WORKSHOP 1: Baltic Urban Forum working group meeting
20 January 2014, Tartu, Estonia

Project scope and outline

The project "Baltic Sea Region Urban Forum for Smart Cities" seeks to enable urban areas in the Baltic Sea Region to move beyond "pockets of smartness" to becoming genuinely smart, by establishing a regional platform for capacity building and knowledge exchange. Key challenges identified and addressed include:

-How to make a green transition towards smart and sustainable societies?
-How to boost innovation and cooperation with the private sector?
-How to engage citizens to those processes?

The working group meeting in Tartu 20 January gathered a wide range of actors in order to explore and formulate a concept for a BSR Urban Forum for Smart Cities – including formats and focus areas. Building on these discussions the project will continue during the spring of 2014; through a working meeting in Copenhagen in March, and a workshop held back to back with the Riga Energy Cities Rendezvous in April. The concept will be put forward for comments during the seminar of the UBC Commissions in Örebro in May, in order to be launched at the Baltic Development Forum 16th Summit in Turku beginning of June.

The project is a joint initiative by the UBC, the Baltic Development Forum, the City of Turku and Tartu Smart City Lab. The preparatory activities have received financing from the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region Seed Money facility.

Defining the Urban Forum concept – outcome from discussions

The discussions in Tartu helped define a number of priorities, challenges as well as concrete activities for a future Urban Forum for Smart Cities:

The urban forum should be useful for, and serve, the cities in the region. That means that the needs of the cities would be the starting point when designing the urban forum. The ambition would be to make the forum demand driven as opposed to technology driven. As the region is characterized small and mid-sized cities, this should also define the scope of the urban forum.

The urban forum should serve as a meeting point and a platform for knowledge exchange for actors from different sectors and from across the region. In particular, it would facilitate public-private relationships. The urban forum would build capacity of the cities in the BSR in applying the smart city concept by providing access to knowledge, connect them with each other in order to share experiences, and facilitate relationships with the private sector.

The urban forum has the potential to bring benefits on both city level and regional level. Cities would gain access to knowledge and to support in improving their performance. This could be achieved for example by making it the urban forum's ambition to move BSR cities up the ranking in smart/sustainable indexes. The urban forum could also help sell the Baltic Sea Region as a smart region. There are already many good initiatives in the Baltic Sea Region, but there is a need to market them better – both globally and towards the EU. This type of branding would also help promote the existence of a regional market in BSR, and increase our competitiveness internationally.

It was noted that there are already a wealth of organizations and platforms in the Baltic Sea Region, and that the urban forum should be set up in a way so to avoid proliferation. It was also stressed that the urban forum should be designed in a way that it is viable also after the initial project phase. Models for future funding should be considered from the start. One suggestion was that cities might be interested in contributing to the financing of the continuation of the platform. Furthermore, the urban forum ought to facilitate continuous processes as opposed to singular events, and strive towards bottom-up approaches that involve stakeholders from the citizens level up to Baltic Sea Region collaboration.

It was acknowledged that the smart city concept requires integrated solutions and decision-making. In order to reach the "smart state" there is a need to break silos and communicate across administrative boundaries – both within cities and on a regional level.

Suggestions for priority focus areas:

- Health and social affairs – in particular addressing the ageing population
- Smart solutions for energy, including renewable energy and energy efficiency in housing and transportation
- Smart solutions for mobility/transportation – both on local and regional level
- Baltic Sea/pollution and water quality
- Efficient use of natural resources
- Social capital

Suggestions for activities:

- Activities related to communications, networking and capacity building:
  - o Website
  - o Working groups
  - o Joint project development
  - o Mentoring systems
  - o Facilitate cooperation between smaller and larger cities
- Dialogue with the individual cities as well as citizens on their needs in relation to city development and technology.
- Test existing methodologies for smart city indexes in the region. Assess the cities to provide them with a basis for developing their own action plans.
- Develop a smart city marketplace or an incubator for business, where actors from private and public sectors can meet.
- Assist with the scaling up of pilot projects to larger scale implementation. This includes looking at how solutions developed locally can be generalized in order to be applied on a larger regional market.
- Implement pilot projects
- Develop policy recommendations

Summary of presentations

Welcome

Aadu Must, City of Tartu, declared that being smart is in, and that the cooperation between countries and cities is the most important factor for success.

Smart cities and ICT based analysis: utilizing opportunities of big data

Rein Ahas, University of Tartu

Prof Ahas outlined the 21st century as the century of mobility – of people, goods, raw materials, ideas and crime. There is a strong positive correlation between ICT use and mobility. With new, efficient means of communications we can engage in business and build relationships across the globe. This means that the more ICT we use, the more we have to move. There is science to support that mobility is the easiest way to move up in society. Relocating to larger/more central cities and regions, so called escalator regions, can lift you up the social ladder whereas staying put requires you learn new skills and create something new in order to become successful.

Today ICT is a crucial tool for city planning, but the challenge is to find out how to sure the information is hooked up to the decision-making, and to find out on what level of complexity this is feasible.

Baltic Sea Region Urban Forum for Smart Cities

Krista Kampus, CBSS Baltic 21 Unit

Ms Kampus presented CBSS and their work within HA Sustainable development within the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. She pointed out that cities are engines for economic growth and essential in reaching the goals on green economy. Cities can act as pilots or testing fields for green tech and smart solutions. They are also the main public procurers. Cities are the engines when it comes to reaching the goals set in Baltic Sea Strategy and the different EU policies.

City - Business Cooperation for New Smart Solutions: Learnings from Development Partnership between City of Turku and Siemens

Risto Veivo, City of Turku and Lars Maura, Siemens Finland

The City of Turku seeks to combine economic growth with ecological sustainability – the city has already managed to cut their CO2 emissions by 30 %, while maintaining economic growth. The city has a good track-record in sustainability, much thanks to green procurement. Other areas in which the city is active is in promoting sustainable mobility systems, regenerate city districts, and in creating the basis for future energy-systems.

Siemens has entered a long-term strategic partnership with the City of Turku, an initiative which grew out of a pilot project led by WBCSD, which both parties took part in. The collaboration include work on infrastructure development, the implementation of a light rail solution, and tolls for sustainable city district planning. Utilizing insights from some of the major cities globally, the ambition is to make Turku a showcase and best-practice example of sustainability in mid-sized cities. Siemens bring the knowledge in technology, while Turku carry out the planning and policy aspects. The results will be made public.

Critical success factors that have been identified during the project include: strategic communication, stakeholder involvement, integrated planning and solution, transportation management, governance and collaboration.

Using mobile phones as sensors or urban mobility measurement
Erki Saluveer, Positium

Mr Saluveer demonstrated how Positium is able harness mobile phone data in order to show the movement of people within Estonia. The models can be used for establishing commuting patterns, tourism projections, to support policy decisions, and inform governance related to urban planning, transport, security and more. Since 2009 the National Bank of Estonia uses the data from Positium to calculate money movements – tracking how much is brought in by foreigners and how much is leaving the country. Starting early, already in 2002, Estonia is the only country making such extensive use of mobile data.

Smart City specialization experience in the Öresund region
Karolina Huss, Öresundskomiteen

The Öresund Smart City Hub project seeks to make municipalities a more informed and engaged consumer of smart city solutions, and to improve dialogue between business and municipalities thereby creating the possibility for business development. The project includes Copenhagen in Denmark and Malmö and Lund in Sweden. Three innovation platforms have been set up to work on smart street lighting, smart biking, and smart water management - areas that all have their different characteristics and challenges. A few take away messages coming out of these processes are:
- Municipalities have limited resources for understanding ICT, and ICT companies have limited possibilities/incentives to understand municipalities
- Make sure technologies adopt to culture, don't expect vice versa
- We need more integrated data, not more data
- We need to break the silo-structures between local government units – step one for a smarter city is strategic/political
- Look at processes, not just the technologies. Citizens dialogue is part of the business model
- Technologies are new and in constant development. We need better understanding of possibilities to have dialogue with the industry before and during and after procurement. We need lighter and more flexible procurements

Riga in partnership for the development of Smart Cities
Inete Ielite, City of Riga

The city of Riga has made big advances approaching climate issues through the energy field. One example is the adoption of the Riga City Sustainable energy action plan 2020-2020. Stakeholder projects include improving energy efficiency in retail buildings, and smart solutions for electric transport.

Riga works together with several other cities and is part of a number of initiatives and platforms, such as Green IT Network Europe and the Step-Up Partnership.

BUF Smart City Concept
Olena Zinchuk, UBC

The most widely used definition of a Smart City is a city that performs well within six fields: Economy, economy, environment, mobility, smart living, people (social and human capital).

UNECE has identified Smart Cities as one of the top priorities for it member states. The concept is also being addressed within the ISO process, and within the EU Innovation Partnership on Smart Cities and Communities.