Taking Stock of ISUDS: First impressions from the application of Article 7

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6 Aika
Key points

- Reconnecting urban planning to its roots
- Urban transformation: winners and losers
- The good news
- Pointers for Art.7 implementation in the future
ISUDS re-focusing the purpose of urban planning

Remember how it all started:
‘The City of Dreadful Night’ (Hall, 1988)

- Human Wellbeing
- Liveability
- Sustainability
Promoting an EU-wide ‘way of doing things’

- Process of ‘Europeanisation’ (Marshall, 2005)
- Policy-driven
- Evidence-based AND participatory identification of challenges and their solutions
- Area-based but with ingrained flexibility
- Linking funding & investment to robustly identified challenges => Enormous political leverage
- Integration allows multi-sector approach across spatial scales
- Multi-stakeholder Governance model and participatory principles
- Part of a long evolutionary process: From the URBAN programme (1980s) to the European Fund for Strategic Investment
Importance of participatory practices

Urban Policy + Funding

“Problem” Areas

Urban Transformation (risk and return)

“Regenerated areas” (winners and losers: land ownership and social policy)

Private sector priorities + Funding

Civil society/Third sector priorities + Crowdfunding(?
Key advantages

Tied to ERDF => Focused on territorial and social cohesion

Rolling out effective hard and soft actions

Streamlining and targeting funds on key local level challenges

Direct contact with the local level => promoting devolution of powers

Mainstreams participatory and multi-level governance practices
Some implementation challenges: Regional and National level

• Institutional and other structural constraints ie the planning system

• Translation

• Adaptation
Prioritisation of Art. 7 within ROPs
Selection of Urban Authority ISUDS

• Local (UA) culture & capacity constraints
• Local (UA) autonomy pressures
Some implementation challenges: Local level

- Translation of the translation
- Capacity (resources, know-how)
- Adaptation/Adjustment periods vs Political time vs Maturity Pipeline
- Local stakeholder relations to be managed
- Coordination with higher governance levels
What to look out for  (Shipan and Volden, 2012)

Area-based approach at the sub-UA level is vulnerable to challenges like gentrification, displacement etc.

Bigger cities often set the example and are imitated by smaller cities.

The ‘Translation’ of cities that set the example is therefore crucial.

As policy direction becomes centralised it is crucial to be able to capture local level responses (see example).

Capacity building is important: Technical Assistance.

UAs compete with each other: Race to the top vs unercutting.
Example: Supporting entrepreneurship at the local level

Medium size city ca 100,000 inhabitants

Incubator infrastructure + Funding via local bank + Article 7 funding = micro financing start-up support that utilises existing infrastructure

Brilliant use of Art 7 flexibility yet deemed ineligible by MA due to similar initiative expected at national level
Competitive vs Non-competitive ISUDS selection

In-built flexibility: pragmatic and necessary

Non-competitive (pre-selection) prone to misallocation due to political pressure/nepotism

Needs-based allocation: requires a robust study of the region’s needs at MA and UA level

Competitive process requires equally high-capacity UAs in order to work: ie it assumes that ‘all other things are equal’.
Competitive Bidding: The City Challenge (UK)
(Malpass, 1994; De Groot, 1992)

• Introduced in 1991: Strategic vision, integration, partnering, leveraging funds, governance mechanism/arms length delivery

• Budget: top-slicing of other programmes (i.e existing resources re-allocated) / from needs-based to ‘concentration’

• Competitive allocation: strength & breadth of partnership, leverage of funds i.e no link to need or capacity+ability to deliver

Round 1: 15 Local Authorities (out of 57 eligible) were invited to bid for a 5-year/40 million GBP programme (each) – 11 ‘won’

Round 2: All 57 ‘Urban Programme’ local authorities invited – 20 ‘won’

• Worked well for high-capacity Local Authorities with tradition of partnering

• ‘City Challenge’ status created upward spiral of match funding
Key take-home messages

• Article 7 an exciting development

• Initiates a process of pan-European diffusion and ‘translation’

• Important to maintain current flexibility of implementation (territorial, selection process etc.)

• Key to maintain feedback loops (local-local and local-regional-national-supra national)

• Important to watch what the trend-setters (often ‘big cites’) do

• Capacity building and TA are crucial

• Positive upwards spirals will be incentivised but also be on guard for undercutting
Thank you!