

Social Urban Innovation

Initial Findings

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SEiSMiC Launching Event

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Urban Challenges

- Based on global trends, European urban areas have to face a diverse set of challenges, problems and potentials for the next decades
 - Austerity & financial constraints
 - Climate change and resource scarcity
 - Demography & urban dynamics, in- & out-migration, social dynamics
 - Economic crisis, global shifts of markets & unemployment
- Social innovation is seen as an important factor and means to tackle these challenges



Social Innovation

an attempt of a definition

- the core of Social Innovation is the **local development** and the **connection to territories**. Social Innovation is seen as being important for **improving the quality of life of people living in communities** and therewith, to increase the welfare of the communities through "employment, consumption and/or participation, its expressed purpose being to **provide solutions for individual and community problems.**"

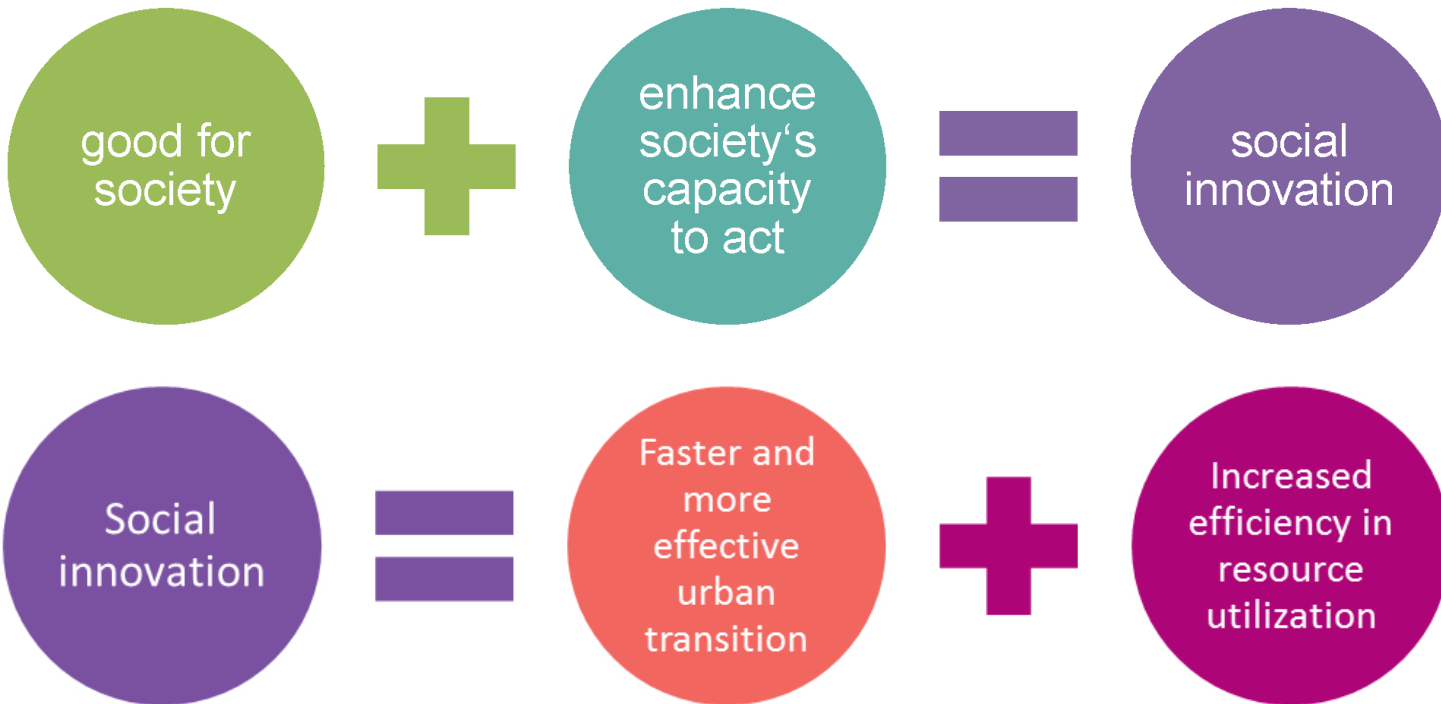
OECD (2011:21) Fostering Innovation to Address Social Challenges – Workshop Proceedings.

- Social Innovation ranges from **promoting behavioural change** of society for tackling greater challenges (e.g. climate change) to the **necessity of society to act** "because socially innovative actions, strategies, practices and processes arise **whenever problems of poverty, exclusion, segregation and deprivation** or opportunities for improving living conditions **cannot find satisfying solutions in the 'institutionalized field'** of public or private action.

Moulaert, et al. (2013:2) Handbook for social innovation. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar

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Social Urban Innovation – SEiSMiC Initial Findings

- To tap the full potential of social innovation for urban transformation, development and economy
 - a SI-friendly ecosystem has to be established and maintained
 - a proactive relationship management between the different actors, grassroots' initiatives and city administration is needed
 - capacity building and mutual learning of communities has to be supported strategically
 - issues such as unemployment, housing, livability and the involvement of minorities or the disadvantaged have to be jointly addressed

Social Innovation Friendly Ecosystem

- Developing & experimenting with new forms, rules, models and processes to enhance collaboration & participation
- Facilitating disruptive innovation by removing legal and institutional barriers
- Conceptualizing grassroots-participation as an integral part of urban planning and development
- Developing new roles, competences and changing the (self-)image of urban administration
- Broadening level playing field policies to include social innovations SI and social enterprises SE
- Utilizing the potential of social entrepreneurship as a means of social inclusion & creation of new jobs in the local/urban economy

Proactive Relationship Management

- Better understand the processes of SI and community action and their interaction with existing structures of government and economy
- Taking use of the local knowledge and improve the connection between local experiences and political urban processes for creating sustainable urban solutions
- Experimenting more with participatory democracy and the therefore needed new role of the local and national government
- Investigating new ways of financing and models to allow communities to take part in the decision on what the money should be spent
- Establishing well balanced local partnerships for strategic planning and innovation – public administration, business, non-profit (civil) sector

Capacity Building

- Finding ways to strengthen the capacity of community groups, if social innovation actions are to make a permanent difference
- Creating visibility for local initiatives and supporting them to activate the untapped potential
- Increasing our understanding of which strategies, models, collaborations have proven successful for urban initiatives to anchor their cause sustainably
- Anticipating the East-West gap and establishing transnational learning
- Creation of self-organising spaces for mutual learning and the procurement of knowledge which contributes to a culture of learning
- Use different forms and places for education for enhancing citizen's ability and willingness to engage in urban development

First Conclusions for Policy

- Create enough room – legally and financially – for urban experiments and societal engagement in urban planning and development
- Support processes to develop new self-images, competences and human resources for urban administration
- Establish a direct and easy dialogue between citizens and EU regarding social innovation issues to build trust and jointly set the agenda
- Develop policies to address unemployment & poverty, real-estate and the housing market, the involvement of minorities or the disadvantaged and enhance livability
- Simplify the funding systems to enable SI/SE to join local, national and EU calls

First Conclusions for Research

- Providing scientific evidence for new urban policies to take highest use of the potential of SI
- Develop and evaluate new models and processes for urban experimentation & participation
- Understanding the consequences for the new roles and conditions for urban administration, policy making and economy
- Facilitating urban transformation through integrated concepts for livable, inclusive and sustainable cities
- Supporting knowledge transfer, exchange and match making between researchers, cities, business and urban actors across Europe
- Addressing research issues such as housing, poverty, education, new concepts for urban governance, public spaces and urban economy

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