



Towards a Common European Metropolitan Agenda

Torino, 12 February, 2016

EUROPEAN METROPOLITAN AUTHORITIES



Index:

| | |
|--|----|
| Foreword | 3 |
| Turin Declaration 2016 | 4 |
| KEYNOTE ADDRESS | |
| The metropolitan challenge in Europe: governing at scale in austerity | 6 |
| PANEL DISCUSSION | |
| Effective metropolitan solutions for governance and investment | 9 |
| PANEL DISCUSSION | |
| EU, national and regional policies for metropolitan areas..... | 16 |
| PANEL DISCUSSION | |
| Metropolitan innovations: models for an EU metropolitan agenda (panel I) | 20 |
| PANEL DISCUSSION | |
| Metropolitan innovations: models for an EU metropolitan agenda (panel II)..... | 24 |
| FOR A NEW METROPOLITAN AGENDA..... | 28 |

Foreword

Metropolitan areas and large cities face great challenges that require cooperation to find common solutions. The Barcelona Metropolitan Area and the Metropolitan City of Turin launched the European Metropolitan Authorities (EMA) initiative in 2015 and 2016 respectively, further strengthening their historic partnership.

The aim of EMA is to share and discuss with political representatives of European metropolitan governments methods, initiatives, experiences and innovative projects related to metropolitan development.

Metropolitan areas generate the highest levels of wealth, competitiveness, employment, innovation and education. Often, solutions sought at the metropolitan and urban levels have proved quicker to implement, and more effective, than those shaped at the national and European levels. It is clear that strong, high-quality metropolitan governance structures are key factors to ensuring social cohesion and a good quality of life for our citizens. Governance, solid institutions, consensus and political leadership are fundamental conditions for our cities to prosper. Metropolitan areas are strategic in addressing vertical issues such as housing, sustainable mobility, and economic and social development, as well as in promoting horizontal approaches like strategic planning, internationalisation, institutional accountability, and citizen participation mechanisms.

The EMA Forum held in Turin on the 12th of February 2016 brought together the mayors, presidents and political representatives of over 30 European metropolitan areas.

EMA 2016 intended specifically to contribute to the EU Urban Agenda from a metropolitan perspective, and to ensure that this dimension is included in the initiative led by the Dutch Presidency. It is of utmost importance that metropolitan areas are taken into account in the definition and implementation of European policies and challenges in order to ensure effectiveness in areas such as Cohesion Policy, research and innovation, employment, poverty reduction, and integration of refugees in cities.

Initiatives like EMA foster partnership and mutual trust, and create shared goals in responding to the needs of metropolitan stakeholders. Ultimately, these processes generate benefits for all. The declaration adopted in Turin stresses the role that metropolitan cities play in development and social cohesion, and the positive

effects they have on their surrounding areas. The declaration urges the European Union to acknowledge metropolitan cities as strategic partners in the definition and implementation of the EU Urban Agenda and in maximising the impact of European funding.

European metropolitan authorities must work in partnership with each other and with the support of national and regional authorities, as well as European and international institutions and networks, to address common challenges.

The third edition will be held in Lyon in 2017. EMA 2017 will be a key opportunity to continue this political debate, to increase the number of participating metropolitan governments and to strengthen the relationship between them, also with a strong connection with the messages of Habitat III. It will also continue to be an opportunity to advance specific solutions to the challenges faced by EMA partners.

Realising that the EU's future is intertwined with that of metropolitan cities, we must continue working together for more coherent and decisive metropolitan policy.

Piero Fassino

Mayor of the City Turin and President of the Metropolitan City of Turin

Alfred Bosch i Pascual

Vice President of the Barcelona Metropolitan Area

Turin Declaration, February 12, 2016



Mayors, Presidents and Political representatives of the European Metropolitan cities and areas gathered in Turin for the European Metropolitan Authorities Forum 2016 (EMA) agree that:

1. Metropolitan areas are primary drivers of the global economy, the engines of European economic growth and the keystones of national competitiveness. Moreover, metropolitan areas are fundamental for national development and social cohesion policies.
2. Metropolitan areas are centres of job creation, investment attraction, research and innovation, education, environmental sustainability and resilience policy, cultural and creative arts, migration and social inclusion; as such they need to be completely engaged in these policy areas to meet the needs of their citizens.
3. Effective metropolitan governance has a positive impact on the greater city-region, fostering economic growth and social development at a regional scale.
4. Metropolitan authorities must be considered strategic partners in defining the European Urban Agenda and must form a cornerstone of the overall framework of that agenda. Furthermore, we urge the EU to move quickly to adopt this Urban Agenda and recognise metropolitan authorities as direct beneficiaries of European funding dedicated to metropolitan policies.
5. The 'Pact of Amsterdam' represents an invaluable opportunity for the deliberation of a European Urban Agenda and we urge the European Council to adopt this 'Pact' and its goals next June.
6. National and regional governments must recognise metropolitan authorities and engage with them to develop policy at the metropolitan level.
7. In a globalised world metropolitan areas must approach common challenges through shared best practices and joint action. In order to foster mutual learning EMA organisers will cultivate new collaborations with the European forums and networks for local authorities, including EUROCITIES, METREX, MEDCITIES, METROPOLIS and the Committee of the Regions of the European Union. Meanwhile, EMA organisers will seek to foster engagement with non-EU metropolitan areas that share common economic development and social inclusion objectives.
8. The European metropolitan authorities who gathered in Barcelona in 2015 and in Turin in 2016 wish to continue their cooperation. The next EMA Forum will take place in Lyon, France in 2017. The Metropolitan City of Turin and Metropolitan Area of Barcelona commit to a technical secretariat to support the planning of EMA 2017.



European Metropolitan Areas 2016

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| 1. Amsterdam | 17. Lyon / Metropolitan Area Grand Lyon | 28. Tirana |
| 2. Barcelona Metropolitan Area | 18. Madrid | 29. Turin |
| 3. Metropolitan City of Bari | 19. Metropolitan City of Milan / Regional Council of Lombardy | 30. Vienna |
| 4. Bilbao | 20. Nice / Metropolitan Area Nice-Côte d'Azur | 31. Warsaw |
| 5. Bologna | 21. Oslo - Åkershus | 32. Zagreb |
| 6. Brussels | 22. Metropolitan City of Palermo | |
| 7. Budapest | 23. Paris / Metropolitan Area Grand Paris | Networks |
| 8. Catania | 24. Porto / Metropolitan Area of Porto | Eurocities |
| 9. Cologne | 25. Poznan | MedCities |
| 10. Metropolitan City of Florence | 26. Stuttgart Metropol Region | Metrex |
| 11. Metropolitan City of Genoa | 27. Thessalonica | Metropolis |
| 12. Hannover | | International Organisations |
| 13. Helsinki-Uusimaa Region | | OECD |
| 14. Metropolitan Area of Lisbon | | Dutch Presidency of the EU |
| 15. Liverpool | | Committee of the Regions |
| 16. Łódź | | |

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

The metropolitan challenge in Europe: governing at scale in austerity



Michael Parkinson
University of Liverpool

Why do EMAs matter?

During the past decade I think we have won the intellectual battle and demonstrated that city regions matter to national economies and to the European economy. We recognise that agglomeration and urban assets are crucial to successful modern economies. During the past two decades many city regions in many countries have emerged from a period of decline to find new economic, political and cultural roles. Governments, the private sector and researchers increasingly see them as the dynamos of national economies not economic liabilities - 'the wealth of nations'. City regions have many assets which make them more significant in an increasingly globalised world. They are not drags on our competitiveness to be bailed out by public funds but the essential drivers of a modern, global economy.

What is the goal of urban policy?

My work shows that as governments search for policy levers to encourage further growth they inevitably end up focussing upon cities. Urban policy is not simply about poor places and poor people but about the overall performance of the whole urban system. And its primary focus should be economic place making. I would argue that the aim of urban policy is threefold:

- maximise the economic and social performance of individual cities
- create an efficient, balanced sustainable national urban system
- by encouraging the drivers of urban success

What are the drivers of urban success?

Seven things really matter for urban success: economic diversity; innovation in firms and organisations; human capital and skilled workforce; connectivity - internal and external; place quality - social, cultural, environmental; governance, leadership and the strategic capacity to create and deliver long term development; decentralisation of decision-making powers and deconcentration of investment.

In my view the key policy challenge is to create the conditions which give cities more of these assets. I would like to emphasise three themes from this work. The importance of mature political leadership. The importance of working at the city-region scale. And the importance of national and European policies in encouraging high performing national economies by increasing the numbers of high performing cities, in particular beyond national capitals.

What role for strategic leadership?

Successful cities have the strategic capacity to exploit their assets. Local leadership is crucial to developing new economic futures for cities, their businesses and residents. Successful cities need stable political and administrative leadership, long term commitment to strategic agendas, the ability to reconcile shifting agendas, the willingness to take calculated risks and the capacity to actively involve public and private sector partners.

What work at metropolitan scale?

One of the crucial questions for those leading and managing a city region is - where does it begin and end physically? Where are its natural boundaries? Local authority boundaries increasingly make little sense in a globalised economy. Increasingly, decisions have to be taken on wider boundaries which more accurately reflect the real functional economy rather than the narrower administrative boundaries of the municipal city. As the European experience suggests, city regions are a better level at which to make economies operate.

What are the barriers to metropolitan working?

The above means that we increasingly have to plan for, manage and run government at a wider city region level rather than a local authority level. Creating delivery

systems to do this is one of the trickiest but most necessary jobs of city regional leaders. The politics of turf are often the most difficult to handle. Typical barriers to successful city regional working include:

- Lack of vision;
- Institutional fragmentation;
- Historic tensions between places;
- Personal rivalries, between elected leaders;
- Political party rivalries, where different parts of the territory are controlled by different political parties;
- Economic rivalries, where places in the same space compete for public and private investment;
- Complacency about the area's prospects and people don't see the need to plan at a bigger territorial level.

What makes for working successfully across a city region?

Tackling these barriers typically requires political compromise which in turn requires good leadership. It needs:

- Cooperation;
- Tolerance - the larger city must not bully the smaller places;
- Trust - there must be political trust that all places will benefit;
- Time - it is not an easy nor a quick fix;
- Delivery - success benefits from delivering successful common projects;
- Capacity - robust delivery systems help decision making;
- Incentives - especially from higher level governments help places work together.

Why encourage metropolitan areas beyond the capital city?

The global recession and Eurozone crisis have encouraged a debate about whether countries perform better if they concentrate their investment in their capitals or spread investment across a wider set of cities. My work on Europe provides substantial evidence that decentralisation of decision-making, deconcentration of investment and a strong set of second tier cities help drive strong national economic performance. Continuing over-investment in the capital and under-investment in the second tier cities in the long run will be unsustainable and lead to economic under-performance.

So what messages for national and European policy makers?

The individual circumstances of countries, regions and city regions will vary and so will policy responses. But some general principles to guide future territorial investment are clear. Specifically governments should invest more in second tier cities when: (i) the gap with capitals is large and growing (ii) the business infrastructure of second tier cities is weak because of national underinvestment and (iii) there is clear evidence about the negative externalities of capital city growth. This is a challenge to city decision makers to exploit the powers and resources they have. But it is a greater challenge to national government to release the powers and resources from the national to the city level if we're to increase national competitiveness and close the gap between the capital and the rest.

So national governments and the European Commission have a clear obligation to invest in cities beyond the capital, to have more explicit national policies for cities and to encourage the growth of successful metropolitan areas if we are to have a successful Europe. The European Commission in recent years has lost some of that focus upon cities and metropolitan areas. It must be revived. In particular we must hope that the Pact of Amsterdam will have the political clout and resources to refocus European energies on the contribution that metropolitan areas can and do make to a successful and dynamic Europe.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Effective metropolitan solutions for governance and investment



Rüdiger Ahrend

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

The discussion of the session touched upon which structures of metropolitan governance work well and where room for improvement remains, also highlighting experiences from recent metropolitan governance reform initiatives.

Anette Soli (County Mayor of Akershus) and Hanna Elise Marcussen (Vice Mayor of the City of Oslo) reported on the Oslo functional urban area from the perspective of, respectively, the county surrounding the city and the core city. This duality of views was particularly interesting. While in some areas interests were somewhat divergent (for example, Oslo having a somewhat stricter view on individual car use in the city centre than the surrounding county) both stressed the excellent cooperation between Oslo and Akershus. Gabor Bagdy (Deputy Mayor of the City of Budapest) reflected on the challenges for a metropolitan area that hosts almost a third of the national population, noting an increased importance of politics in such a situation. Helder de Sousa Silva (Vice President of the Lisbon

Metropolitan Area) reported on successful developments in the Lisbon Metropolitan Area and its particular challenges. Jean Ives Sécheresse (Deputy Mayor of the City of Lyon and Councillor of the Metropolitan Area of Lyon) described the positive developments in the Lyon Metropolitan Area in the context of the French reform of Metropolitan governance. Pierre Mansat (Head of Metropolitan Issues at Grand Paris, City of Paris) and Eugenio Cominci (Vice mayor of the Metropolitan City of Milano) both reported on the on-going ambitious metropolitan governance reforms that are taking place in their cities and countries.

The metropolitan experiences discussed in the session were extremely rich and generated three main conclusions. First, in some countries there is a greater culture of metropolitan cooperation than in others. Yet, even in those same countries, there can be significant variation in the level of metropolitan cooperation from one metropolitan area to the other.

Second, an ingredient that greatly facilitates metropolitan governance reform is a long history of cooperation between municipalities. Having experience in cooperation working and bringing tangible benefits, as well as higher levels of mutual trust are important ingredients in attempts to further deepen cooperation. This obviously does not imply that in the absence of such a history attempts to deepen metropolitan governance should not be undertaken, but it may take more time to achieve desired outcomes.



Anette Solli
County Mayor of Akershus



‘Our Plan for Innovation and Entrepreneurship was an invitation to local actors engaged in sustainability, value-creation and international competitiveness to collaborate. For the first time, we have been able to make a truly holistic and coordinated effort towards several joint strategies that strengthen the metropolitan area.’

Anette Solli spoke about the Metropolitan Plan for Innovation and Entrepreneurship as a good example of metropolitan collaboration.

Solli began with an introduction to the governance structure of the Oslo Metropolitan Area, which includes the City of Oslo and the County of Akershus, and its most important challenges: managing population growth and sustaining economic development.

The Oslo Metropolitan Area is experiencing among the highest population growth of any metropolitan area in Europe. Managing such intensive and rapid demographic growth requires investments in transportation infrastructure, strategic land-use planning and open space conservation, improvements in energy efficiency and social inclusion policies.

Economically the metropolitan area needs to bolster competitiveness and adaptability by strengthening its innovation ecosystem. Solli highlighted talent attraction as the biggest challenge in doing so considering over 50% of innovative companies report difficulties attracting skilled workers.

Third, a good national legal framework that both requests and facilitates cooperation of municipalities is an important ingredient for successful cooperation at the metropolitan scale.

Taken together, this implies that successfully instituting metropolitan governance may be easier in some situations than in others, but that there certainly is no exclusivity or cultural incompatibility. Effective solutions for metropolitan governance can be found and made to work in any country with the right incentives and if given sufficient time.

The recently adopted Plan for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (PIE) intends to face these challenges head on and represents one of the most significant outputs of the close collaboration between the City of Oslo and the County of Akershus.

Taking into account regional economic restructuring, the PIE underlines the importance of planning at the metropolitan scale in developing effective solutions.

The PIE represents a milestone in metropolitan planning given the participation of the business, research and knowledge communities at the national, regional and municipal levels. In the County Mayor’s opinion, this cooperation can be considered the most innovative element of the planning process since it succeeded in overcoming traditional barriers between academia, the business community and the public sector that historically contributed to a lack of regional innovation. According to Solli, the PIE ‘was an invitation to those engaged in sustainability, value-creation and international competitiveness to collaborate. For the first time, we have been able to make a truly holistic and coordinated effort towards several joint strategies to strengthen the metropolitan area’.



Hanna Elise Marcussen
Vice Mayor of the City of Oslo



‘The City of Oslo and the County of Akershus joined forces to develop shared targets and tasks, particularly in the areas of transportation, economic development and social housing.’

The Regional Plan for Transport and Land Use (RPTLU) is one of the most significant results of the traditional approach to cooperation between the City of Oslo and the County of Akershus.

In the face of rapid population growth, congestion and deteriorating air quality due to increased ownership of private vehicles, national government requested the City of Oslo and the County of Akershus cooperate to jointly develop the RPTLU. The plan responds to these challenges by focusing on transportation infrastructure and key services including education, healthcare and housing.

The Vice Mayor underlined that collaboration between the City of Oslo and the County of Akershus dates back

to the ‘90s when joint investment programmes were developed and implemented. Collaboration continued until in 2008 a joint Public Transport Authority was created. This history of collaboration laid the groundwork for the RPTLU planning process.

The development of the RPTLU required ‘the City of Oslo and the County of Akershus to join forces to develop shared targets and tasks, particularly in the areas of transportation, economic development and social housing’. A joint Planning Secretariat managed an engagement process that involved political actors, stakeholders and citizens in numerous public hearings.



Gábor Bagdy
Deputy Mayor of the City of Budapest



‘Sometimes reasonable but rigid European rules can have unintended consequences.’

Gábor Bagdy began with two preliminary remarks regarding the national governance framework and then discussed the possible breakup of the Central Hungary region in the near future.

The Hungarian urban system is dominated by the capital city, Budapest, while all other cities are much smaller and can be considered secondary (Hungary’s second largest city, Debrecen, has a population of only 200,000). Dialogue and cooperation between national government, the City of Budapest, secondary cities and rural areas is only just beginning to take shape. The ability of Budapest to collaborate effectively with rural areas will be tested on the occasion of the World Aquatic Championship in 2017 and in the development of the candidacy for the 2024 Summer Olympics.

Furthermore, Hungary has only limited experience in local government, with decentralization entering the political agenda only in the ‘90s. These structural, political and institutional characteristics undermine effective metropolitan governance. In this context, metropolitan governance may be further weakened by current European Union policy.

The Metropolitan Area of Budapest extends to the County of Pest which covers an area of nearly 6,400 square kilometres and nearly 1.2 million inhabitants. When Hungary joined the European Union in 2004 the City of Budapest and the County of Pest were classified as a single region within the EU framework and qualified for EU assistance. Over the past decade,

however, the region's economy has outgrown the qualifications for EU funding assistance. Upon close inspection, though, economic prosperity within the region is distributed very unevenly: Budapest is much wealthier than the rest of the County of Pest.

In this context, the County of Pest is paradoxically incentivized to seek to break away from the City of Budapest in order to once again qualify for EU support. Bagdy therefore emphasizes that 'sometimes reasonable but rigid European rules can have unintended consequences'.



Hélder de Sousa Silva

Vice-president of the Lisbon Metropolitan Area



'Working together will be essential in facing challenges related to demographics, migration and security which are increasingly affecting Europe.'

The Lisbon Metropolitan Area consists of 18 municipalities and covers an area of nearly 1.600 square kilometres with a population of 2.9 million (nearly a quarter of the national population). 30 % of Portuguese businesses are located in the Lisbon Metropolitan Area and, with 150 km of Atlantic coastline, the Lisbon Metropolitan Area is one of the primary gateways to Europe from the Atlantic Ocean. The area has a high potential for the development of economies around outdoor sport and leisure activities and efforts to increase tourism have produced positive results.

The tortuous process leading to the creation of metropolitan areas in Portugal began in 1991 with the establishment of an inter-municipal structure. Seven years later, in 1998, a referendum for the constitution of metropolitan areas failed. Then, in 2003, the Lisbon and Porto metropolitan areas were created as semi-official structures but it was not until the reform of 2013 that they were formally recognized as administrative areas.

The Metropolitan Area is composed of three organs: the Metropolitan Council which serves as the executive

organ and is composed of the 18 mayors of the municipalities that it integrates; the Metropolitan Executive Committee which serves as the legislative organ and is composed of 5 members elected by the municipal assemblies; and the Strategic Council for Metropolitan Development which is an advisory board composed of 55 members. A reform is currently under consideration which would introduce direct elections for the members of the three organs.

Mr de Sousa Silva highlighted the Lisbon Metropolitan Area's three strategic priorities: transportation and mobility; accessing European funding; and inter-municipal collaboration. Mr de Sousa Silva underlined that consolidating metropolitan governance and fostering national and European networks are critical to successfully implement these priorities.

He concluded by stating that 'working together will be essential in facing challenges related to demographics, migration and security which are increasingly affecting Europe'.



Jean-Yves Sécheresse

Deputy Mayor of the City of Lyon and
Councillor of the Metropolitan Area of Lyon



‘We are committed to institutional innovation aimed at creating public policy that is clearer, better geared to local challenges and more streamlined.’

France has a long history of cooperation among municipalities, albeit within a strongly centralized national framework. Recent reforms in 2014 introduced important innovations in the cooperation within and among different levels of government. In accordance with this law, and thanks to the political initiative of the Mayor of Lyon, the Metropolitan Area of Lyon replaced the Local Urban Community in January 2015. By joining forces with the County of Rhône a new local administrative unit was created that is unique in France. This institutional innovation is ‘aimed at creating public policy that is clearer, better geared to local challenges and more streamlined’.

With a highly active community, 9,000 staff members and a budget of 3.3 billion euro, this new institutional level has a very broad mandate. As Mr Sécheresse put it, the challenge is ‘to establish links between the human and the urban’. Thus, the

Metropolitan Area of Lyon is trying to integrate competences in social fields, traditionally belonging to Counties, with those of the former Urban Community concerning urban planning and economic development. To date, the Metropolitan Area of Lyon has focused on social housing policy and increasing attractiveness for foreign enterprise.

Moreover, the Metropolitan Area of Lyon is committed to collaboration at a larger scale, that of the so-called *Pôle Métropolitain*, which consists of 143 municipalities covering an area of over 1,600 square kilometres and with a population of 1.9 million. The *Pôle Métropolitain* development strategy aims to improve mobility, foster employment, protect natural spaces and farmland and provide rich cultural programming. Public institutions approach these broad objectives through the engagement of private actors, academia and research bodies.



Pierre Mansat

Head of Metropolitan Issues at Grand Paris,
City of Paris



‘It is time for a political governance in metropolitan areas.’

While recognizing that operational and functional governance experiences have already produced significant results in fields such as transportation and mobility, Mr Mansat began by focusing on the need for a political governance in metropolitan areas. Mansat argued that it is time for a great leap forward in political metropolitan governance in order to develop shared strategic frameworks for all actions and policies – and Paris is rising to this challenge.

Firstly, in 2009 Paris constituted the Paris Métropole Joint Studies Association (*Syndicat mixte Paris Métropole*) that brings together 212 local authorities and stakeholders who are committed to developing joint responses to the social, economic and environmental challenges facing

their territories. Currently, the main areas of interest are transportation, housing and economic development.

Secondly, Paris is working to promote the concept that metropolitan governance is not the sum of the various initiatives of individual local authorities but rather means a shared political vision and process. The candidacy for the Summer Olympics in 2024 will be a key test of the ability to develop and implement such a shared metropolitan vision.

Finally, Paris is committed to strengthening a sense of ‘metropolitan identity’, by engaging residents in participatory processes around metropolitan issues.



Eugenio Comincini,
Vice Mayor of the Metropolitan City of Milano



‘At the moment, the future of Italian Metropolitan Cities is decided at the political level: the more political authorities are able to interact with all the different levels of government, the more Metropolitan Cities will gain the appropriate role and weight.’

Mr Comincini began by summarising the process establishing Metropolitan Cities in Italy and underlining that this process opens up huge opportunities but also presents significant challenges. Specifically, a lack of clarity around public finance issues is complicating this process, causing policy makers to invest a great deal of time clarifying obscure aspects of the law and searching for effective solutions. Peer to peer learning networks across metropolitan cities are therefore particularly useful in this embryonic phase.

Comincini went on to focus on the experience of the Metropolitan City of Milan in developing its strategic plan, a process which has seen the engagement of local stakeholders including representatives from the 134

municipalities and the Region of Lombardy as well as key socio-economic actors. The main issues that the Metropolitan City of Milan is addressing in the strategic planning process concern local public transport and mobility, spatial planning and managing European funds. Comincini highlights the need to empower Metropolitan Cities through a stronger political role at the national and European levels.

Finally, Comincini emphasised that ‘at the moment, the future of Italian Metropolitan Cities is decided at the political level. Yet the more that the political authorities are able to interact with all the different levels of government, the more Metropolitan Cities will gain their appropriate role and weight’.



Nicholas Beets,
Dutch Urban Envoy, Dutch Ministry of Interior and Kingdom Affairs



‘There are clear similarities between the EMA initiative and the Pact of Amsterdam effort: strength in cooperation, building partnerships, knowledge exchange, and the involvement of urban areas in EU policymaking.’

Urban areas are at the forefront of Europe’s challenges and it is in cities where EU policies and regulation touches the lives of Europe’s citizens most directly.

The aim of the Urban Agenda is to make the EU “urban proof.” To do this we are creating the Amsterdam Pact, an operational framework containing priority themes, joint actions and a working method for joint partnerships. The partnerships are the engine for the future and will give cities more influence in the European Union. They represent a new form of multilevel cooperation between stakeholders.

Thematic partnerships focus on priority issues. They are concrete, case-based and result-oriented. Partnerships

include Cities, member States, the European Commission and other stakeholders. The Netherlands is already facilitating the first 4 of these partnerships in order to demonstrate the value of doing these partnerships.

The aim of the partnerships is to formulate proposals for better regulation, better access to funding and better knowledge exchange. And the partnerships are all about cities. Better yet, all about cities and their surroundings.

Through a bottom-up approach the urban agenda has identified a number of themes: jobs and skills in the local economy; urban poverty; housing; inclusion of migrants and refugees; sustainable land and resource use; circular economy; climate adaptation; energy transition; urban

mobility; air quality; digital transition; innovative and responsible public procurement. The four pilot partnerships are focused on urban poverty, inclusion of migrants and refugees, sustainable land and resource use, and air quality. These challenges are not cast in stone – they are just the first ones. Over time issues will be added and withdrawn.

The partnerships were established by asking CEMR, Eurocities, Urbact and the CoR to suggest a city that is a connected to a network that is already working on these themes. A fifth institution may also be added to the partnerships. Member States have been selected via the Urban Development Group. Most importantly, the European Commission is a partner. From the very first meetings the Commission sent representatives from their various Directorates-General – not just a single-issue representative

The first partnership I want to highlight is that on housing. It is coordinated by Slovakia and the objective is to ensure access to affordable, quality housing for everyone. The partners are Vienna, Scottish Cities Alliance, Riga and possibly a Finnish city, and the member states are Slovakia, Slovenia, Latvia, Luxemburg, Germany and the Netherlands. Others members of the partnership include the European Commission (various DGs), Eurocities, European Investment Bank and International Tenants Association. The partnership members have been meeting since December.

The partnership on urban poverty is led by France and Belgium. The objective is to reduce poverty and improve the inclusion of people in poverty or at risk of poverty in deprived neighborhoods.

The fourth pilot partnership is on the inclusion of migrants and is led by Amsterdam. It is an interesting model because it is a partnership not coordinated by a member State but by a City, and Amsterdam is taking quite a heavy burden on its shoulders with such a relevant partnership. This is an experiment to determine whether it is better for partnerships to be led by member States or Cities.

The results of the partnerships will be presented at the informal ministerial meeting on urban affairs on the 30th of May where we hope to seal the Pact of Amsterdam. Before the end of 2015 a first draft of the pact of Amsterdam was circulated to 38 different parties: member states, the European Commission, Eurocities, CEMR – and everyone except for just two parties responded. The text is currently being updated and on the 16th of March there will be another round of presentation and feedback, and so on until the text is finalized.

The most significant milestone is the 21st of June when the Pact of Amsterdam, which will have been agreed upon in the informal meeting of Ministers of urban affairs, will be endorsed by the European Council. At that point we will have a more binding European Urban Agenda than what we have had so far.

There are clear similarities between the EMA initiative and the Pact of Amsterdam effort: strength in cooperation, building partnerships, knowledge exchange, and the involvement of urban areas in EU policymaking. They are very much aligned. What is nice to see is that the EMA Forum organises itself with the same drive, which is to develop an urban agenda in which cities can make a difference for Europe – not one in which Europe is asked to make a difference for cities.

How do we integrate the metropolitan issue in the urban agenda and get from declaration to actions to partnership? The best way is for members of the EMA Forum to connect to their Ministries of urban affairs, which are involved in the meeting on the 30th of May. Or perhaps even more importantly connect with their Ministries of foreign affairs, which will sit and agree on the Council conclusions on June 21st. It will also be key to connect with your networks, thereby influencing the future partnerships. However, it is important that cities participate in the partnerships not only as themselves but as representative of European urban networks.

PANEL DISCUSSION

EU, national and regional policies for metropolitan areas



Marco Cremaschi
Sciences Po

Cities in Europe occupy a unique position; as we are often reminded, they organized regional spaces even before nation states coalesce. By the turn of the millennium, however, the traditional spatial order of European nation-states had started to vanish. The hierarchical political system that framed cities since the Middle Age is changing.

The emerging metropolitan network decouples these old social and spatial arrangements. The comeback of cities is highly selective. The contributors to the panel insisted on the diversity, density, and scale of the urban network: it consists of a number of vigorous cities, middle sized, and large urban regions. Because of the variety of processes at play, this dense network of cities changes in different ways.

In fact, the development trend of European cities is uneven, with some cities shrinking or others developing. Only a few cities are involved and the dispersion process is massive; metropolitan organization is often an uneven process. Metropolises result in fact both from sprawl and agglomerative forces, and they are made by built-up areas along with agricultural lands. People live and travel daily across increasingly complex urban regions.

As a consequence, multilevel relations reveal plenty of tensions and innovation. A new metropolitan language is emerging at the intersection of this complex web of arrangements. But not surprisingly, all metropolitan narratives hint at a contradictory love affair with regional and national governments.

Where does the Urban Agenda stand, however? The EU has been supporting the regions for decades aiming mostly to drive local development. The EU Commission sticks to a double narrative of growth and cohesion, fostering a mixed set of policies. Member states have successfully resisted all effort to go further. In fact, a far larger chunk of EU funds goes to agriculture than to urban issues and social policies. There are plenty of reasons for this bifurcated approach: the EU had to look after competition and cohesion at the same time for political and social concerns.

Is it still the case after the crisis of 2008? This is a different crisis compared to the one in the 80s, when European policy first dealt with urban issues. Many agree

that the metropolises of Europe do not have to rest on the old twofold model. In fact, metropolitan cities mix rural and urban issues by definition. They concentrate the rich and the poor. They assemble different landscapes. They produce innovation, foster social cohesion, and aim at the environmental protection through the same policy instruments. Thus, they are already beyond the EU punctilious approach of partitioning of funds, objectives, and directorates.

Metropolises have to cooperate with Regions. This can be mutually rewarding if they focus on a new development framework, well beyond old regional policies. If they do, they would provide a crucial experimental laboratory, which might get the EU beyond the crisis.



Nicola Schelling

Director of Stuttgart Region and President of Metrex



‘Cities cannot develop in isolation from their surrounding areas.’

Nicola Schelling represents two institutions that in last 20 years have developed effective collaborations on a number of fronts: the Metrex Network and the Stuttgart Region.

Metrex, the network of European Metropolitan Regions and Areas, provides a platform for the exchange of best practices and is a partner to European institutions, the research community, governmental organisations and other networks. Metrex deals with spatial planning and related fields such as transportation and economic development.

The Stuttgart Region is an association of local authorities which includes the City of Stuttgart and the five

surrounding municipalities. It was founded in 1994 to promote coordinated development in the region and it is the first region in Germany to have its own directly elected parliamentary assembly.

Based on the belief that ‘cities cannot develop in isolation from their surrounding areas’, Stuttgart Region is committed to connecting with other local institutions to increase international competitiveness and coordinate collaboration between local municipalities and districts.

The Stuttgart Region performs important tasks in the fields of local public transportation, regional planning and business development.

**Christian Tordo**

Deputy Mayor of the City of Nice



‘It is particularly important to strengthen the dialogue between regional and metropolitan levels to build consensus on mid-term projects.’

Nice Côte d’Azur is a unique example of a “bottom-up metropolis”: it was established in 2009 without any legislative mandate and thanks to the initiative of the municipalities themselves.

In Tordo’s opinion, four main factors encouraged this voluntary process. The first was the Mayor of Nice’s strong political leadership. Second was the commitment of various administrative authorities (Region, State and Nice Côte d’Azur Metropolitan Authority) to boost economic development by incentivising collaboration. The third factor was the solidarity between the coastal and mountain areas, which have a history of successful

cooperation. And, finally, the willingness to engage in partnerships, such as the candidacy for the Winter Olympic Games of 2018, contributed to a shared territorial vision for the future.

In a significant move to support metropolitan collaboration, a recent national law assigns shared competences on economic development to both Regions and Metropolitan Authorities, ‘thus making it particularly important to strengthen the dialogue and build consensus on mid-term projects’. The experience gained by the Nice Côte d’Azur Metropolitan Authority will go a long way towards building the necessary partnerships.

**Michał Olszewski,**

Deputy Mayor of the City of Warsaw



‘With the use of flexible instruments, much more than through standardised operational frameworks, territories can face common challenges and develop shared solutions.’

Mr Olszewski cautioned the need to adopt a flexible approach to European metropolitan policy, especially in consideration of the needs of highly centralized countries such as Poland where local and metropolitan issues have only begun emerging very recently.

Warsaw has been able to coordinate service delivery at the metropolitan level through a bottom-up approach. National government, for its part, tries to standardise these experiences through rigid operational schemes, which are often incompatible with territorial characteristics and competences.

Recently, after years of lobbying at the European level, Warsaw was finally successful in attaining

valuable financial instruments, such as the Integrated Territorial Investment instrument of the new Cohesion Policy, to promote metropolitan integration. However, implementation is challenged by the rigidity of national operational frameworks.

‘With adequate instruments territories can face common challenges and develop appropriate solutions. But such instruments need to be flexible.’ For this reason Olszewski concluded by asserting that ‘the need for flexibility is stronger than the need for standardized national frameworks’.



Raffaele Cattaneo

Member of the Committee of the Regions and
President of the Regional Council of Lombardy



‘It is the cities, the metropolitan areas and the regions that shape Europe. An EU Urban Agenda developed through and driven by a bottom-up approach, is really necessary.’

Raffaele Cattaneo spoke in his capacity as Member of the European Committee of the Regions, the consultative body whose mission it is to involve regional and local authorities in the EU decision-making process.

Mr Cattaneo asserted the need for an EU policy for metropolitan areas, arguing that ‘it is the cities, the metropolitan areas and the regions that shape Europe, much more than national governments’. This is why the Committee of the Regions strongly supports the EU Urban Agenda.

He discussed different models for a policy agenda and encouraged a bottom-up approach, that is, an EU Urban Agenda led by cities, metropolitan areas and regions. He went on to outline four primary goals for the EU Urban Agenda. The first goal aims to unlock the potential of cities,

metropolitan areas and regions and strengthen a bottom-up approach by supporting the exchange of experiences and dialogue among local authorities. Secondly, an EU Urban Agenda must improve the regulatory framework by reinforcing the effectiveness of such tools as territorial and urban impact assessments. Thirdly, the agenda should support integration of EU funds and enhance integrated instruments such as CLLD, Community-Led Local Development and ITI, Integrated Territorial Investment. Finally, the EU must seek to foster knowledge exchange among all of the institutional actors involved.

Lastly, Cattaneo underlined the importance of making an EU Urban Agenda valuable not only for big cities, metropolitan areas and regions but also for the small and medium-sized cities which characterise the EU urban system.



Alfred Bosch

Vice President of the Barcelona
Metropolitan Area



‘To overcome the impasse generated by tensions between the different levels of government, it is necessary to start from people’s social needs.’

Alfred Bosch discussed the complexity of multilevel governance in Spain, which is characterised by high tensions between national, regional and local governments on both political and economic levels.

While Barcelona and its metropolitan area were always on sound footing with the Catalonia Region, tension and conflict tended to characterize relations with the State.

In recent years, as Catalonia experienced rapid economic growth, the independence movement has also gained new impetus. Though the Spanish government is trying to make Catalonia “fall in love” with it, the State at the same time consistently under-finances the regional government.

This complex system of relations has negative effects

above all on citizens and their needs. It is for this reason that Bosch argues ‘it is necessary to start from people and their social needs, not the strict limits of legal powers’.

European Metropolitan Areas should not wait for the EU funds to develop solidarity between the main cities and their surrounding less developed cities. The Barcelona Metropolitan Area is already doing that with job creation, housing and social policies.

On the other side, he argued that we have no excuses to not organise ourselves as European Metropolitan Cities and create a dialogue with the European Commission offering our collaboration in the definition of urban policies. This kind of meetings, forums and networks help metropolitan areas and cities become one stronger voice.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Metropolitan innovations: models for an EU metropolitan agenda (panel I)



Peter Austin

Eurocities Metropolitan Areas Working Group

A European Metropolitan Agenda must take account of the variety of circumstances and contexts for cities and their functional areas. Even in situations where metropolitan collaboration is not being encouraged, cities should seize and build on their democratic legitimacy to set up arrangements for shared agendas and joint working with stakeholders across their regions. A general conclusion was the need for strong and long-term dialogue with stakeholders, especially with authorities at all levels of government in the region and with the general public where possible. By making use of EU policies and tools, especially ITI, the number of cities' experiences in metropolitan collaboration will increase. This will lead to more good practices to learn from and help move the metropolitan approach in functional urban areas into the mainstream of national and international frameworks for key strategic policy issues. The innovation capacity of this snowball effect should be recognized and supported at the European level and in arenas such as the EMA to build on the knowledge and networks.

The presentation from the representative of Bilbao focused on urban transformation within the city, and the need to strengthen the metropolitan perspective. Many urban projects can be expected to influence, and be influenced by, neighbouring communities beyond the city boundary. The best way to determine this is for the city to initiate and develop a dialogue with the neighbouring municipalities and/or regional authorities.

The Mayor of Hannover presented a convincing narrative with good examples of how the core city has held broad participation processes with interest groups, neighbouring communities and authorities, as well as the general public. In fact Hannover's approach to developing a dialogue with the public about metropolitan issues seems to be a very innovative approach. This gives both stability to the metropolitan agenda and a depth of support and understanding that can be needed to make hard decisions at the level of the city-region.

Councillor Lina Liakou from Thessaloniki explained how her city had taken a unilateral approach to developing an arena for metropolitan collaboration, despite being discouraged by the Greek national government. Given the severe financial and social hardship in the region, the need to think and act at the strategic level was felt to be acute, so that a “guerrilla” action was taken to set up a strategic dialogue to harness the resources of stakeholders across the functional urban area.

Catania is a relative newcomer to the network of Italian Metropolitan Cities. As Mayor of the second city in Sicily, Enzo Bianco expressed his warm enthusiasm for engaging with the municipalities in the functional urban area. He pointed out a range of key issues, including economic development and transport, where there are big opportunities to strengthen the city’s performance, at the same time as sharing the benefits with the wider area. Bianco also referred to his background in the EU Committee of the Regions, where the importance of the metropolitan perspective is also gaining ground, not least

in view of the Integrated Territorial Investment funding under the current financial programme. He emphasized the need to continue to communicate the importance of the metropolitan dimension and to show good examples from across Europe.

The Mayor of Poznan expressed his strong commitment to adopt a fresh, metropolitan approach to developing his city and its wider functional urban area, also in fields where this had not existed before. Poznan has already quite good regional transport collaboration and joint economic development strategies. During the past decades, land owners and developers have exploited weak policy-coordination, leading to strong population growth in the communities surrounding the city with heavy commuting and car-based shopping as a result. The need to coordinate activities to further encourage economic growth in the region was very clear. The benefits of the EU Integrated Territorial Investments were anticipated in the next few years, in accordance with priorities in dialogue with leaders in the surrounding municipalities.



Enzo Bianco

Mayor of the City of Catania and Chief of the Italian Delegation at the Committee of the Regions



‘We have to think about metropolitan areas even within short and medium-term policy framework.’

Mr Bianco discussed the strategic development of the Metropolitan Area of Catania as well as EU strategy for metropolitan areas.

Catania has two primary metropolitan development strategies. The first attempts to valorise Catania’s large youth population, a long tradition in higher education and a significant presence of university students, in becoming a research and innovation centre (the “Etna Valley” project is one of the most important initiatives in this field). The second metropolitan development strategy seeks to valorise the massive inflow of immigrants and refugees. Catania has proven capable of successfully managing this population influx and intends to improve

local infrastructure and put in place adequate policies to face this humanitarian emergency.

Mr Bianco went on to address the EU metropolitan agenda, ‘focusing specifically on the need for short and mid-term strategies for those metropolitan areas, including some Italian ones, which face substantial obstacles towards development’. In these particular areas strategies must be able to immediately improve quality of life. To do that the EU Urban Agenda should recognize the importance of networks, such as EMA, for the exchange of best practices and sustain the adoption of bottom-up approaches which have proven successful (for instance in the URBAN Project and Territorial Pacts).



Thomas Hermann
Mayor of the City of Hannover



‘We must talk to each other and very consciously listen to one other.’

With its unique legal status, the Hannover Region is quite different compared to the other districts of Lower Saxony. It includes the City of Hannover and 21 municipalities, with a total population much larger than other districts of the State. The Hannover Region has competences in waste management, public transportation, health and social services, economic promotion, environmental protection and land use.

The City of Hannover plays a significant role within the Hannover Region. The city is growing fast and since 2014 has put significant effort into a sustainable urban planning process that led to the My Hannover 2030 plan. Within this process the City understood that it must listen to itself and very consciously promote dialogue around a common vision of the future. Hence the ‘Urban Dialogue’ initiative that aims to engage citizens in envisioning the future.

In order to identify and collect ideas for the future, the Urban Dialogue began with the following questions: how do we wish to grow; how can we make Hannover a home for many; how can we achieve educational excellence and create a vibrant culture; how can we strengthen independent living and promote social engagement; what do we want our city to be like and what can we afford; how do we want city government to work in the future?

To answer these questions the City initiated thematic debates on the economy, science, the environment, jobs, mobility, culture, education, inclusion, integration and participation. Two hundred events have engaged around 17,000 citizens so far.



Jacek Jaskowiak
Mayor of the City of Poznan



‘A change in mentality is necessary. Current strategies have to take into account contemporary needs.’

Mr Jaskowiak emphasised the need for a change in mentality. The world changes fast and young people’s needs are very different from those of previous generations. ‘It is therefore necessary to correct past strategies in order to meet new challenges.’

The City of Poznan’s development strategy focuses on transportation and mobility on the one hand, and technology on the other. Over the past 15 years Poznan has faced significant population loss. People moved

away from the city centre and the number of daily commuters using private vehicles has grown rapidly. The impact on urban sustainability has been so serious that a new transportation model based on mass transit and alternative modes of transportation is currently being developed. As for technology, Poznan intends to improve internet access and digitalization services for both citizens and businesses, considering these as pre-requisites for a modern society.



Lina Liakou

Councillor of the City of Thessaloniki



‘Despite the lack of formal metropolitan governance, Thessaloniki has been able to create an informal governance structure in order to meet the European principles of sustainable development and to confront the problems related to the city’s economic crisis.’

Thessaloniki is ‘a city that, despite the lack of established metropolitan governance, has been able to create an informal governance structure in order to meet the European principles of sustainable development and to confront the problems related to the city’s economic crisis’.

Ms. Liakou underlined that there is no formal metropolitan governance structure in Greece. National reform of local and regional institutions did introduce a metropolitan coordination office within the Regional Authority. While any municipal mayor can engage with this office it currently has no resources or specific accountability.

However, since 2014 drastic events have taken place including budget cuts, political crisis, social crisis, and massive flows of migrants and refugees. At the same time international networks have been established and new opportunities have emerged within EU Cohesion Policy (such as ITI and CLLD). In the face of such change mayors understood the need to collaborate in order to ensure future development.

In this context, and thanks to the initiative of the mayor of Thessaloniki, a Metropolitan Development Agency was

created. While the agency’s main priority is to foster economic development the agency is considered by all the members involved as a platform for broad cooperation. Through the agency the first metropolitan urban development strategy was developed based on a strong bottom-up approach. Within the agency, actors involved learned from each other and exchanged ideas, networks and resources.

According to Liakou governance challenges still remain: the metropolitan strategy was neither assisted nor supported by either the regional authority or the central government. The agency is now seeking recognition of the strategy from the regional authority and coordinating with different levels of government to implement it.

Lastly, Liakou argued that the European Union can contribute to tackling governance problems by finding ways to ensure that EU guidelines and policies are not filtered by national schemes and lose their intended purpose (as in the case, for example, of ITI); by strengthening capacity building at the local level; and by sustaining the exchange of experiences and best practices at the local level.



Asier Abaunza Robles

Councillor for Urban Planning of the City of Bilbao



‘The success factors of Bilbao’s long-term development planning were: the agreement among different institutional levels, the broad participation of citizens and sound financial management.’

In the context of long-term town planning, Bilbao’s most important redevelopment initiatives centred on improving accessibility and internal mobility. These included the extension of the port facilities, development of Bilbao’s new airport, expansion of the underground system, significant upgrades to roads and railways, and the creation of an intermodal station.

In Abaunza’s opinion ‘three key factors contributed to the success of Bilbao’s redevelopment strategy. First and foremost, the redevelopment vision and plan was concerted across all four critical institutional levels: Spanish National Government, Basque Government, Land Government of Biscay Region and Bilbao City Council. Secondly, citizen participation, especially through public hearing processes, ensured even broader consensus. Lastly, the Basque government’s sound financial management ensured projects were delivered efficiently’.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Metropolitan innovations: models for an EU metropolitan agenda (panel II)



Ivan Tosics

URBACT Programme Expert, Metropolitan Research Institute of Budapest

The panel included cities which are in different phases of the development of their metropolitan areas: Florence has been established as Metropolitan City, Porto Metropolitan Area is established and will directly elect a leader next year, and Tirana just went through administrative reform and has now increased its territory. Vienna has no metropolitan area and is aiming for further developing cross-border relationships.

All the cities, however, have positive visions of the development of their metropolitan areas, particularly with regards to issues such as maintaining the intimacy of governance, developing social and cultural cooperation, supporting bottom-up development initiatives, and envisioning the future based on past vocations.

There was a joint view expressed by the panel members that the growing attention paid to cities in the last decade cities should be extended towards larger urban areas. More than the fragmented local government level

or the level of large regions, it is the level of the urban areas and metropolitan territories which could become the building blocks of a credible European architecture. The metropolitan areas, led by innovative mayors of the major cities or directly elected leaders, are able to develop complex visions including also the social elements of development.

The EU Urban Agenda should help to evoke political will at the national level towards metropolitan thinking, at least by providing guidelines for Member State authorities regarding legislation, infrastructure and financial sources for metropolitan areas. On the other hand the local municipalities should also be supported in improving metropolitan governance across administrative borders towards efficiency and sustainability. A mix of governance approaches should be explored, allowing the development of different approaches to metropolitan cooperation, according to the matter or policy to deal with.

In economic terms investments with public importance should not be constrained as these would contribute to support the balanced development and more fair distribution of opportunities in the metropolitan areas. All these elements of a new framework are needed for our society to confront the crucial problems ahead of us.

In the on-going process of developing the EU Urban Agenda the metropolitan level should become one of the horizontal (territorial) aspects in all topical partnerships. To achieve that the large cities should step up pro-actively in discussions with the Commission and their national authorities. In this process networking between metropolitan areas is important and good practices should be distributed.



Giovanni Bettarini

City of Florence



‘The Metropolitan Area of Florence identifies innovative strategies by re-interpreting its past.’

Mr Bettarini introduced the foundation of Florence’s metropolitan development strategy: ‘to design its future Florence must look to its past and reinterpret its artistic, cultural, craft and industrial heritage in an innovative way’.

In the field of culture, the Metropolitan Area of Florence supports higher education through master degree programmes, incubators and mentoring

programmes. In the economic and industrial fields it is committed to increasing its attractiveness, and the agreement signed by the City, the Tuscany Region and General Electric last January represents one of the successes of this strategy. Florence has also proven capable of learning from past challenges, such as the flood in 1966, by fostering education programmes, schools and projects in the field of restoration.



Erion Veliaj

Mayor of the City of Tirana



‘A technological solution gives the population an opportunity to be more engaged with the Municipality and the Municipality an opportunity to be more responsive to its residents.’

Mayor Veliaj warned of the risk of the metropolis becoming too disconnected from its residents, which are the City’s most important asset.

To avoid this risk, Tirana chose a technological solution: the mobile application ‘Tirana Ime’. Thanks to this application every citizen in Tirana can easily access real-time information on road traffic, urban transportation,

tourism and other important services directly from their mobile phone. At the same time anyone can report problems or concerns in real-time, allowing municipal staff to respond quickly and effectively.

‘The application gives the population an opportunity to be more engaged with the municipality and the municipality an opportunity to be more responsive to its residents.’



Ernest Sultanov
Coordinator of MIR-initiative



‘Personally I believe that the creation of common infrastructure is a key factor in promoting a sustainable model of development in the world today.’

Mr Sultanov presented the MIR Initiative, a long-term vision for metropolitan areas along the ancient Silk Road to promote the exchange of goods, people and ideas.

The initiative unites business leaders and innovative thinkers, statesmen and mayors in a joint attempt to shape the future starting from the idea that ‘the creation of common infrastructure is a key factor in promoting a sustainable model of global development’. The initiative promotes a strategic high-speed rail corridor from Europe through Turkey and the Middle East to Russia (METR region).

The initiative took off with the publication of the ‘White book on the future of mobility in the METR Region’, the conceptual basis for the future of transportation and communication infrastructure in the region. As a next step three committees were established: the cities committee, which serves as the governing body of the organisation; the infrastructure committee, a kind of joint construction, infrastructure and railway consortium; and the investment committee, composed of the banks and financial institutions which are investing in the project.

Sultanov concluded by expressing his willingness to involve new partners in the project.



Avelino Oliveira
Secretary Executive Commission of the Metropolitan Area of Porto



‘In metropolitan policy we are testing a “zig-zag method”, adopting different approaches depending on the specific issue we are dealing with.’

Mr Oliveira began by outlining the state of the art of metropolitan governance in Portugal, and then moved on to focus on what he defines as the ‘zig-zag approach’ to metropolitan governance in Porto.

The local government reform of 2013 established the two Metropolitan Areas of Lisbon and Porto. In 2017 there will be direct elections in both metropolitan areas and these will represent an important milestone in the country’s move towards effective metropolitan governance.

Portugal is still in a very experimental stage with metropolitan governance and different approaches and models are currently being piloted; Porto, for instance, is testing diverse governance approaches in different sectors. In the transportation sector a top-down approach from the national level to the metropolitan and

municipal levels has proven effective. On the contrary, in urban spatial planning (in particular, in the construction of a metropolitan GIS system), a bottom-up approach beginning from the municipalities and building up to the metropolitan level has been essential. On the other hand, the 2014-2020 EU Structural Fund programming requires a multilevel approach.

This mix of governance models represents the so called ‘zig-zag method’ that the Metropolitan Area of Porto is testing. ‘Depending on the specific sector or policy area an appropriate approach will be chosen.’

Mr Oliveira expressed the need for the European Union to establish a political council in order to discuss EU guidelines rather than strategic documents.



Omar Al-Rawi

Member of Parliament of the City of Vienna



‘One of the ways to overcome Vienna’s metropolitan challenges may be through increased cross-border cooperation.’

Vienna is simultaneously a growing city, one of the nine states of Austria, and, together with Bratislava, a multi-national metropolitan area.

Considering the influx of over 40,000 immigrants last year, plus a significant number of refugees, Vienna’s primary challenge entails sustaining population growth while maintaining a high quality of life, ensuring social cohesion and good social housing, and promoting significant investment in infrastructure and the green belt.

‘One of the ways to meet this challenge, in Al-Rawi’s opinion, may come from cross-border cooperation at the metropolitan scale.’ Though separated by just 50 km there are significant differences in both productivity and cost of production between Bratislava and Vienna (for example, costs of production are one-third in Bratislava). Such differences can be turned into opportunity by

implementing cross-border chains of production that take advantage of lower labour costs in Bratislava and higher levels of quality and innovation in Vienna.

Mr Al-Rawi went on to discuss the European political project, which he believes suffers from three major problems. The first is a problem of credibility: people don’t know what the European Union is doing. In this sense, the Urban Agenda could be instrumental in bringing the EU closer to its citizens by addressing the specific needs of people in cities. The second problem arises from a lack of vision: a society that does not deliver visions will leave a generation without perspectives. The construction of common visions is an area that will require additional work in the future. Thirdly, the Stability Pact must be reformed: investments in social cohesion and infrastructure, for example, must not be considered in the stability calculus if Europe is going to take growth seriously.

FOR A NEW METROPOLITAN AGENDA

Nadia Caruso and Cristiana Rossignolo, Politecnico di Torino



As underlined in “Cities of Tomorrow. Challenges, visions, ways forward” (European Commission, DG Regional Policy, 2011, p. 68), Europe recognises “the increasing importance of the city at regional or metropolitan level”. In fact, several urban policies have to be taken on wider boundaries which reflect more accurately the real functional economy rather than the narrower administrative boundaries of the municipal city. In the last decade, the economic and financial crisis has intensified several urban problems, generating new forms of marginalisation, social and spatial polarization and territorial fragmentation. New pressure is also arising from global migration trends. The crisis has demonstrated the limits of existing sectorial policies, hence calling for an integrated, cross-sectorial and territorial approach which offers a new European model of urban development at the metropolitan level. As the European experience suggests, metropolitan areas are a better level at which to make economies operate.

The different contributions presented in the Second European Metropolitan Authorities (EMA) Forum emphasize the important role of metropolitan areas in Europe. Metropolitan authorities deal every day with the most urgent and pressing needs of the European population, coping with XXI Century challenges (environmental pollution, housing, inadequacy of infrastructures, high unemployment rate, ageing

population, rising crime rate, industrial decline, etc.). These entities have to address not only everyday life in urban areas, but also the impacts of global dynamics, for instance the financial crisis or different process of institutional restructuring.

Some lessons emerge from the experiences of metropolitan authorities:

- The importance of dealing with societal challenges – these public entities do not focus only on physical actions (planning, transport, etc.), but also on economic, environmental and social issues, tackling every day the urgent matters of life in European cities.
- The relevant role given to processes of cooperation – all metropolitan authorities recognize the importance of relations, networks and cooperation with other public and private actors across different geographic levels. The cooperation is fostered not only with local stakeholders, but also with higher institutional levels: different territorial and government/governance levels have more or less relevance depending on the specific challenges and objectives they have to address. Good relations with Regions are considered as a key priority for the participants of the Forum.
- Promoting tools and actions to better plan, program or design future development in a competition over

scarce resources – metropolitan areas have proved to have strong and integrated visions and strategies in order to improve their conditions and go beyond current weaknesses and limits. One of the main challenges for metropolitan planning strategies is to develop effective frameworks of coordination. The “multi-actor” and “multi-level” context and the dynamic shape of functional and territorial spaces in metropolitan areas urge us to find new strategies that effectively enable to connect the different spheres of action.

– Place-specificity and people-based approach can be considered as one of the main strengths of European metropolitan areas, implying that the differences in the socio-spatial and economic structures are essential values for the European area. The differentiation offers opportunities and a variety of situations (various interests, margins and capabilities conditions), it corresponds to various institutional frames and approaches of governance, which entail complex and dynamic strategies. This character allows the rise of multiple solutions and good practices that should be spread throughout networking processes among metropolitan areas.

The European Urban Agenda can provide a frame of actions for these realities, collecting their strengths and fostering their dynamic urban development. A better

understanding of the pressing needs and emergencies they are dealing with every day would help in order to better define innovative forms of cooperation among metropolitan areas, national governments and EU institutions. The EU Urban Agenda can also provide guidelines for Member State authorities regarding legislation, infrastructure and financial sources for metropolitan areas. Specific priorities and strategies can strengthen the weight of metropolitan authorities in the processes of governance. Good government and governance structures at a metropolitan level are also key conditions for cities’ competitiveness, but, at the same time, these entities need tools and programs supporting their actions (for instance, EU Integrated Territorial Investments is a common instrument for these entities).

Developing metropolitan cooperation is obviously a matter of political vision and commitment. Without these crucial features, any initiative would be unlikely to lead to concrete outcomes. Successful metropolitan areas have the strategic capacity to exploit their resources, but need stable political and administrative leadership, long term commitment to strategic agendas, the ability to reconcile shifting agendas, the willingness to take calculated risks, and the capacity to actively involve public and private sector partners. The European Urban Agenda has the chance to strengthen the capabilities of metropolitan areas to address the current challenges.

EUROPEAN
METROPOLITAN
AUTHORITIES



More information:

EMA 2016: www.cittametropolitana.torino.it/speciali/2016/ema

EMA: www.amb.cat/ambmetropole