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Addressing sustainability issues in relation to spatial planning and policy making is the aim of this part of the questionnaire. The notion of urban sustainability includes:

- Sustainable growth (new workspaces including business services and growing economies such as information technology, culture and media industries, new homes to accommodate the increased population and to deal with sub-standard housing)
- Linking growth to public transport capacity (growth focused on areas where there is existing or potential capacity on the public transport network, relationship between new development and public transport capacity)
- Securing a better environment (protection and improvement of the historic environment, the public realm, open and green spaces, safety in residential and public areas)
- Ensuring social and economic inclusion (policies targeted at different communities and minorities, affordable housing, training of citizens to enable competitiveness for new jobs, policies to accommodate people in different life stages and ensure accessibility)

Sustainability interventions are many times retrofitted to existing urban development projects rather than being incorporated into the decision-making process at the outset. We are therefore also interested in mapping the urban decision making process in your cities,

indicating through the questions (e.g. question 14) who needs to be involved at what stages, how far do local communities and local authorities participate, how can the desired level of participation be achieved, co-ordinated and monitored and what tools and resources each stakeholder may need to enable the design of more sustainable urban environments. Based on the 16 responses received from the capital cities, a relevant analysis is presented.

In the question on the factors that are considered important by the capital city in policy approach for recent urban development practices infrastructure and more specifically public transport are highlighted as most important in current policy approach for urban development practices. Social and economic inclusion in the built environment (affordable housing, access to a wide range of employment, accommodation of people in different life stages, mixed land use/urban diversity) and the protection of the historic environment and green areas are also rendered highly important.

When the capitals were asked to give three good practices of recent urban development initiatives referring to the integration factors in relation to urban development projects, the responses provided with important insights as to what is currently happening in the capital cities in relation to urban development and regeneration projects. Recent urban development initiatives in the capital cities focus on sustainable growth initiatives (residential and neighbour projects), growth and public transport capacity (metro development, development of cycling lanes), environment and design (protection and management of the natural environmental projects, energy efficient design and bioclimatic technologies and restoration of historic centres) and social and economic inclusion considerations (prevention of the homeless).

Local authorities described a number of instruments utilized in order to ensure community involvement in spatial planning decisions. These mainly include committee meetings, public forums and surveys which allow the participation of local communities throughout the development of the cities's land use/development plans. Information and proposals are available in many cases through information centres, publications and public exhibitions.

Moreover, on a follow up question on the mechanisms in spatial planning and policy-making which ensured proper monitoring and assessment, a number of mechanisms are being used by the capital cities. Annual reports as part of the assessment of the city's general urban plan, are used by most cities including Amsterdam, Bratislava, Tallinn. Cities like Vilnius, Nicosia, Warsaw and Tallinn also use statistical data through surveys and cartographic material, whereas Dublin and Nicosia make use of independent evaluations and public hearings respectively.

The answers to the question "Describe mechanisms in spatial planning and policy-making which: Link growth to public transport capacity" highlight a focus on public transport development in relation to sustainable urban growth. Cities such as Amsterdam (the car and the city), Brussels (mobility plan), Nicosia (integrated mobility master plan), Vienna (mpv03-strategic traffic concepts) and Warsaw (strategy of sustainable development of public transportation system) refer to strategic plans on public transport development. Policies focusing on traffic reduction are also mentioned by Stockholm (congestion charging scheme), Tallinn (promoting public transport among residents and visitors), Vienna (restriction of individual transport) and Nicosia (bike sharing system).

The responses to the question on the mechanisms in spatial planning and policy-making which ensures social and economic inclusion focus on incentives for regeneration/restoration schemes (rehousing programmes, low cost housing, subsidised housing, neighbourhood management projects), development of long term social and spatial agendas (socioeconomic data, strategies in the masterplan, transfer of land for public centers and facilities, setting of priorities in the budget).

In the last question, capital cities were asked to suggest projects which they would consider as a priority for future EU/regional policy/cohesion funding. Responses provide useful insights on future directions of the capital cities. Local authorities would

- expand on projects related to the existing environment such as rehabilitation, city centre restoration and improvement of the public real
- significantly expand on transport infrastructure projects focusing on the improvement and development of public transport,
- Introduce new projects promoting integration of deprived groups,
- Expand on infrastructure projects aiming at the improvement of services in health care and education,
- Introduce new projects relating to energy-efficient systems and solid waste management systems
- Introduce new cross border cooperation projects

During today's roundtable discussion the following obstacles and constraints have been identified by a number of participant cities:

- Many cities encounter difficulties on allocation of resources due to a rather large number of municipalities and lack of coordination among them.
- Lack of continuity in urban projects due to a number of factors including: short term vision and planning, insufficient resources, change of governance and unexpected external factors. The latter observation also raised the absence of flexibility in urban projects to accommodate changes during the various stages of the project and its subsequent life cycle.
- Lack of sufficient powers at the local and regional level. Municipalities have limited freedom in decision making.
- Lack of interaction and coordination among social partners and physical planning.

During the discussion a number of recommendations were shared by the participants:

- Spatial planning goes beyond traditional land use planning to bring together and integrate policies for the development and use of land (including connectivity to adjoining communities) with other policies and programmes which influence the nature of places and how they function.
- Urban development initiative necessitates an integrated approach as mentioned in the common position paper, given that appropriate place and scale based approaches (think globally, act locally) are the best tools to achieve integration of the policies and interventions.
- Active participation by local authorities and the collaboration with communities are of vital importance in identifying citizens' needs and responding more effectively.
- Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should be incorporated in the planning process in order to ensure a fruitful learning process and adjustments to changing needs.

