



Ministry Of Industry And Trade (Mpo), Czech Republic

Models and instruments for the funding and implementation of Smart City testbeds

FOLLOW-UP NOTE

POLICY LEARNING PLATFORM MATCHMAKING SESSION

DATE: WEDNESDAY 24 AUGUST 2022 – 13:00-15:00 CET

BENEFICIARY: MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY AND TRADE (MPO), CZECH REPUBLIC

TOPICS: TESTBED, LIVING LAB, SMART CITIES, FUNDING

PARTICIPANTS

Hosts

- Miroslav Scheiner, Special Project manager, Section of the EU and Foreign Trade, Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic,
- Marie Zezůlková - Head of Urban Policy and Strategy Unit, Ministry of Regional Development
- Dominik Opálka - Smart City Specialist, Ministry of Regional Development
- Eva Holzová (TBC) - Smart City Projects and Events Manager, Brno City Municipality

Peers and Experts

- Cornelia Dinca, Amsterdam Smart City programme, International Liaison Manager (Netherlands)
- Kaisa Spilling, Forum Virium Helsinki, Development Manager (Finland)
- Kalle Toivonen, Testbed Helsinki, Senior Advisor Digitalization and New Technologies, City of Helsinki - Economic Development, Innovations and New Experiments (Finland)

Interreg Europe Policy Learning Platform

- Mart Veliste, Interreg Europe PLP Thematic Expert, SME Competitiveness
- Luc Schmerber, Interreg Europe PLP Thematic Expert, SME Competitiveness
- Elena Ferrario, Interreg Europe Thematic Manager

OBJECTIVES OF MEETING

The Czech state department responsible for innovations, digitalization, technologies and business, as well as export promotion, at the Czech Ministry of Industry and Trade (MPO) is coordinating the City For The Future

project. The project aims to promote solutions supporting sustainable urban development provided by Czech companies. The project covers various topics, such as health, smart buildings, energy, mobility, ICT, services, environment and agriculture.

Now MPO, together with the Czech Ministry of Regional Development, the national Smart City Policy coordinator, is planning to set up Smart City testbeds in different cities, supporting the promotion of Czech-based technologies and solutions for cities. A recent realization has been that companies require references and feedback (pilot tests) for international expansion. Equally important is to stimulate the implementation of new technologies in Czech cities and municipalities.

The matchmaking objective was to showcase how such testbeds have been implemented, managed, and funded in other European regions.

SOME KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Project-based, EU-funded pilots are suitable for launching a testbed. The Amsterdam and Helsinki experiences prove that the development journey can begin with a spark ignited by project funding.
- Identify and build on current initiatives. It makes sense to start small, tap into existing “energy” (i.e. motivated people, businesses), and strengthen already active communities and testbeds. Agility and adaptability are important characteristics in the initial stages of setting up testbeds.
- Public-private partnerships need to be established for long-term financial stability that is not dependent on EU structural funds. Stakeholders & partners can contribute in different ways. For example, research institutions and non-profit associations could contribute in kind.
- Technology is often overemphasized. Institutional, economic, regulatory and behavioural dimensions are essential. A testbed should use a citizen-centric approach where the city and the companies work with residents. City experts also learn valuable insights through co-creative processes. It is not enough to showcase companies’ projects. The products need to be tested in a real-life setting so that companies can get practically valuable feedback. “Agile piloting” is excellently suited for testbeds.
- When branding a testbed region or the companies in the testbed, it is more appealing to first talk about what problems are being solved, not what solutions are being offered. The former makes the themes relatable. The latter can come off as a sales pitch, alienating some audiences.
- Innovation does not happen because somebody wants it to happen. The public sector needs to offer tools for sparking innovation in the cities.
- Initiatives at local, regional and national levels should be aligned. Effective are situations where top-down policies are bridged with bottom-up projects. It always makes sense to link piloting programme themes directly to a city’s development programme.

SOME KEY PRACTICES IDENTIFIED

Featured Interreg Europe projects and their good practices

- RETRACE: [Amsterdam Smart City](#)
- ecoRIS3: [Smart Kalasatama](#)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Living labs:

- [Marineterrein Amsterdam Living Lab](#)
- [De Ceuve|](#) – former shipyard converted into a living lab in Amsterdam
- [Smart Kalasatama – a district for experimentation](#)

Guides:

- [Urban Living Labs: A Living Lab Way of Working](#) – a step-by-step method for setting up urban living labs based on an analysis of 90 local experimental projects in the Amsterdam region.

- Pocket Book for Agile Piloting - Co-creation and experimentation of early prototypes in a real-life environment

Policy:

- Netherland's National Smart City Strategy
- Conclusion of the Finnish Six City Strategy development programme