Pilot Projects and their Significance in Approaching Challenges – Exemplified by Refugee Aid

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12th International Symposium on Urban Planning and Environment
1st UPE Lusophone Symposium
Agenda

Pilot Projects in German Spatial Planning

Stages of a Pilot Project

Stage 1 – Identification of a novel Challenge in Spatial Planning
Stage 2 – Creation and Public Bidding
Stage 3 – Applications
Stage 4 – Evaluation by the Initiator
Stage 5 – Execution
Stage 6 – Completion and final Evaluation

Conclusion
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Pilot Projects in German Spatial Planning

- In various scientific disciplines: development of models to reduce complexity of reality
- In spatial planning: real world experiments, realized in form of pilot projects
- Pilot project
  - Small-scale, short-term experiment
  - Important research instrument for spatial planning
  - Employed to study novel challenges
  - Does not follow pre-defined processes to achieve a target
  - Attaining statements about suitability and practicality of urban or spatial planning concepts
  - Carried out in multiple regions or municipalities
  - Scientific monitored by academic or private institutions
  - Activities are continuously evaluated
## Stages of a Pilot Project

1. **Identification of a novel challenge in spatial planning**  
   Scientific questions cannot be answered in another way

2. **Creation and public bidding**  
   Criteria and parameters are given

3. **Applications – individually or in groups**  
   Pilot regions/municipalities  
   Stakeholders interested in the scientific monitoring role

4. **Evaluation of the received applications by the initiator**  
   Generally valid criteria: innovativeness, the region’s potential pilot function, sample function,  
   generalizability and transferability of results.  
   On-topic criteria relevant to the proposal

5. **Execution**  
   In-process examination of research questions, implementation of strategies and measures  
   Process orientation: collaboration of participants, exchange of experiences between simultaneous pilot  
   projects, and continuous communication of running pilot projects to expert audience

6. **Completion and final evaluation**  
   Final presentation and final report  
   Identification of generally applicable criteria and their transferability to large-scale problem solutions
Stage 1 - Identification

Population in Germany in 2014

Asylum applicants in 2015

Based on Folkerts-Landau, 2015.
## Stages of a Pilot Project

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Stage 2 – Creation and Public Bidding

Overall aim

- development of perspectives and approaches for successful and permanent integration of refugees and asylum applicants in decentral located municipalities with high demographic challenges

Research questions

- What measures can be taken to facilitate the reception of refugees and asylum applicants in the municipalities?
- What are factors for refugees and asylum applicants to stay in rural areas?
- What kinds of measures offer particularly good conditions for the integration on the (local) labor market?
- What are spatial implications of the reception of refugees in regions with high demographic challenges in periods between initial reception and recognition as well as afterwards?
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Stage 3 – Applications

- Institutions interested in scientific monitoring role have to find pilot municipalities
- Municipalities are selected on the basis of various criteria
  - Facing outstanding challenges due to demographic change
  - Located in structurally weak rural areas
  - Keen interest as well as initiatives of civic participation
  - Open-minded towards innovative solution approaches and collaboration formats
  - Vivid interest of local stakeholders in participating
- Involvement of the funded project partners, associated collaboration, transfer partners and group of experts
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Stage 4 – Evaluation by the initiator

- Innovativeness
  - Linkage of “integration of the refugees and asylum applicants” and “demographic change” in the light of a sustainable local and regional development is novel
  - No practical and innovative solutions, drawing on the overwhelming engagement of the initial reception and distribution of refugees in Germany
  - No mid- and long-term strategies and options for permanent accommodation
  - No strategies for integration into civil society and labor market, especially in peripherally located municipalities

- Transferability and applicability
  - Advisory panel ensures scientific quality of the research services and the implementation of the developed solutions
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**UPE 12 - CITIES FOR US: engaging communities and citizens for sustainable development | LISBON, Portugal | May 31 - June 03, 2016**
Stage 5 – Execution

Measures for a facilitated reception

- Commitment and open-mindedness of local population and motivation of the refugees and asylum applicants
- Engagement of an refugee coordinator and welcome sponsors
- Development of a software

Integration into civil society

- Development of a “Welcome App” for refugees and asylum applicants
- Distribution of refugee families in structurally weak rural areas
- Guiding refugee children required to attend school by professionals

Integration into labor market

- Offering internships in local companies
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Stage 6 – Completion and final Evaluation

- Structurally weak rural areas affected by emigration can benefit from the current rush of refugees
  - Inhabitation of vacant buildings
  - Preservation of local social and technical infrastructure
  - Compensation of the shortage of skilled workers
- Central requirements in integration: open-mindedness, civic engagement and volunteering
- Development of innovative solution approaches by various stakeholders
- Transferability and applicability of findings is of central importance
Conclusion

- Continuous and final evaluation of pilot projects is crucial
  - Continuous exchange of gained information, knowledge and experiences
  - Adjustment of aims and measures during the pilot project
- Including current findings in future work
- Taken changing external conditions into account
- Scientific criteria and applicability, affordability and transferability are considered in the project
- Formed solutions, ideas and research results can be used for transfer to other municipalities
Thank you for your attention

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