OECD
BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES

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City innovation and public value

"Yes, local governments innovate!"

Piret Tõnurist

@piret.tonurist

OPSI Observatory of Public Sector Innovation

oe.cd/opsi | @OPSIgov | opsi@oecd.org

PIRET TÕNURIST

INNOVATION SPECIALIST AND LEAD ON SYSTEMS THINKING
OBSERVATORY OF PUBLIC SECTOR INNOVATION

SYSTEMS APPROACHES TO CREATING PUBLIC VALUE ON THE CITY LEVEL

OPSI

WHY DO WE NEED CHANGE?

SYSTEMS ARE NOT FAILING; THEY ARE WORKING FOR THE AIMS THEY WERE DESIGNED…
IT IS THE AIMS THAT HAVE CHANGED

01

END OF KNOWN KNOWNS

Uncertainty is on the rise and not everything can evidenced (in time)

02

COMPLEXITY

Problems are becoming increasingly complex, while out solutions remain reductionist

03

PROXIMATE FAILURE, DISTANT IMPACT

Increasingly todays interventions – and failures – will have long-term effects

04

MENS ET MANUS

There is a need for reflection in action: fuzzy fronts and open ends

05

CONTEXTUAL VARIANCE

Most problems are contextual and akin to the system they derive from. Toolkit fatigue – not all processes can be described in linear actions

06

NEW AIMS

The way we live our lives has changed and so have our expectations of government and public services

Tactics for systems change

TO CREATE THE POSSIBILITY TO INITIATE AND CARRY OUT PROJECTS FOR SYSTEMS CHANGE IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

PEOPLE

Combining a diverse set of people:
"If you know everyone in the room: you will fail"

PLACE

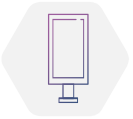
Creating the neutral space to deliberate and set back from the everyday system

DWELLING

Creating the time and conditions to think and deliberate on the end purpose

CONNECTING

Connecting to all stakeholders to both inform the process and form advocacy coalitions



FRAMING

Framing the issue based on the outcome/purpose (public value) not existing system structures

DESIGNING

Based on the analysis before, designing solutions that may have systemic effects

EXPERIMENTING

Reducing uncertainty by experimenting on a smaller scale with different solutions and clear action plans

PROTOTYPING

Creating a prototype for scale that can be tested by diverse populations

STEWARDING

Guiding and supporting the process by both creating the resources and political backing for change

MEANINGFUL MEASUREMENT

Measuring the effects based on the outcomes wanted to achieve, not proxies

SMART CITIES – FOR WHOM?

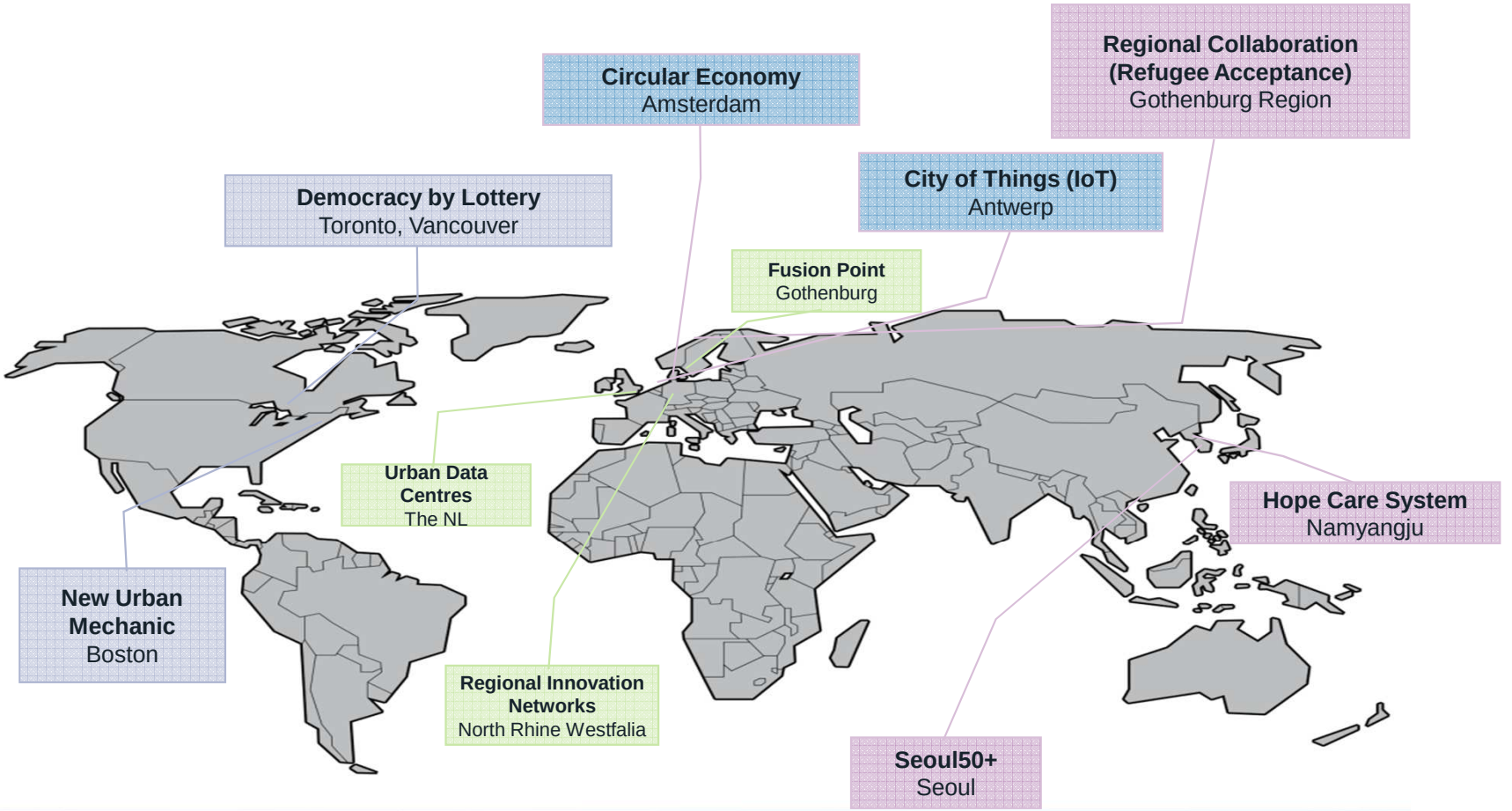
Transformative change on the city level

- How to frame public value around complex challenges on the city level?
- Technology push at smart cities, but what value and for whom?
- How to have a deliberative process with stakeholders and citizens?
- How to use the information in building a future vision of cities?
- What scale to work on to make challenges actionable?

How to frame problems on the city level?

There is no one answer fits all, but there are some examples we can learn from

Case studies



SMART CITIES – FOR WHOM?

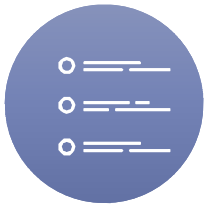
Transformative change on the city level: main challenges

CONTEXTUAL NEEDS

- Not all cities have the same needs
- Issues cities face today do not follow administrative bounds (city vs suburb vs region vs state)
- Variety of strategies to reach the same aims

Lack of dedicated analytical capacity and other resources (money, time etc.) around innovation and smart solutions

- Difficulty in ascertaining the real public value connected to projects (Antwerp)
- Funder and private sector perspective starts to domineer the agenda (Boston, Antwerp, Gothenburg, FP)
- Cities have little time to react and research does not inform processes in time (Gothenburg, FP)
- Engineering over public value (Antwerp, Amsterdam)



Fragmented agendas: different silos and agencies dealing with specialized issues

- Discussions around technologies (IoT, circular economy etc.) affecting the whole of government difficult (e.g., Amsterdam): experimentation vs working on scale
- At the same time, precedents in different areas (procurement, data ownership etc.) start to affect cities ability to define a coherent agenda (Amsterdam, Antwerp)

New deliberation approaches require sharing of power with citizens and stakeholders which is difficult for city governments

- Both top-down and bottom-up approaches present, but some level of political buy-in is necessary (e.g., Seoul, Namyangju, Gothenburg, Boston), however it become a double edged sword in the long run (e.g., Boston, Gothenburg)
- Lowest common denominator collaboration (Gothenburg) and alternative strategies
- User perspective as the legitimizing factor (Boston, Toronto, Vancouver); however, getting into systemic issues becomes difficult
- Sharing of power is much easier in areas of prior government blind spots or new emerging policy fields (Seoul, Namyangju, NRW); much difficult in more traditional fields (urban planning – Gothenburg; water governance – Amsterdam)

Where to go from there?

Developing more systemic, purpose-driven strategies of innovation in cities with concrete action plans to institutionalise new practises…

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