down your own key lessons on the policy issue being discussed at your table.

Group exercise: agree on and write down three collective lessons.
What can you do to benefit from this workshop?

**Empathic intelligence**
- Suspending assumptions and judgements.
- Put yourself in the shoes of your peers, but speak the truth (You are a critical friend!)

**Attentive listening**
- Listening to understand what is being said.
- What do your peers have to teach you that you do not know?

**Intentional speaking**
- Focus on what matters.
- Share both positive and negative experiences. These are equally important.

**Keep networking in mind**
- Think of possible ways to cooperate with your peers from other European cities.
Thanks and enjoy it!

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