



CITIES AS ARENAS OF POLITICAL INNOVATION  
IN THE STRENGTHENING OF DELIBERATIVE AND  
PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY

# DEVELOPING THE EURARI INDEX

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An Impact Assessment Model Derived from The  
EUARENAS Experience

DECEMBER 2021

**EUARENAS** investigates the ways in which social movements coupled with local government reform initiatives, manifesting themselves in local-level experiments, create momentum for political change that include more inclusive and participatory forms of governance.



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## 1. Introduction

The idea of this document is to provide practical guidelines on how to proceed with an impact assessment of deliberative democracy initiatives and with the various projects that can originate from them. Assessing the impact of an initiative is not easy. There are a series of steps that need to be followed, and the strategy to implement is strictly related to the type of initiative that is undertaken. There are, however, procedural characteristics that are common to impact assessment across different initiatives. The first thing to determine is which type of impact we are interested in measuring. Initiatives have different objectives, stakeholders, recipients and so on. The impacts that the initiative might have, are multiple as well. The results of an initiative can be assessed in terms of economic, social, urban, environmental, cultural impact just to mention a few. Indeed, depending on the type of initiatives, some impacts might be stronger than others, while complex initiatives' results might need to be assessed from different perspectives at the same time. Therefore, the type of impact to assess is derived by the results that the promoter wants to achieve. At the same time, the creation of an overarching framework to assess impact, helps in comparing initiatives across a single Program such as the **EUARENAS** one. Therefore, while still allowing for the development of ad hoc indicators depending on the different goals of the initiatives under consideration, this document tries to develop a consistent framework for impact analysis.

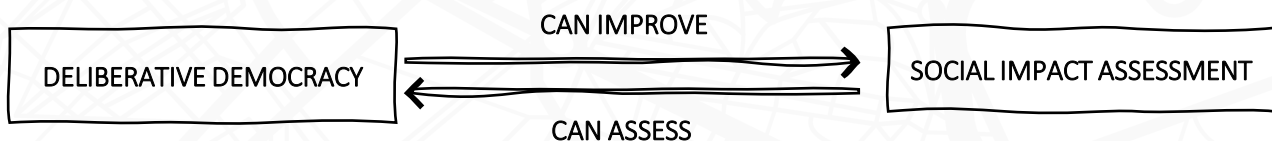
In order to facilitate the above mentioned, this document firstly, reviews and operationalizes the definition of impact, trying to understand which type of impact we are referring to, and from which theoretical framework derives its operationalization. Second, it highlights the moment of analysis. Strictly linked to the theory of change (Brest 2010; Chen and Chen 1990; Stein and Valters 2012; White 2009), impact assessment is conducted before, during and after the assessed initiative. Thanks to specific peculiarities of the co-cycle process refined through EUARMP Methodological Protocol, it is possible to map the various phases of the analysis according to the different steps of the cycle, helping analyst and practitioners in assessing the impact and providing good proof of how the co-cycle and a co-governance process in themselves allowing for better impact assessment. Third, the document explains how an analysis can be conducted, highlighting methodologies and tools that can be used for data gathering and analysis. Finally, the document proposes a series of dimensions and indicators that can be used to assess the overall impact of deliberative initiatives operationalizing the notion of urban impact. It is on these basic indicators that ad hoc measures need to be added in order to grasp the specificities of each initiative and their relative impact.

## 2. WHAT IMPACT? – Towards an operationalized definition of impact

To create a coherent framework for an overall evaluation of the **EUARENAS** project and to allow for comparison of the different cases that are implemented and monitored within the project, urban impact is seen as the set of voluntary and involuntary goals and consequences that deliberative democracy initiatives can generate in the city, in neighborhoods and on communities. Considering both physical and social space, the urban impact is made up of the quality of the urban environment, social quality, and political quality. These three dimensions include within themselves all the different aspects that can be influenced by an initiative. The social dimension evaluates the impact on the individual and the community, using single and aggregated indicators to evaluate which benefits the initiative has brought to the people that it was directed to. The political dimension includes the impacts on the political, legal and governance levels, it entails monitoring the effect on policies, as well as on administration and innovative governance. Finally, the quality of the urban environment dimension encompasses the physical impact that the initiative has on the urban space. This dimension includes indicators linked to sustainability, energy transition, urban spaces and resources, and social models of their fruition.

When it comes to deliberative democracy a starting point to define which type of impact has to be assessed is provided by a series of researches (Felicetti, Niemeyer, and Curato 2016; Goodin and Dryzek 2006; Hartz-Karp and Pope 2011; Michels and Binnema 2019). While part of the assessment of deliberative democracy can be found in the literature on deliberative democracy itself, useful insights can be found in the recent understandings of Social Impact Assessment (SIA). SIA can be understood as the set of “processes of analyzing, monitoring and managing the intended and unintended social consequences, both positive and negative, of planned interventions (policies, programs, plans, projects) and any social change processes invoked by those interventions” (Vanclay 2003, 5). Considering this definition strictly, it might seem that SIA is concentrated on assessing a specific type of impact that is related to the social dimension. However, the definition itself of “social” implies a wide range of dimensions that often overlaps with the core dimensions on which deliberative democracy initiatives can be assessed. Dimensions as participation, inclusiveness, personal and cultural improvements, quality and quantity of human relations, welfare status etc. are all dimensions that can (and need) to be assessed when conducting a SIA, covering in this way much of the impacts that deliberative democracy initiatives might have. Moreover, it is well established that public participation is a core aspect of an effective impact assessment (Hartz-Karp and Pope 2011). The intrinsic characteristics of deliberative democratic initiatives allow for the conduction of a better impact analysis, especially when implemented following integrated schemes as the co-cycle and the quintuple helix model. As a matter of fact, these schemes provide constant interactions between each component of the initiative, facilitating the measurement of the changes throughout the entirety of the process. The double relation between the SIA and Deliberative Democracy is summarized in the following figure:

Figure 1: Deliberative Democracy and Social Impact Assessment



This double relation between deliberative democracy and SIA makes the latter extremely useful when it comes to defining the methodologies and the dimensions that need to be considered when assessing an initiative impact. Indeed, depending on the initiatives considered, SIA might not be enough. However, as the next section will show, an impact assessment must be planned according to the specific goals of a determined initiative. Therefore, while SIA can be a good starting point, providing useful major guidelines, it is a good practice to consider also additional dimensions in the early stages of the impact assessment.

A major conceptualization of impact when it comes to deliberative democracy is related to the intrinsic characteristics of deliberative democracy. The literature that develops such a contextualization focuses on dimensions such as influence, inclusion, skills and virtues, deliberation, and legitimacy (Michels 2011). These dimensions relate to the deliberative process and are useful to understand its efficacy and its primary impact. In short, they are useful to understand whether the initiative has achieved its primary goal or not. We have discussed this conceptualization of deliberative democracy’s impact in D2.1 Methodological Framework, while bridging the theoretical framework to the methodological one. Therefore, the approaches considered at that stage of the research (Michels 2011; Michels and Binnema 2019) serve as a solid base to evaluate the primary objectives of the initiatives and should therefore be included in the impact assessment process. While the distinction between different types of impact linked to deliberative democracy (instrumental, conceptual, and strategic) has been useful in the transition between theory and methodology, it does not seem relevant when operationalizing the concepts. Instead, the dimensions of influence, inclusion, skills and virtues, deliberation and legitimacy should be maintained in the operationalizing exercise conducted here. Therefore, these dimensions should be restructured and included in the distinction developed within the EUARENAS framework (D8.1 and related activities) among social, political, and urban environmental impacts.

The insights offered by the literature on SIA (Grieco, Michelini, and Iasevoli 2015; Nicholls, Nicholls, and Paton 2015) allow for a more operationalized review of impact assessment. As a matter of fact, SIA, and the methods we can derive from it offer a series of details that allow the identification of different phases, dimensions, and indicators for analysis. The next sections will show how starting from the principles of SIA we can move forward in developing a framework for assessing the overall impact of deliberative democratic initiatives at the local level.

### 3. WHEN IMPACT? – Time and phases of impact assessment

Once it is defined which type of impact it is necessary to assess, other considerations need to be developed around the idea of time. There are two types of time that need to be considered when conducting an impact assessment: a substantial and a methodological one.

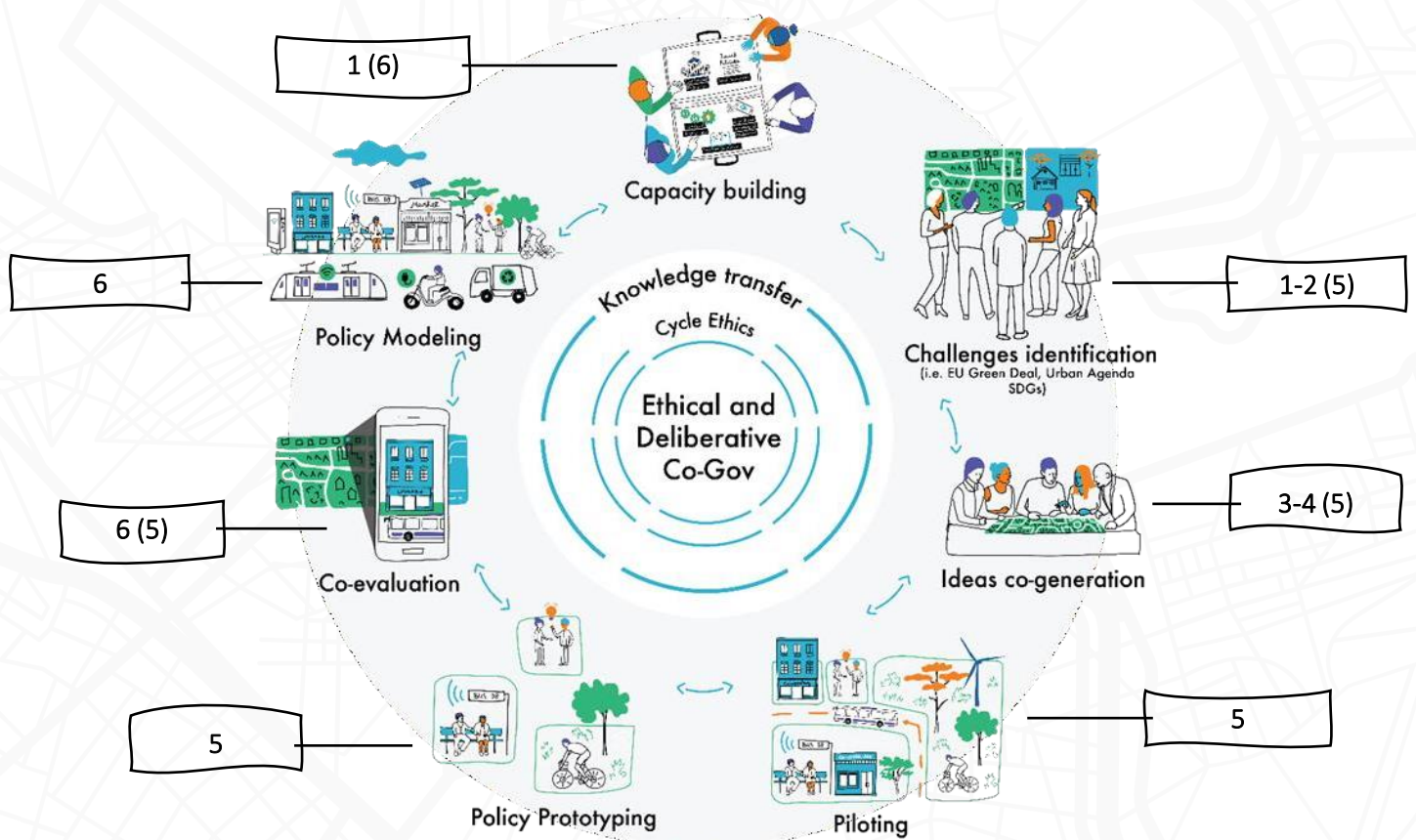
Substantial time relates to the idea that impact is a measure of change. It is here that the theory of change finds its application. Theory of change applies to a series of initiatives from businesses to civil society and government and it is used to analyze situations that evolved through time (Brest 2010). In this sense, time understood substantially means that assessing impact implies measuring changes from a time where the initiative is absent to a time where the initiative has taken place and has produced its effects. The bottom line here is that impact analysis develops over time, and it is not a procedure that can be implemented in a static moment. While it is possible to retrace the pre-initiative status of a specific context even after its implementation. Analyses that are conducted exclusively ex-post lose in terms of validity when compared to analysis developed ex-ante and carried out together with the initiative itself.

Instead, the methodological time refers to the specific moments in which the analysis needs to be conducted. Measuring change requires the implementation of an assessment agenda or process that operationalizes the different steps required to identify variations in the system object of the assessment. There are various assessment procedures that have been formalized in the literature (Corvo et al. 2021). Most of the processes of impact assessment encompass a series of phases that are common to all of them. A first phase is dedicated to the identification of the issues and variables to assess, as well as to the formalization of the areas and boundaries that will delimit the object of the assessment. A second phase usually involves a preliminary assessment of the current situation. As of the concepts introduced with the theory of change and further developed into practical applications (Mark 2008; Miller 2010), to measure change it is needed to know the status at time 0, before the beginning of the initiative whose impact we want to assess. A third phase that usually follows the mapping of the status quo is the formulation of possible alternatives for the changes that we expect to notice. It is a crucial part of the impact assessment process to be able to link the observed effect with the initiative under consideration. Therefore, identifying other possible concurring patterns that can generate similar outcomes will be useful to understand if the initiative is the sole accountable process for those results. In case the impact assessment analysis is required as a preliminary evaluation for the approval or rejection of a specific initiative, alternatives should then be evaluated as other possible solutions to undertake. In this eventual phase, the use of data and models can help to project and hypothesize future consequences of the various initiatives to choose accordingly which to undertake. On the other hand, when the impact assessment analysis is not a condition for the implementation of the initiative but is instead a tool to measure its consequences such a modeling might not be relevant. Nevertheless, it remains relevant to include a reflection of possible alternatives to the outcomes that the initiative aims for. The last two phases represent the core of the assessment as they imply the measurement and evaluation of the data. The measurement involves monitoring activities to collect relevant data for the evaluation. The evaluation phase will then retrospectively review the various effects monitored, it will then compare them with the objectives identified during the phases and it will finally assess the process employed.

In short, the phases that can be identified are:

- 1) *Definition*: objectives, variables and limits are identified and formalized
- 2) *Status quo*: measurement of the variables before the beginning of the initiative
- 3) *Alternatives*: identification of possible other concurring factors to the outcomes
- 4) *Selection*: (eventual) evaluation of alternatives and subsequent decision
- 5) *Monitoring*: data gathering during the implementation of the initiative
- 6) *Evaluation*: evaluation of the results at conclusion of the initiative

Figure 2: Impact Assessment and the Co-Cycle, phases of assessment



The various phases of the co-cycle allow for a progressive application of the different phases of assessment. The previous section has shown how initiatives that see the participation of citizens, already offer an advantage for assessing their impact. This is mostly due to the continuous engagement with the stakeholders of the initiative that facilitates the monitoring of the impact through the whole process. Moreover, it makes it easier to gather data directly from the stakeholders, as data gathering moments can be inserted at various stages of the participatory initiatives. The assessing activity follows step by step the process of creation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of an initiative. However, different tools and methodologies might need to be applied according to the different moments of the analysis, as at different times they try to assess different aspects of the initiative. Therefore, moments of analysis might extend over more than one single phase of the co-cycle. However, this doesn't affect the time relation between the progress of the analysis in that of the piloting activity.

#### 4. HOW IMPACT? – Methodologies and tools to assess impact

From the definition of what impact is, we have highlighted the multidimensional core of impact and its assessment. As a matter of fact, there are a plurality of dimensions that can be considered when defining impact. Therefore, we have created a differentiation between social, political, and urban environmental impact, trying to include all the possible intended and unintended consequences of a specific initiative. Moreover, we have shown how the assessment of the impact is an analytical process that needs to be conducted in alignment with the initiative process, from its development to its implementation and monitor phases. In doing this, we have shown how the co-cycle structure can answer to some of the specific requirements of a correct and efficient impact assessment analysis, making the participation of the various stakeholders through the entirety of the process one of its essential characteristics, the co-cycle structure allows for an easier and consistent assessment of the various interests at stake, their satisfaction and perception, and most importantly the consequences that they are subject to in the various stages of the initiative.

One thing that we have still not formalized, is the methodology that needs to be followed when conducting an impact assessment. Although we have already clarified some aspects of the procedures to assess an initiative's impact, we have not offered a structured guide yet. From the previous sections we have understood:

- 1) Impact is multidimensional and needs to be assessed accordingly
- 2) Impact has to be measured through the entirety of the initiative's process, from its development to its implementation and monitoring phases.

The multidimensionality of an initiative's impact entails that there are different types of variables that need to be considered, and that there are different methodologies to analyze these variables. As a matter of fact, impact can be assessed with the use of quantitative variables, providing aggregate results and allowing to trace the process on a more general aspect (i.e., citizens involved, economic activities opened regulations adopted, increase in public transport), but it can also be assessed with the use of qualitative variables that allow for a better understanding of the impact at the individual level (i.e., level of satisfaction, levels of perceived improvement).

Different variables require different instruments for the data gathering process. Therefore, once again, the impact assessment appears not to be linked to a specific tool or methodology. Questionnaires, interviews, focus groups as well as review of existing databases, local archives, policy, and legal texts, they are all instruments that can be used in the various phases of the impact assessment. Moreover, actual methods used to analyze such variables and data vary as well.

There are various methodologies that can be used to assess impact. However, as previously mentioned, almost all of them find a good ground in the theory of change. This entails that the various methodologies share the core foundation of using an outcomes-based approach. This approach applies critical thinking to the formulation, implementation and evaluation of initiatives and programs that aim at obtaining change. Practically, the theory of change requires the identification of the sequences of events that can lead to an expected result. In short, the theory of change is at the base of the phases of impact assessment. Derived from theory of change, and depending on the impact (social, political, and urban-environmental) that we want to assess, there are various methodologies that can be used. However, some techniques allow for the aggregation of different variables and indicators within a unique framework, allowing for an assessment of various dimensions at the same time.



The SROI methodologies evaluates social, economic and urban-environmental impact of an initiative through the direct involvement of the principal stakeholders (Nicholls, Nicholls, and Paton 2015). Vastly used in social impact assessment, when the proper variables are included, the SROI represents a good methodology to assess impact at large. Specific variables are developed in the next section. Here, it is needed to link the various phases of the analysis to the methodological tools that can be used to gather and analyze information and data. The phases of SROI don't differ much from the phases of analyses summarized in the previous section. Therefore, it is possible to link the various tools not only to the relevant phases of analysis, but also to the co-cycle's ones.

Table 1: Phases of analysis, Co-Cycle and Tools

Phase of Analysis	Co-Cycle	Tools
<b>Definition</b>	Capacity Building & Challenges Identification	Interviews, focus groups, ethnographic participation to preliminary meetings and discussions.
<b>Status Quo</b>	Ideas Co-Generation	Data review and analysis. Public database, local archives.
<b>Alternatives</b>	Ideas Co-Generation	Expert Interviews, desk-based research. Local expert engagement (CSOs).
<b>Selection</b>	Ideas Co-Generation	Not an analysis phase, but a decisional phase for (usually) policy makers to decide which initiative to implement according to the results of the analysis.
<b>Monitoring</b>	Piloting & Policy Prototyping	Interviews, questionnaires, focus groups, quantitative data analysis.
<b>Evaluation</b>	Co-Evaluation & Policy Modeling	Verification of the results with the objectives previously identified analysis and reporting.

## 5. BREAKING UP IMPACT – Dimensions and indicators to assess impact (EURARI)

It should be now clear that impact assessment is strictly related to the objectives that a certain initiative has. While the assessment should evaluate the overall consequences of the initiative, its primary goal should be to understand if the project has achieved its goals or not. So, first and foremost, variables and indicators should be developed according to these specific goals. Therefore, it is not possible to determine them in advance or with certain degree of generalization. However, as the impact assessment is focused, but not limited to the objectives of a specific initiative, it is still possible to identify a series of different variables and indicators that can be used assessing different initiatives. Moreover, in reframing impact within the framework of deliberative democratic initiatives, it is possible to identify a series of dimensions (with the relative indicators) that need to be always considered when evaluating the impact.

Table 2: Dimensions, Objectives and Indicators the base of the EURARI

Impact's Dimension	Objective	Indicators
<b>Social</b>	1-Inclusion and diversity	People involved/potential people Minorities represented/minorities present People included/people previously excluded Number of meetings organized Number of participants per stakeholder type
	2-Engagement	Number of initiatives with follow up Instances presented that have made it to the following step of the project Individual satisfaction of the process Presence of same individual across initiatives
	3-Economic Development	New economic activities created Increased wealth of the area Increased in partnerships New skills acquired by participants Sustainable finance
	4-Personal Development	Community development Interest in civic life Trust in local authorities
	5-Digital and tech Development	Innovative tools and methods - adoption of programs, applications, platforms Increase of digital literacy Decrease of digital divide New tech infrastructures
	6- Cultural Development	Recovery and enhancement of cultural assets (mq/mq or number) Capacity-building and knowledge programs Cultural and entertainment services or facilities
<b>Political</b>	1-Governance	Number of innovative tools introduced in regulations Degree of legalizations of the innovative tools (mandatory/non mandatory)
	2-Participation	Number of additional participation initiative Number of new participation initiatives Number of local authorities involved
	3-Legal	Number of regulations implemented from the initiative Number of deliberative councils/assemblies
	4-Influence	Number of new political entities Change in political preferences

<b>Urban environmental</b>	1-Urban resources and social models of the fruition of urban resources	<p>Accessible infrastructures (number and type)</p> <p>Public/public use buildings and areas</p> <p>Indicator public areas: surface area of public outdoor areas with social function / total area of the project area</p> <p>Public services - area of dedicated spaces / total project area</p> <p>Increase in the level of accessibility and fruition perceived to the initiative spaces (before and after)</p> <p>New landmarks</p> <p>Increase in perceived quality of urban space and city livability</p>
	2-Environmental quality	<p>Typology of urban morphology (reticular/organic, flat, or hilly/mountainous)</p> <p>Environmental policies and strategies compliant with European climate neutrality goals</p> <p>Energy Efficiency Indicator - number of increases in the energy classes of buildings</p> <p>Energy Sustainability Indicator - number of plant types from renewable sources (none, +1 solar/wind/hydro/geothermal/biomass)</p> <p>Environmental remediation: project area subject to environmental remediation/restoration/risks reduction/elimination of causes of pollution</p> <p>Urban reforestation/greening/nature-based solutions: area/project area</p>

## 6. COMPARING IMPACT – Lessons from the international and European frameworks

Additional indicators can also be derived by international indexes. While these indicators are not strictly related to the impact assessment of deliberative democracy, they are still useful to grasp the ongoing trends in urban development. Moreover, as they are widespread used across the world, they favor comparison across countries and different contexts and initiatives. This is the case of the indicators linked to the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (UN General Assembly 2015). The 17 SDGs are elaborated within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and they include a series of different goals as the subsequent development framework after the Millennium Development Goals. Covering a series of different areas, from poverty to hunger, from gender equality to ocean protection, the 17 SDGs are explicated into a series of different targets to which correspond various indicators for measurement. Among the various SDGs we can identify different targets that can be linked to urban development. However, the most specific ones are indeed the targets of Goal 11 (Make cities and Human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable).

Table 3: SDG 11 - Targets and Indicators

Targets	Indicators
11.1 By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe, and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums	11.1.1 Proportion of urban population living in slums, informal settlements, or inadequate housing
11.2 By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible, and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons	11.2.1 Proportion of population that has convenient access to public transport, by sex, age, and persons with disabilities
11.3 By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated, and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries	11.3.1 Ratio of land consumption rate to population growth rate 11.3.2 Proportion of cities with a direct participation structure of civil society in urban planning and management that operate regularly and democratically
11.4 Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage	11.4.1 Total per capita expenditure on the preservation, protection and conservation of all cultural and natural heritage, by source of funding (public, private), type of heritage (cultural, natural) and level of government (national, regional, and local/municipal)
11.5 By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations	11.5.1 Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population 11.5.2 Direct economic loss in relation to global GDP, damage to critical infrastructure and number of disruptions to basic services, attributed to disasters
11.6 By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management	11.6.1 Proportion of municipal solid waste collected and managed in controlled facilities out of total municipal waste generated, by cities 11.6.2 Annual mean levels of fine particulate matter (e.g., PM2.5 and PM10) in cities (population weighted)
11.7 By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities	11.7.1 Average share of the built-up area of cities that is open space for public use for all, by sex, age and persons with disabilities 11.7.2 Proportion of persons victim of physical or sexual harassment, by sex, age, disability status and place of occurrence, in the previous 12 months

11.a Support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning	11.a.1 Number of countries that have national urban policies or regional development plans that (a) respond to population dynamics; (b) ensure balanced territorial development; and (c) increase local fiscal space
11.b By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels	11.b.1 Number of countries that adopt and implement national disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 11.b.2 Proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies
11.c Support least developed countries, including through financial and technical assistance, in building sustainable and resilient buildings utilizing local materials	<i>No suitable replacement indicator was proposed. The global statistical community is encouraged to work to develop an indicator that could be proposed for the 2025 comprehensive review. See E/CN.3/2020/2, paragraph 23.</i>

The European Union (EU) also has cities and the urban level as the focus of many of its initiatives and investments. Therefore, it is possible to also identify EU's practices of measurement of impact at the local level. Within the EU framework, attention to development, and especially local development is indeed provided within the European Cohesion Policy. Within this framework there have been different initiatives to develop a consistent methodology to assess the impact of the different programs that Structural and Cohesion Funds are organized into.

One of the most important attempts can be found in the ESPON 2020 Cooperation Programme adopted on the 26th of May 2016 by the European Commission. ESPON's goal is to promote and foster the European territorial dimension in development and cooperation. The tools used to achieve this goal are evidence, knowledge transfer and policy learning to public authorities and policy actors across the different levels of governance. Linked to the activities of the Programme are the consolidation of a European Territorial Observatory Network and the provision and policy use of pan-European comparable, systematic, and reliable territorial evidence. While the EPSON focuses mainly on integrated investments, it can still be useful to develop a general understanding of the EU's approach towards impact measurement.

In line with what has been argued in this document, the ESPON experience on indicators highlights how excessively specific and sectorial indicators, while still relevant, are unable to grasp the wide impact of integrated initiatives. Moreover, the experience also suggests that an understanding of the context is key to choosing appropriate indicators.

Another interesting resources available to assess socio-economic development within the EU's framework is EVALSED. EVALSED is an online tool that provides guidance on the evaluation of socio-economic development. EVALSED's focus is indeed on the evaluation within the EU cohesion policy. However, it can also be useful to evaluate other socio-economic development tools.

EVALSED comes after the MEANS collection which was a comprehensive set of handbooks the EU Commission published in 1999. Means handbooks have been the standard text for European evaluators until the publication of the upgraded GUIDE (EVALSED). Differently from the UN SDGs, the EU doesn't

provide a strict series of targets and indicators. Instead, the guides that are published within the European's framework relate more with the theories and practices to follow when conducting an impact assessment.

Coherently with the approach developed in this document, the guide for example highlights two core characteristics of evaluating socio-economic impact. First, the evaluation has to be useful, usable and used, which entails that it has to be an integral part of the decision making and management, as it is also an essential part of the entire process of democratic accountability. It is therefore remarked the necessity to have an impact assessment process, its links with the democratic process and its value in being conducted through the entirety of the initiative's process. Second, evaluators, commissioners and those who use the results of the analysis need to balance the available methods with the demands of pragmatism. This logic was followed in this document by detaching from an excessively theoretical approach, trying to operationalize the core characteristics of the process and principles of deliberative democracy into factors that can be measured according to the time, resources, and tools available.

Finally, while the EU doesn't seem to largely provide specific indicators to be considered, it still reinforces its guidelines with a series of specific guides and tools that can be implemented during the evaluation. This is the case of the URBACT programme. URBACT is the European Territorial Cooperation Programme destined to foster sustainable and integrated development at the urban level across Europe. As others, it is an instrument of the Cohesion Policy, financed together with the European Regional Development Fund, all EU's Member States, Norway, and Switzerland. To achieve its mission of enabling cities to cooperate and create integrated solutions to shared challenges, URBACT uses a series of tools including: networking, know-how sharing, and best practices identification.

Among the tools available, URBACT offers a series of guides to measure results. These guidelines, as they have shown to be coherent with the premises of this document, can be used during the evaluation phases of the EUARENAS project. This would allow the assessments produced within EUARENAS to be more easily compared to similar projects, increasing in this way the outreach of the results and the potential contribution to society.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

The deliverable has set the base to operationalize the theories and concepts addressed and developed by EUARENAS. In building up the EURARI index, the document has shown how deliberative democratic theories and impact assessment can benefit each other. This relation has then been used to show how the co-cycle formula manages to divide the initiatives in phases that can be easily linked to the various phases of analysis. Moreover, the participatory characteristics of both deliberative democracy and co-governance allow for the active and continuous monitoring of the initiative's objectives and impacts. Finally, starting from the assumption that parts of indicators and tools used to assess an initiative need to be tailored on the initiative itself, the document also shows how it is still possible to build indicators that can be shared across experiences in order to favor dialogue among stakeholders and shared access to results and know-how. In doing so the document also considers indicators and methodologies developed at the international and European levels. The considerations developed in this deliverable serve as a base for the ones that will follow within the same work package. In conducting its tasks of monitor and advancement of the activities and in its evaluation of the pilots the work package will apply the concepts addressed here. The assessment will be divided into two main reports. The first one will focus on the monitoring of the activities (D8.3) including therefore the preliminary phases of the assessment. The second will focus on the direct and indirect outcomes of the initiatives (8.4), finalizing in this way the impact assessment.

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