



Show me where sustainability lies

– Design and use of performance evidence for smart urbanisation

| 26 October 2016 |

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Framing the problem

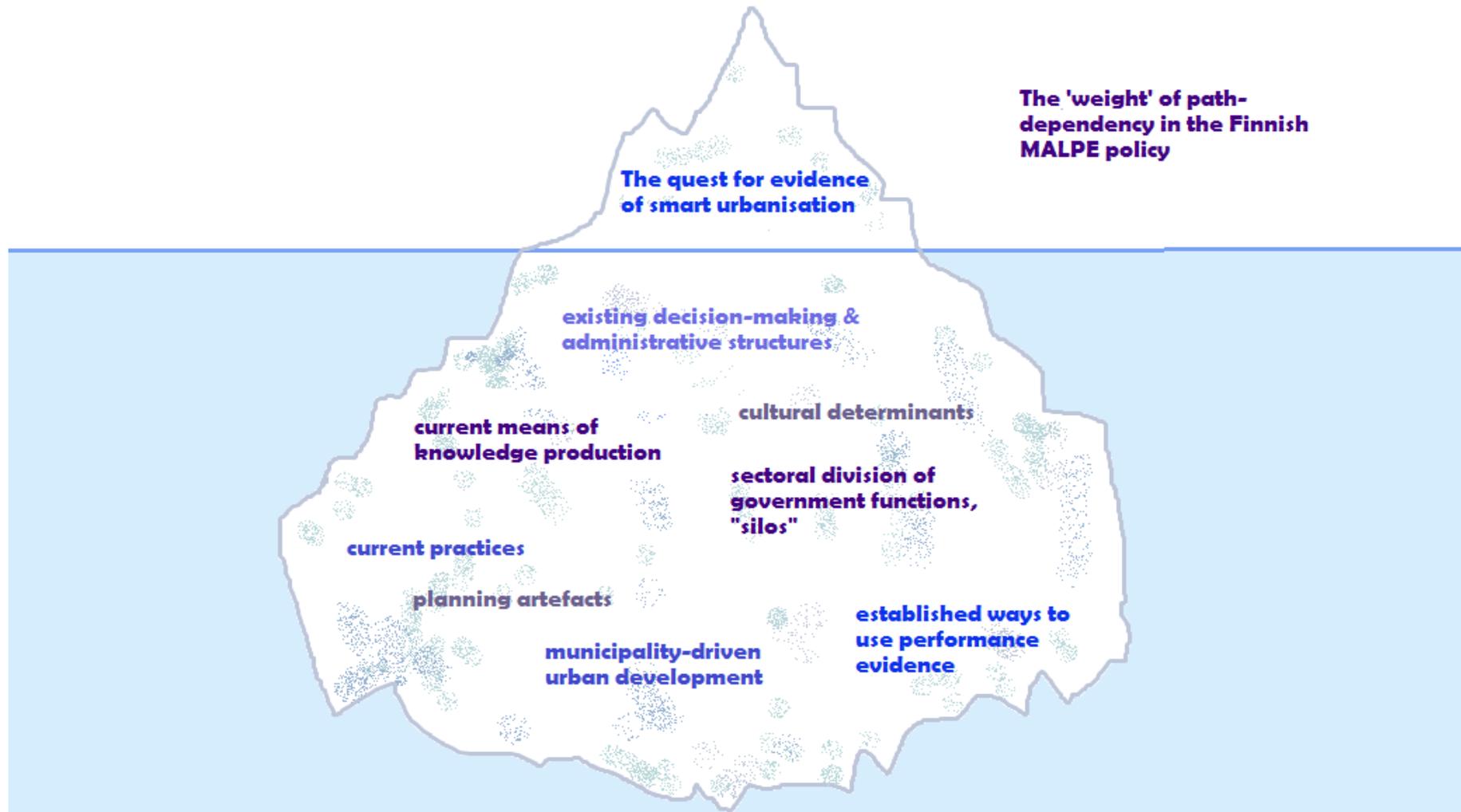
- **Starting point: the three criteria of sustainability**
 - financial and ecological sustainability; sustainable provision of public services
 - the three criteria of sustainability are set in distinct timeframes (from 1 year to centuries)
- **Concept: *smart urbanisation***
 - ‘smart’ as in smart growth (growth without increases in the use of natural resources)
 - ‘smart’ as in smart cities (the promise of new technologies and big data)
 - ‘urbanization’ to refer to urban policy making *across municipality and city boundaries*
- **Context: performance measurement and management**
- **Problem: design and use of performance evidence on sustainable urban policies**
 - how to cope with multiple indices and metrics?
 - planning artefacts affect how sustainability is perceived

Current knowledge

Finnish urban policy-making systems are characterized by

- **Path-dependency**
 - existing administrative and decision-making structures, established practices and means of design and use of performance evidence condition urban policy-making
- **Silos and sub-optimisation**
 - good intentions: sectoral division of government functions in the name of efficiency
 - side-effect: administrative silos define the pursuit of sustainability
- **Municipality-driven urban development**
 - Finnish constitution: municipal self-government
 - no genuine interest for regional urban development

(Results of the JULMA project (Vakkuri et al. 2016))



Key problems to address

- **Problems with the design of performance evidence and planning artefacts**
 - What classifies as evidence of sustainability?
 - Who influences what is considered evidence? Through what mechanisms?
 - How does the available evidence take into consideration different timeframes of sustainability?
 - How do planning artefacts steer decisions-making on urban policies?
- **Problems with the use of performance evidence**
 - How is evidence used in decision-making? What are the purposes of use?
 - Are there any dysfunctional modes of uses (etc. myopic behaviors, gaming with evidence, “tunnel vision”)?
 - What type of evidence is needed to legitimize urban policy decisions?

Added value – better use of sustainability evidence

- Understanding **the limitations and institutional ambiguities** of decision-making and performance evidence in urban policy-making
- ***Integrating multiple timeframes*** into the current urban development planning, sustainability evidence production and decision-making processes
 - Supporting decision-makers in addressing multiple time scales
- ***Transferring practices of generating, measuring and evaluating information on sustainability***
 - Can case-specific instruments be put into more universal use in Finland?
- Exploring novel ways **of evaluating and measuring sustainability**
- **Demonstrating intelligent uses of performance evidence** in the context of smart urbanization

Discussion points

Working hypothesis

Design and use of performance evidence in local government is defined and influenced by path dependencies, and the assumption of “relevant” and “useful” knowledge. In this context, sustainability evidence is *‘nice to have’* but not part of mainstream *‘core’* data that actually determines urban policy-making in Finland.

Questions

- Is it so? Is this similar or different in different city regions in Finland?
- Should this be addressed at a more general level within the project or is a case-specific approach sufficient?
- Are there converging interests within the consortium that could be addressed via common questions setting/sub-projects?