



Just resilience: you show it... and then you know it

Can 'Just Resilience' be **measured** and how does that actually lead to more action on justice in European cities' and municipalities' climate adaptation strategies? A group of over 40 scientists, practitioners and policy makers deliberated on this on the 12th of October 2022.

The EU strategy of **smarter, more systemic and faster** adaptation to climate change reinforces the pledge of equitable sharing of benefits and burdens and of *Leaving No One Behind*. Ms. Pavla Vidanova, representing DG Clima, pointed at the it is **challenging to translate the theoretical concept of just resilience** into guidelines for national adaptation plans. Ms. Petya Pishmisheva of the Covenant of Mayors - Europe, a network organisation supporting climate adaptation in over 10,000 municipalities, added that there are **hardly any operational tools and approaches for** Just Resilience to help municipalities. She indicated that there is a need for **integrated approaches** and that we could learn from the food transformation community. What is the way forward? Ms. Kati Mattern from the European Environment Agency introduced the ongoing work on developing indicators for just resilience and emphasized **the need to bring existing knowledge together in the format of overviews and literature reviews**.

Mapping tools exist to show effects of climate change. Could injustice be shown by adding demographic and societal layers? What about privacy, level/scale, where to start and how to show different types of injustice? Participants felt that to better inform society, the **causal chain of how benefits and burdens** are distributed should be made transparent: you show it... and then you know it. Before setting indicators for baselines and progress monitoring, **recognitional justice is the first step**, which means to recognize the harm of climate change as such. To prevent adaptation processes that only engage the "usual suspects", there is a need for more **innovative approaches** to also engage disadvantaged groups, people who often lack a common voice or those who are excluded in other ways.

Furthermore, there is a strong wish to avoid **maladaptation**, more specific, to avoid that the situation is getting unintendedly worse for some people. Given that it is not easy to estimate all impacts of adaptation measures in advance, it was recommended to pursue just resilience by **talking with people and encouraging reflexive monitoring approaches**. Although scenario analysis is a very valuable tool, it was stated that no one can make decisions or design next steps from behind the desk!

Pre-set indicators may not work because of the complex and localized nature of just resilience and the uncertainty of climate change. But what if we want to compare progress between cities? Cities are diverse, because of their location, population, size, risks they face and many other factors. The group recommended that cities should **develop their own indicators** and be **inspired by successes and failures** of other cities. Perhaps a long indicators list to pick and choose from? But, the main conclusion of the dialogue was that even before talking about indicators, the goal of Just Resilience should be embedded in the whole process, and therefore, we first need to work on **getting the mindsets of everyone into the direction of just resilience!**

One paragraph text:

"Measuring" Just Resilience, as well as setting the right indicators, is seen as a way to promote justice within local authorities' efforts to adapt to climate change. But, policy makers struggle to translate the concept into practical guidelines for EU Member States. The necessary expertise is hard to find! One idea for triggering action is to include injustice in mapping tools: showing society the causal chain of unjust distribution of benefits and burdens of adaptation measures. You show it... and then you know it! In any case the first step, before thinking about indicators, is to recognise groups, communities and individuals that are or will be affected, directly or indirectly, by climate change or the adaptation measures. Everyone in the adaptation process should have the mindset of willing to 'leave no one behind'. To involve marginalised groups in adaptation processes, innovative approaches are needed. Pre-set indicators may not work due to the complex and localised nature of just resilience. Cities could get inspiration on operationalising just resilience by each other successes and failures and develop their own indicators that fit to their location, population, risks and other factors, while involving individuals and groups who normally do not have a (respected) voice.