The support to cities implementing sustainable urban development

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6Aika
Sustainable Urban Development as a key EU vehicle

- Urban Agenda for the EU
- Six City Strategy, SUD funding for cities
- URBACT Exchange and networking programme
- Urban Innovative Actions
Sustainable Urban Development in Finland

- Focused on six major cities and their joint strategy
- Sub-delegation implemented through joint Steering Board of cities
- Follows the ITI principle, combining several thematic objectives from ERDF and ESF programmes
- Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment as Managing Authority
- Strategy initiated by cities and prepared in dialogue with the national government
- Implementation led by cities, in close collaboration with national level
Successful points from the national perspective

• SUD funding targeted to limited number of cities – fragmentation of resources avoided
• 6 cities at new level of co-operation: ”Inter-city co-creation” and joint actions of implementation
• Constructive and informal partnership between cities and the national level adds value
• New way of making urban development policy: ”Open code of collaboration” and simultaneous utilisation of digitalisation
• Platform-based approach is breaking through
• Opportunity to develop a Finnish smart city concept, and to scale it to the wider group of cities
Challenging elements

- The six cities not only collaborators but also rivals
- Cities’ varying development cultures or strategic orientations not always easy to fit together
- Some reluctance of city organisations to link the Six City instrument as core part of their strategy – over time, however, this has improved
- In content, there are lots of ”things never tried before” which makes it demanding to communicate when people expect tangible projects
- In EU Programme framework, thematic concentration vs. need for holistic approach in urban development are to some extent in contradiction
Summing up the SUD in Finland

- **Creative tension** in the collaboration is visible and a positive driver for making new, in a new way
- **Remarkable funding opportunity** for cities, and steered by cities
- **SUD/ITI can also be adaptable to the networks of cities**
- **Arenas for targeted European exchange** of knowledge on SUD/ITI are needed; a place for Urban Development Network
- **There is always room** for improvement – yet the experience is very promising in the big picture