The European urban fabric in the 21st century
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Dear reader,

The 5th European Summit of Regions and Cities held on 22 and 23 March 2012 in Copenhagen brought together an impressive number of mayors, presidents of regions, representatives of local and regional authorities, leading architects, urban planners and researchers, representatives of European and international institutions and associations, with a view to ensuring that sustainable urban development features more prominently on the policy agenda.

The wealth of debates, the high quality of the contributions and the inspiring speeches of the Presidents of the European Parliament, the Danish EU Council Presidency and the European Commission pushed urban matters to the forefront of European current affairs.

We are confident that the debate and exchanges of experience will continue, as we share the belief that our regions and cities can transform challenges into opportunities. They are breeding grounds for creativity, innovation and know-how and their authorities are bound by their proximity to citizens to deliver on high quality and inclusive living conditions.

The Summit provided the opportunity to showcase good practices and demonstrate the political backing for the "European urban fabric" as a shared vision to be taken to United Nations’ Rio+20 conference in June, and beyond. The Copenhagen Declaration is an outspoken commitment in this regard.

The event provided also an opportunity to highlight the importance of the local and regional dimension when it comes to responding effectively to today’s major social and environmental challenges and to the economic crisis. It offered ample confirmation that the future of Europe, its internal cohesion, its prosperity and its voice on the international stage all depend on cities and regions working together alongside other levels of government.

On behalf of the Committee of the Regions, the City of Copenhagen and the Capital Region of Denmark, we would like to thank all speakers and participants most warmly for contributing to the success of the event.

Mercedes Bresso  
President of the Committee of the Regions

Frank Jensen  
Lord Mayor of Copenhagen

Vibeke Storm Rasmussen  
Chairman of the Regional Council Capital Region of Denmark
Introduction

The 5th European Summit of Regions and Cities on 22 and 23 March in Copenhagen followed previous events held in Amsterdam (1997), Wrocław (2005), Rome (2007) and Prague (2009).

Under the title "The European urban fabric in the 21st century", the event organised by the Committee of the Regions in partnership with the City of Copenhagen and the Capital Region of Denmark brought together about 700 participants to illustrate and reflect on how the EU has shaped its cities and to identify the future European urban policies and strategies that are relevant for regional development. The idea of "urban fabric" reflects the long-standing capacity of European cities and regions to reinvent themselves as places to live and to enhance intellectual, cultural, economic and social exchanges thanks to innovative urban planning and architectural projects.

On 22 March, the workshops on urban dynamics and European governance debated the crucial role of Europe in developing European urban areas and drew attention to the key role of cities and regions in implementing various methods of citizen participation.

The workshops on greener urban strategies: Rio+20 and the role of cities and regions highlighted the difficulties of financing green innovation for cities and emphasised the need to look at urban development within the broader local and regional context, so as to manage coexistence between the city and natural and rural areas, with the region remaining the basic level for the implementation of EU policies.

On 23 March, the first plenary session on the challenges and good practices of global cities demonstrated that European cities now need to regroup and reinvent themselves so as to face up to international competition, create lasting jobs and implement the sort of spatial planning that favours social inclusion and solidarity, with a view to promoting public wellbeing and sustainability.

The second plenary session on the city in its environment: synergies between cities, towns, villages, regions and rural areas served as a reminder that European cities can develop only in close cooperation with their surrounding areas. This territorial symbiosis is what secures balanced territorial development that benefits cities and rural areas alike.

20 years after the historic Earth Summit of 1992 and looking forward to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development due to take place between 20 and 22 June 2012 in Rio de Janeiro, the Summit made it possible to demonstrate the key role of cities and regions in designing and implementing a sustainable model of urban development. The Copenhagen Declaration adopted in the presence of the European Parliament President and the Danish Prime Minister who holds the rotating Presidency of the EU Council, expresses the commitment to making cities greener, more socially inclusive and more economically competitive and to make sustainable urban development a key focus at the Rio+20 Earth Summit. It also called on the European Union to share its best practices, including the Covenant of Mayors and the European Green Capitals, at a global level.

The exhibition Beautiful, green, smart and inclusive: Colourful cities linked specific examples of best practice from cities and regions to the Summit’s conference programme. It will be on show in Brussels at CoR headquarters between 7 May and 1 June and at the European Commission headquarters in the Berlaymont building during the 10th European Week of Regions and Cities, between 8 and 11 October 2012. To complete the exhibition, EUROCITIES showcased a selection from its photo competition “My city - my view”, organised to celebrate the 25 years of EUROCITIES.

More information including speeches, presentations, photos and videos can be found at www.cor.europa.eu/CoR-Summit2012.
Mercedes Besso, President of the Committee of the Regions, Frank Jensen, Lord Mayor of Copenhagen and President of EUROCITIES and Vibeke Storm Rasmussen, Chairman of the Regional Council of the Capital Region of Denmark delivered the welcome speeches during the opening of the Summit, which were followed by José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission as keynote speaker. The session was moderated by Alex Taylor from euronews.

Mercedes Bresso introduced the Summit objectives and the reasons for the choice of the event venue and subject. She expressed her hope that this Summit would contribute to asserting the role of the regional and local authorities in the negotiation process at Rio+20 according to the principle of multilevel governance. Copenhagen was a good place to meet, as it was in the centre of the debate on the subject of this conference, namely sustainable development, which combines environment, economic and social aspects. She then explained the choice of the Summit title. In her opinion, a European city was a kind of fabric, linked strongly to its territory and undergoing constant transformation. This fabric had to face the challenges of the 21st century. But challenges could turn into opportunities and problems into solutions. At times of economic crisis, a city had an important role to foster creativity, attract talent, facilitate cooperation between entrepreneurs and create new jobs. She encouraged participants to discuss the challenges and come up with solutions to be applied in cities and regions. On the subject of governance, Ms Bresso believed that the potential of European cities had not been sufficiently recognised. She underlined that 55 years after signature the Treaty of Rome and 20 years after the launch of cohesion policy, the EU had no formal competence in urban policy, although she admitted that EU influence was growing, in particular through the Structural Funds. She recalled the history of EU-funded programmes, such as URBAN and URBACT, and political documents such as the Leipzig Charter. She added that a range of initiatives were in place to bring together cities or urban agglomerations under the EU flag, such as the Covenant of Mayors, Capitals of Culture, European Green Capitals and Smart Cities.

The time had come to develop an urban policy, instead of several overlapping initiatives, to tackle a spectrum of issues emerging in urban areas and to support those who manage the cities. Ms Bresso said that the Committee of the Regions, and the European Parliament, were dissatisfied with the European Commission proposal for the Urban Development Platform, as it was a political-technical hybrid. She would have appreciated horizontal links between cities and urban areas, which were in line with modern partnership practices and expressed the CoR’s concerns about a rigid list of thematic priorities generated by the Europe 2020 strategy. Ms Bresso encouraged new forms of governance to allow all European cities to become factories of solidarity, tolerance, creativity and competitiveness for benefit of Europe. She emphasised that a new approach was needed to see cities as creative places, to encourage them to work together and in harmony with other governance levels and to support them with funds. She emphasised the goal of subsidiarity and the importance of a wide approach that allows the imagination and capacity of regions to achieve the goals by themselves. She strongly believed that cities had a role to play in the future governance aimed at helping the EU to emerge from crisis.

“At this time of economic and financial crisis, cities have a key role to play in changing our lifestyles, stimulating creativity, attracting talent, helping the unemployed get back to work and building cooperation with businesses.”

Mercedes Bresso
Vibeke Storm Rasmussen noted that the goal of the Capital Region of Denmark was to ensure sustainable and green growth for the area. From the air, Copenhagen looked like a green and blue place. To achieve this and to ensure sustainable growth, a number of measures were in place, including planning of green areas that were easily accessible from all parts of the city, public parks, electric vehicles for public transport and the widening of the cycling paths network. By 2020, a cycling tunnel to Germany will be built. Ms Rasmussen said that the Capital Region was not at the edge of the EU but in the centre, and to achieve this, traffic connections were being improved by building a railway network and a major airport. The region aimed to be not only green, but also smart. There would be an important hub between Denmark and Sweden. According to Ms Rasmussen, cities and regions create Europe and they have to feature high on the agenda as they are the ones who have to combat the crisis every day.

"We have to make sure that we have a sustainable and integrated approach to urban development and that all citizens can benefit from it."

Vibeke Storm Rasmussen

José Manuel Barroso underlined the key role of European urban areas in contributing to the growth and jobs agenda, and the vital importance of economic, social and territorial cohesion for the future of Europe. He stressed that fiscal consolidation was linked to sustainable, inclusive and intelligent growth, underpinned by knowledge and innovation as key drivers. He pointed out that Copenhagen was an example of a city with ambitious goals, which developed opportunity for its citizens. Urban areas were sources of challenges and opportunities, and sustainable urban design should be the goal. Denmark, where more than 85% of its people live in urban areas, was a particular illustration of the challenges and opportunities.

He reaffirmed that the European model of cities was a pattern followed by EU partners from other continents, such as China. In this context, he also mentioned the recent Partnership for Urbanisation. European cities had success stories to tell and Mr Barroso pointed to the “Cities of tomorrow” report published last year by the European Commission, which proposes some forward-thinking solutions to the key challenges faced by the urban fabric of Europe. This report fed into the proposals for a renewed cohesion policy under the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), which sets out an urban agenda based around the principles of sustainability, innovation and partnership.

Mr Barroso underlined that 5% ringfencing of the ERDF national allocation was a minimum to be spent on urban policy, through the new Integrated Territorial Investment instrument, by which fund management can be delegated to cities. He added that EUR 400 million were earmarked for innovative actions in the field of urban sustainable development and that Partnership Contracts were being put in place to ensure that all levels of governance were properly involved in the design and implementation of programmes. In his opinion, rural-urban partnerships could be best addressed via community-led local development and as such could potentially benefit from support through all funds under the Common Strategic Framework.

At EU level, the Multiannual Financial Framework was a key instrument to deliver on growth and jobs. Mr Barroso briefly referred to the conference in Brussels.
earlier that morning on the MFF, involving the European Parliament and national parliaments, with the participation of European Parliament President Martin Schulz, and Helle Thorning-Schmidt, Prime Minister of Denmark. He underlined the need for concerted efforts at all levels to make the case for Europe and to explain why a euro spent at European level makes more sense than a euro spent at the national level. Furthermore, the culture of entitlement needed to be replaced by a focus on results and therefore cohesion policy needed to be tied even more closely to the Europe 2020 strategy. Mr Barroso emphasised that all levels of governance have to be involved to achieve its goals.

The MFF goals were investment and innovation, growth and jobs. In his opinion, innovation and research were of utmost importance for the cities’ future. Therefore he recalled two potential future Innovation Partnerships under the Innovation Union flagship: “smart cities” and “water efficient Europe”, where, in his opinion, cities and urban areas must be the key players. He also cited the example of the Joint Programme Initiative on “Urban Europe – Global Urban Challenges, Joint European Solutions”. Horizon 2020 would simplify the funding rules and it will focus on major social challenges and on industrial competitiveness. He added that funding proposed by the European Commission for Research and Innovation package for 2014-2020 was an increase of 46% over the current programme.

Moving to the aspect of better connectivity between regions and cities, Mr Barroso addressed the European Commission proposal to use new financial instruments as project bonds or growth bonds for investment in energy, transport and digital infrastructures. On sustainable energy, Mr Barroso acknowledged that local government, such as that in Copenhagen, has become a leading player in policy implementation. He emphasised the efforts of the Covenant of Mayors signatories, by which an estimated 132 million tonnes of CO2 emissions were being saved every year.

Finally, he stated that during the upcoming United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development Rio+20, Europe had to maintain and strengthen its leading role in sustainability. He called on the leaders of the cities to assume a stronger role in the debates in defence of Europe, as they were themselves “leaders of Europe”.

“It is not enough just to speak about Europe 2020 when the heads of state or government meet. It is for all levels of European leadership, including the regional and local authorities, to make it happen on the ground. I think it is critically important that the leaders of the cities, the leaders of the local authorities in Europe, take a stronger role in the debate in defence of Europe.”

José Manuel Barroso
Approximately one half of the world’s total population, or 3.5 billion people, live in urban areas. In Europe, however, the figure is closer to 70%, which means that around **350 million Europeans live in urban regions**. Current trends suggest that these numbers are set to rise even further: by 2030, the world’s urban population is expected to account for almost 5 billion of the predicted total population of 8.1 billion. In Europe, meanwhile, the urban population is expected to reach 375 million or 75% of the total EU population by the same year. However, as only London and Paris feature on the list of the world’s 26 “mega cities” – with a population of over 10 million inhabitants – the EU has a more polycentric structure than the USA or China for example, and is primarily made up of small and medium-sized cities. Around 56% of Europe’s urban population – or 38% of Europe’s population as a whole – live in cities and towns of between 5,000 and 100,000 inhabitants; 12.3% of Europeans live in cities with a population of over one million inhabitants, while 7% live in cities of over 5 million. The last figure is almost four times higher in the case of the USA.

There are over **90 000 local and regional authorities** in the EU, of which about 89 000 represent the local government level i.e. municipalities, town or cities, with the remainder representing the regional level. Depending on the Member State in question, their responsibilities can cover areas such as the provision of educational, social protection, health and general services to the public. Local and regional public expenditure represents about EUR 2 100 billion a year and accounts for roughly one third of all public expenditure in the EU. In the area of public investment, however, the figure is twice as high and accounts for 70% of all public investment in the EU. Sub-national levels of government have acquired a certain degree of influence over EU policymaking since the 1990s especially through the implementation of cohesion policy and in the field of public procurement, state aid and the application of environmental standards.

The proposed set of rules and the EUR 336 billion budget for **EU cohesion policy during 2014-2020**, includes a number of new initiatives for cities. First up are the Integrated Territorial Investments, an instrument which helps identify solutions that cut across different policies and EU funds, such as in the area of enterprise support, innovation, employment and environment. Secondly, some EUR 400 million has been earmarked to support urban innovative actions as well as an EU-wide platform of 300 cities supporting capacity-building and exchange. Finally, community-led local development will be supported by cohesion policy, rural development and fisheries funds in order to facilitate the implementation of cross-sector intervention and integrated local development strategies.
Europe is one of the most urbanised continents with around 75% of its population living in urban areas. The success of European cities as poles of attraction is therefore undeniable, but what makes a city not only successful but also liveable? The answer seems to lie in a combination of elements that make up a living and “beautiful” city, including green spaces, clean air, pleasant buildings, safety, a blooming local economy fostering jobs and high standards of living, uncongested traffic, good transport infrastructure and many others. This workshop discussed how European cities are succeeding or failing at putting together the pieces of this puzzle and also to what extent cities benefit from belonging to the EU and how they can make their way in a multilevel governance system.

Claude Jacquier, research director at the National Center for Scientific Research, Grenoble, France, kicked off the debate. Speakers included Antonio Costa, Mayor of Lisbon, Portugal and Member of the Committee of the Regions, Alessandro Cosimi, Mayor of Livorno, Italy and Member of the Committee of the Regions, Burkhard Jung, Mayor of Leipzig, Germany and Marek Woźniak, Marshal of the Wielkopolska Region, Poland and Member of the Committee of the Regions. Jan Olbrycht, Member of the European Parliament, gave the concluding remarks. The workshop was moderated by Alex Taylor, journalist from euronews.

Claude Jacquier set out some issues identified in his work on the European Union and the urban dimension, carried out for the Committee of the Regions. On a general note, he underlined that the documents and statistics currently available about the development of cities and regions are to some extent out of date as they do not, for instance, take into account the impact of the financial crisis. As a first reflection, he emphasised that Europe has a major trump card in the fact that, of all the continents in the world, it benefits from the best distribution of cities across the continent, which serves as a good basis for a balanced and sustainable growth. However, statistics show that cities and towns are growing at different rates; some are continuing to grow while others are experiencing demographic or economic decline. Unlike in the past, towns and cities are not only prosperous places but they also hide poverty and inequality, as recognised by the last cohesion report. He called for an end to the dichotomy between urban and rural areas and suggested starting thinking in terms of "rurban" regions.

Mr Jacquier warned against an overly technological approach to sustainable development and reminded those present that the deadline to reach the "20-20-20 targets" was only 8 years ahead (2020). Therefore, and in order to avoid repeating the failure of the Lisbon strategy, the role of cities and regions in making the necessary investments is crucial. He also stressed the role of cities and regions as innovative environments because it is not at state level that most innovation and added value are created. However, innovation will not happen without cooperation; not only horizontal cooperation between cities but also multilevel or vertical cooperation. In conclusion, Mr Jacquier underlined the importance of building local action teams in...
António Costa welcomed the reinforced role of cities in implementing the Europe 2020 strategy. He recalled that cities were home to 80% of the European population; that they were the centres of growth and knowledge and also cradles of innovation, but at the same time consumed huge quantities of energy and produced thousands of tonnes of greenhouse gases. It is also in the cities where we see the biggest social divide and highest level of unemployment. Thus, it is in the cities that we are going to win or lose the major challenges we face in trying to secure smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. To succeed, we need a holistic approach that translates into an integrated strategy. Mr Costa showcased some examples from Lisbon where a wastewater collection system was being built on a main square to reduce the pollution of the river Tagus. This project touched on many other aspects of urban planning, such as the value of cultural heritage or changes in mobility patterns that will return more public space to the citizens by increasing pedestrian zones. He also stressed the efforts under way in Lisbon to regenerate areas of the city affected by serious problems of crime, drugs and prostitution, thereby improving the quality of public spaces. Another example is the creation of urban gardens that help to reduce the risk of flooding and where food for poor people is produced by low-skilled workers. He concluded by emphasising that all these were examples of integrated projects that combine environmental, economic and social inclusion aspects.

Alessandro Cosimi indicated that cities have progressed a great deal since the creation of the European Union. Infrastructure has been renewed, urban spaces are used in a more efficient way and common efforts have been made to solve social and economic problems and to build cities that are modern and offer a good quality of life. In Tuscany, the EU has contributed to plans that address urban decay, help to make cities more inclusive and simultaneously do not close off the city to what is happening around it. He stressed that, in a difficult economic context, local authorities have seen their position weakened. A way had to be found to unlock the potential that local authorities have in achieving genuine governance over their urban areas, renewing the public system at all levels of governance and rethinking governance in cities. Mr Cosimi also called for the integration of urban planning in decision-making processes and for more flexible forms of governance. He noted a dangerous trend, namely that young people often do not feel that they are members of society. It is the responsibility of cities to make sure that everyone feels able to contribute and participate in town life.

“This is the advantage of integrated projects, which can combine environmental aspects, economic aspects and social inclusion aspects.”

António Costa
Burkhard Jung expressed his conviction that EU activities and financial instruments can contribute to changing the situation in cities. As an example, he mentioned his city, Leipzig, which clearly illustrates how a city can benefit from an EU programme. The URBAN II programme had helped Leipzig to get citizens involved in developing parts of the city in a sustainable way. From the 1990s onwards, Leipzig has managed to help less privileged parts of the city become prosperous and sustainable. Based on this experience, he urged Europeans to share best practices that can be replicated and find common solutions to the major challenges of unemployment, social cutbacks and integration problems.

In response to the moderator’s question for concrete examples of this European cooperative approach, Mr Jung mentioned several cities with which Leipzig has been working together and learning from: Birmingham, an example of how a very industrial city can transform itself into a very creative city, while Lyon and its “fête des lumières” has been an inspiration for the yearly celebrations of the fall of the Berlin Wall. Leipzig has also shared its experience with Kiev on developing infrastructure for big sport events. Other examples of partnership include transport, energy or sustainable waste management issues.

Marek Woźniak referred to the importance for regional development not only of large metropolises but also of small and medium towns and warned against managing urban development policies too autonomously, in a way that they would be separated from the development of the region as such. In this regard, although he supported the 5% ring-fence and the Integrated Territorial Investments included in the ERDF proposals for the next programming period. He also noted that, in Poland, smaller towns often complain that the capital city of the region receives too much money. Mr Woźniak noted that, in his region, just over 7% of EU funds were allocated to the capital city but, on the other hand, this represents just one-quarter of the funds received by the capital city; three-quarters were direct transfers from the central government. This shows that there is not a contradiction between regional and urban development; it is a question of interaction and integration between programmes designed for regions and cities. He concluded by stressing that regions should therefore not be considered as enemies of cities but, on the contrary, that they are equally important.

The ensuing debate with the audience touched further on the role of small towns in keeping rural areas alive and the need for balanced territorial development. The importance of administrative simplification in the management of funds, the role of culture in reviving cities and the use of revolving funds as a means to multiply available funding for urban development were also raised as crucial topics.

In conclusion, Jan Olbrycht emphasised that the impact of the European Union on cities is embodied in things such as the single market or the free movement of people, and was thus clearly recognisable. He pointed out that the real question was whether the urban dimension was present in European policies and stressed the importance of the exchange of good and bad experiences between cities. Mr Olbrycht also noted the need to bear in mind that tensions between regions, cities and rural areas exist, but that they can and should be defused through multilevel governance instruments such as the proposed Partnership Contracts. Finally, he stressed that the 5% ring-fence in the ERDF proposal is not a limit for investment in cities but a special ring-fence for promoting cooperation of cities with their surroundings.
Almost all European cities face the need to better engage with their citizens: partnerships and bottom-up participatory processes can increase people’s awareness and support for local democratic institutions, as well as ensuring ownership and more efficient public investment to create cities of the future. This workshop focused on how public can be involved in local and regional projects. It discussed in particular how cities can reach out to their citizens and make them contribute to the local and regional aspects of the Europe 2020 strategy.

The workshop was moderated by Alex Taylor. Simon Güntner, professor at the University of Hamburg for Applied Sciences, opened the debate. Speakers included Georgios Kaminis, Mayor of Athens, Greece, and Member of the Committee of the Regions, Witold Stępień, Marshal of the Łódź voivodship, Poland, and Member of the Committee of the Regions, Milan Ftáčnik, Mayor of Bratislava, Slovakia and Member of the Committee of the Regions, and Daniel Termont, Mayor of Ghent, Belgium. Zita Gurmai, Member of the European Parliament, gave the concluding remarks.

Simon Güntner began by observing the unanimous support for citizens' participation, but that it was manifested differently depending on local traditions and circumstances. He pointed out that a range of instruments and tools to involve citizens in local projects have emerged over the past few years: town meetings, citizen panels, participatory budget, etc. In this regard, he noted that a great deal of hope has been pinned on participatory democracy, but stressed that there are also some traps. The hopes are that participatory democracy will help to design and implement better policies and projects, enhance local ownership of projects and legitimate choices. The biggest traps were the "efficiency trap", whereby citizens drop out of the process because the timeframe for implementation is too tight for them to be able to come up with a position or contribution, and the under-representation of minority interests. Mr Güntner also mentioned some factors that are essential for a successful participatory process. People need to know what there are deciding on and decision-makers need to be ready to accept and incorporate citizens' views into the projects. Regarding the design of the participatory exercises, timing, length, style of communication and language are also crucial. He concluded by summarising his main recommendations: the need to be realistic about what can actually be opened up for public debate; to tell people what is at stake and give them appropriate feedback, and not to think of the local community as a single entity with a single interest.

Milan Ftáčnik referred to the current situation in his own country, Slovakia, where twenty years after the fall of communism, people were extremely disappointed with politicians. He stressed the need to integrate participatory democracy into the decision-making process, an exercise that is much more easily carried out at local and regional level than at national level. He then gave an overview of some initiatives that have been taken in Bratislava. First, as a general rule, he recommended being open and keeping people informed, because this is the only way to gain people's confidence and trust. In this regard, public hearings, including structured...
debates with citizens, are being organised on a regular basis. He also mentioned the regular use of polling to gather citizens’ views. Mr Ftáčník also spoke about the introduction of participatory budgeting in Bratislava. The projects are still at an early stage but citizens, organised in "communities", will be already deciding on investments representing 1% of the budget. Finally, he hoped that through this kind of initiatives politicians will be able to convince people that their opinion really matters.

Daniel Termont gave some further practical examples of how to get people involved in local democracy. He explained that the City of Ghent has a specific department responsible for urban renewal and "neighbourhood action". The town is divided into 25 different areas and each area has a full time "neighbourhood organiser" who serves as a sort of link between the citizens and the city government. Ghent also puts extra efforts into ensuring social cohesion in densely populated mixed neighbourhoods. Mr Termont indicated that neighbourhood debates are organised regularly. These debates have proved very popular with residents. A second example is a grant programme where residents decide on actions to promote coexistence in their neighbourhood (e.g. a street gathering, a barbecue, a cycling path, setting up a website). Finally, he mentioned an idea borrowed from Rotterdam, whereby citizens can decide on a number of hours of police work.

Georgios Kaminis pointed to the fact that it is always easier to protest against something than to muster support for an idea or project. He gave the example of the controversy created by a project for an underground parking in Athens. He also warned about the difficulties of organising referendums to consult citizens and their potential for giving rise to misunderstandings and false claims.

Witold Stępień stressed the difficulties of his region in trying to get people involved in local decision-making. But he noted that these difficulties could be overcome through regular public consultation and dialogue, by sharing information with citizens and civil society players such as NGOs and by reinforcing partnership. As an example, he mentioned the existence of a network of information points that inform local authorities, citizens and companies of the various possibilities for applying for EU funding and also the use of Facebook to gather citizens’ views and a regular consultation process with local players on local transportation issues.

The ensuing debate with the audience revealed further insights into the topic. In response to Mr Termont’s suggestion that town councils might not be that useful when it comes to managing a city and that maybe more direct democracy was the answer, Mr Güntner felt that the role of political parties is still crucial because they are capable of organising collective interests. A revitalisation of political parties was nevertheless badly needed to change their tendency to misrepresent interests. Ms Gurmai expressed her belief in participatory democracy and suggested that tools such as the new European Citizens’ Initiative are a step in the right direction. Mr Kaminis underlined that it was sometimes difficult to involve citizens in complex decisions related to city management, not only talking about democratic participation but also about achieving a balance between conflicting interests.

“Citizens’ participation is really important. When you want to create something, you must take their views and ideas on board.”

Georgios Kaminis
In her concluding remarks, Zita Gurmai welcomed the discussion on tools for participatory democracy and expressed her hope that cities and regional authorities will go further in using these tools in order to involve more and more people in regional and local projects. However, she pointed out that no one had spoken about "solidarity", which was a key component of an urban society. She also emphasised once again the importance of direct democracy, of dialogue with the civil society and between generations. Referring to the European Citizens’ Initiative she underlined that it represented a substantial contribution to fostering citizens’ participation at European level, but she wondered if citizens really did know about its existence. In this regard, she believed that local and regional authorities are best placed to raise awareness on this kind of initiatives. In her opinion, the quality of urban policies will define the future of our societies in terms of mobility, sustainable development and social inclusion. In almost every European city one could find neglected or impoverished urban areas that require targeted action in terms of social inclusion. Moving to her last point, she called for direct democracy to start at local level, even if this was not always easy or self-evident and cited the example of local referendums which, in her opinion, should not necessary be formulated in terms of a simple yes or no question. She indicated that a constructive dialogue with citizens has the potential to avoid resistance and even change "opposition" into "support".

Exhibition: Beautiful, green, smart and inclusive: Colourful cities

An exhibition entitled "Beautiful, green, smart and inclusive: Colourful cities" linked concrete best practice examples from cities and regions to the Summit’s conference programme. The exhibition presented 28 ongoing or recently finished projects in urban development, grouped in four thematical villages:

• "Beautiful Cities" concentrated on projects linked to architecture and town planning;
• "Green Cities" focused on energy efficiency, transport solutions and sustainable urban/regional development.
• "Smart Cities" showcased innovation projects and smart specialisation strategies.
• "Inclusive Cities" promoted social innovation, employment and creative solutions to social services.

The following projects were presented:

**BEAUTIFUL CITIES**

**Basque Country**  
EcoEuskadi 2020: A successful process built from the bottom-up

**City of Copenhagen**  
Global challenges, Copenhagen solutions

**City of Malmö**  
Making sustainability reality

**Kavala**  
Kavala on the Mmove

**Lisbon**  
Local Lisbon: Towards a green and resilient city

**Sète**  
An eco-system town which conserves and recycles its natural resources

**Sofia**  
Sofia’s integrated urban transport project

**GREEN CITIES**

**Basque Country**  
EcoEuskadi 2020: A successful process built from the bottom-up

**City of Gent**  
Gent 2020

**City of Westminster**  
Electric Vehicles in Urban Europe

**Groningen**  
City of Talent!

**European Environment Agency**  
Environmental virtues of the Compact City

**Łódź City and Region**  
Łódzkie speeds up

**Rakvere**  
Smart House and Intelligent Building Skills Centre

**Rhône-Alpes Region**  
Integrated urban projects

**_INCLUSIVE CITIES**

**Colwyn Bay**  
Creating a town to be proud of

**Dublin**  
Civic participation of new communities through local authorities

**Emilia Region**  
Citizens of Reggio Emilia, for example

**Rotterdam**  
Inhabitants of Rotterdam do it themselves

**Salzburg**  
Winner of the Access City award 2012

**Tuscany region**  
Young and sustainable cities

**Uszka**  
Housing and social integration model-programme
The transition to a green economy will be at the heart of the Rio+20 Earth summit. The workshop discussed approaches to mobilise the substantial funding that this transition requires, and the development of innovative financial schemes involving local partners, banks, private companies, and civil society with EU support, in order to have a significant leverage effect when applying market-based instruments. The workshop showcased three projects from cities that had successfully managed the financial shortfall.

The workshop was moderated by Annette Riedel from Deutschland Radio, with an introduction by Achim Steiner, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Case studies were presented by Andres Jaadla, Mayor of Rakvere, Estonia, and Member of the Committee of the Regions, Javier Maroto Aranzábal, Mayor of Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain, and European Green Capital 2012, and Paul Tisley, Deputy Leader of Birmingham City Council, United Kingdom. Karl Falkenberg, Director-General for Environment of the European Commission concluded the debate.

Achim Steiner appreciated the close cooperation that the UNEP and the Committee of the Regions were developing, with the shared aim of promoting sustainable development and the transition to a green economy, based on the wealth of experience of Europe’s cities and regions in this regard. The escalating global trend in urbanisation offered extraordinary opportunities, but at the same time augmented the costs of failure in urban planning. Cities were important actors: taking into account the major and still increasing share of cities in the use of resources, their ability to manage their ecological footprint will strongly affect the health of our planet; moreover, local and regional authorities had the capacity to become pioneers in experimenting with...
innovative actions that take much longer to develop at the national and international levels. Mr Steiner believed that the United Nations must take advantage of these cities as catalysts for actions at global level.

The speaker further outlined the main elements of the green economy concept, as described in UNEP’s Green Economy Report. Today’s societies had the means to make environmental obligations an enabling rather than a disturbing factor, creating greater efficiency and new jobs. Major studies such as the Stern Report on climate change action and TEEB on protecting ecosystem services made the clear case for a green economy, by demonstrating the substantial costs of inaction and missed financial opportunities in mismanagement of resources, for example of waste. He called on governments to step in and to create markets to leverage greater private green investment. He also called on the EU’s sustainable cities to bring their experiences to Rio+20, demonstrating that a green economy is a model not only for rich, but also poorer cities to follow, and extending the EU’s cities ideas to the global level.

Andres Jaadla presented various innovative actions that the City of Rakvere had taken to reduce energy costs for public and private buildings, which often lack appropriate insulation. Historic public buildings, which cannot easily be insulated, were turned, by using EU and own funds, into “smart houses” that use ICT to minimise the energy costs. The experience gained in this pilot project could now be multiplied to several thousands historical buildings in Estonia. Moreover, using smart technology for street lighting also resulted in energy savings, which then made it possible to switch to the use of green energy in a second phase. For owners of private buildings, Rakvere cooperated with private companies and major banks to offer attractive renovation schemes. Asked by the moderator if he believed that “borrowing against future savings” was the new system of financing similar measures, as implied in financing schemes offered by several IT companies to cities, Mr Jaadla stressed the importance of drawing up business plans for such major investments, which balance the necessary investments with the current and future energy costs. Finally, he believed that the cases he presented would demonstrate that, in times of austerity, investing in a green economy would not always mean that local and regional authorities had to find additional, but also to make better use of existing financial resources, if they innovate their system management and explore innovative financing schemes.

Javier Maroto Aranzábal highlighted the importance of the European Green Capital Award for his city and the push this gave to further green urban projects. Vitoria-Gasteiz had developed a sustainability policy based on clear goals that translate into ambitious projects. This strategic approach, combined with sound financial planning, had helped the city to continue green-economy projects during the current economic crisis and at times with limited public budget. The city had achieved new forms of funding, including attracting significant external funding from the EU, the Spanish and provincial governments and developing new public-private collaboration formulas, with, for example, over twenty companies that sponsor the Green Capital, the launch of a public-private gas company, or a sponsorship by a local banking entity for the city’s environmental education program. He welcomed in particular the support the regional and national governments had given, including a law that allowed fiscal deductions for the sponsoring companies. His city also explored options to optimise the cost/benefit ratio of transformation measures, not least for the new inner city green belt. In conclusion, he called on the EU to focus the Cohesion and Structural Funds on sustainable projects in order to help cities in their ambitious transition to a green economy.

Paul Tisley presented the front-running programme "Birmingham Energy Savers", a major retrofitting programme running since 2010 for existing properties to help achieving the city’s overall carbon reduction target. The city was intending to expand the programme through to 2026, investing EUR 1.6 billion (with EUR 500 million from public and private borrowing). In combination with the city’s commitment to build a new city centre district energy network, the programme would help to reduce the city’s total energy bill. Speaking of return on this investment, cutting the energy bill for example by 60% could add some EUR 1 billion to the city’s economic output and take many households out of fuel poverty. Asked by the moderator about how incomes of local and regional authorities could be increased, Mr Tisley called in particular for a broadening of the taxes that they can raise.

The ensuing debate with the audience built further on the importance of EU cohesion policy to support the transition to a green urban economy, as highlighted for example in the October 2011 "Cities of tomorrow” report from the European Commission. Moreover, the debt limits rules fixed by
the EU were criticised by some as a major barrier for local and regional authorities in undertaking the further green investments and more growth-oriented policy that was required. The necessity for Member States to keep their feed-in tariffs for renewable energies steady was also discussed.

Karl Falkenberg concluded the debate by paying tribute to the valuable experiences from local authorities in financing the transition to a green economy. He believed that the debate had demonstrated that additional financial resources are not always needed to promote the change, but rather a more responsible, sustainable, and clever use and re-allocation of existing financial resources. He also emphasised the urgent need to abandon environmentally harmful subsidies. Moreover, he invited cities to grasp the financial opportunities that lie in securing the sustainable behaviour of citizens. For example, the latest studies suggest that adequate implementation of EU waste legislation would result in 400,000 additional jobs, plus additional revenues for cities. He invited local and regional authorities to take their wealth of ideas in the EU to Rio+20, thereby convincing developing countries at Rio+20 that there is a future case in the green economy, with Europe’s cities sharing their experiences in putting the right frameworks in place to release the innovation potential. Finally, he summarised the activities that the European Commissioner’s Directorate-General for Environment was undertaking to promote the green economy in Europe, ranging from the European Green Capitals Award, which aims to generate competition for better ideas, including financing, for all aspects of resource efficiency, to the mainstreaming of environment into the future Common Agriculture Policy and Cohesion Policy.

"The key concern is not the availability of finance but awareness of where and how we want to spend it.” Karl Falkenberg

In Europe, cities generate around 75% of all CO2 emissions, which is why they need to be at the forefront of the fight against climate change. EU initiatives and programmes have a key role to play through initiating, promoting and connecting relevant approaches across Europe.

The Europe 2020 objective of achieving sustainable growth aims to enhance resource efficiency and to help the EU prosper through low-carbon economic and urban development while preventing environmental degradation and biodiversity loss. It promotes greater water efficiency and the use of waste as a resource as well as the promotion of renewable energies and more efficient energy supply systems.

The Covenant of Mayors commits cities to reducing their greenhouse gas emissions by more than 20% by 2020 and has been signed by over 3 000 mayors from across Europe. The Smart Cities and Communities Initiative, which builds, among other things, on this covenant, will develop a more comprehensive approach to urban challenges in energy, transport and information technologies. Since 2010, the Green Capital Award has sought to provide an incentive for cities to inspire each other and to share best practices in the area of sustainable urban development. Stockholm (2010) and Hamburg (2011) are followed by Vitoria-Gasteiz in 2012 and Nantes in 2013 as role models showcasing high environmental standards and inspiring other cities in the EU.
Greener urban strategies: Rio+20 and the role of cities and regions

The workshop discussed approaches to tackle the environmental impact of uncontrolled urban development and the spread of urban lifestyles, including in particular the pressure of urban sprawl on natural land, the faster consumption of natural resources, or traffic congestion. The workshop showcased projects from cities and regions that had successfully managed to implement a holistic and integrated approach to developing cities and their surrounding territories based on carbon neutrality, minimal use of natural resources, closed economic cycles and social inclusion.

The workshop was moderated by Annette Riedel from Deutschland Radio, with an introduction by Professor Jacqueline McGlade, Executive Director of the European Environment Agency. Case studies were presented by Hanna Gronkiewicz-Waltz, Mayor of Warsaw, Poland, Ilmar Reepalu, Mayor of Malmö, Sweden, Member of the Committee of the Regions and rapporteur for the CoR contribution to the Rio+20 Summit, Jean-Jack Queyranne, President of the Rhône-Alpes Region, France, and Sten Nordin, Mayor of Stockholm, Sweden. Connie Hedegaard, European Commissioner for Climate Action, concluded the debate.

Jacqueline McGlade underlined the need for cities and regions to develop adequate governance structures and spatial planning policies and processes, in order to be able to address the increasing conflicts in land use, for example between green spaces, transport, housing development, and biomass and food production, as they result from climate change, and the necessity to increase cities’ resilience and to reduce their external global footprint. She stressed that many EU policies had indirect spatial implications on cities. She was concerned about the still high annual land uptake in Europe and was pleased that an increasing number of cities are looking into different ways to reduce land uptake and soil sealing, quoting as an example two pilot projects in Germany on tradable land building permits limits. Moreover, she highlighted how a focus on ecosystem services can create direct benefits for urban areas, if cities understand how to manage them as an asset. She referred to the recently launched TEEB Manual for Cities: Ecosystem Services for Urban Management, which makes the case for valuing ecosystem services in cities, for example the regulating services provided by street trees, urban farming, or the potential natural, but also social capital of sustainable brownfield development in cities.

“Spending time and thinking about what the eco-services are within the inner city is not only about the physical planning but it is also about the economic value they bring.”

Jacqueline McGlade
Hanna Gronkiewicz-Waltz gave an overview of the actions that Warsaw, which is a signatory to the Covenant of Mayors, is taking to move to a resource-efficient, low-carbon city. These included the planning of low-carbon districts in former industrial areas, the purchase of new hybrid busses and promotion of public transport and bicycles, the retrofitting of buildings to promote energy efficiency, the installation of a new waste water treatment plant, or energy performance contracting for the street lightning. She stressed that the substantial financial investments that were being made required sound financial planning that managed to combine local funds, national and EU funds and public-private partnerships. She asked that the EU’s new Multiannual Financial Framework should continue to allow for funding of such activities. Asked by the moderator about possible regulatory or other instruments that a city can apply to tackle urban sprawl, Ms Gronkiewicz-Waltz stated that the means can vary, yet called for clear coordination mechanisms. Moreover, she explained that urban sprawl in the metropolitan area of Warsaw is a serious problem and drew attention to the fact that there is no joint metropolitan authority and integrated planning for the sustainable development of the whole metropolitan area. Finally, she felt that a law similar to that currently under discussion in Poland, that enabled metropolitan areas to better coordinate or concentrate their authorities was very helpful in this regard.

Ilmar Reepalu gave an example of his city’s waste management policy, the overall aim of which was to make Malmö a resource-efficient city. Nowadays, only a minor fraction of waste still goes to landfill, with more than 90% of the municipal waste being reused, recycled, used to create biogas or burned in the waste-to-energy facility. He drew attention to the city’s approach of using biogas from organic waste to fuel the city busses: as a further example of urban system innovations, which makes better use of existing financial resources, given the reduced costs for conventional fuel. As for the territorial dimension, he underlined that cities would never exist without their “hinterland” and that a well-thought organisation of this connection would be crucial. He supported, as a good example, subsidies for commuters to use public transport. Such investments needed to be balanced with minimised environmental impacts and reduced spending on additional road constructions or parking areas. Supporting the presentation of Professor McGlade, he also underlined the need for cities to also carefully manage and plan biodiversity and ecosystems within the built environment. This would tie in with the need to change cities’ accounting systems, complementing the GDP with better life and sustainable development indices. Asked by the moderator about challenges for cities to plan and improve citizen’s behaviour, Mr Reepalu underlined the importance of promoting local democracy and enabling citizens to be part of the “sustainable city” vision.

Jean-Jack Queyranne presented the problem of urban sprawl and land uptake in the Rhône-Alpes Region. He believed the answers were to be found in better regulation and spatial planning, better conservation of set-aside land, as well as the promotion of peri-urban agriculture. Furthermore, he emphasised the need for cities to form city-networks on a regional scale and presented the key recommendations of a study that his region had conducted on “redrawing the territorial map”. The study suggested setting a clear priority on improving regional mobility, meaning for the Rhône-Alpes Region in particular further rail investments, reclaiming urban spaces in the context of a greener and inner-city development, and lastly promoting territorial solidarity of cities and the regions’ rural areas.

Sten Nordin presented the ecological city district pilot projects his city was undertaking within the framework of the Stockholm Plan of Action for Climate and Energy 2010-2020, developed under the auspices of the Covenant of Mayors, and describing the city’s ambitious work as regards the climate and energy. Within the ”Sustainable Järva project”, the city improved the energy efficiency of the housing stock built during the years of the Swedish so-called ”Million Programme”. After evaluation and further development, its methods will be used in up to 1500 ”Million Programme” houses belonging to a public housing company. Moreover, he introduced the Royal Seaport project, which will create 10 000 homes and 30 000 jobs, with new buildings and infrastructure based on sustainable and efficient energy solutions, closed circulation/waste recycling systems and smart eco-design. In conclusion, Mr Nordin noted that the ecological city districts would open up

“Both cities and surrounding rural areas have to reflect upon different ways of using resources”.

Ilmar Reepalu
new housing markets, have a high replication potential for other cities, and would make a reality of the vision of a densely populated city with a distinct environmental profile.

The ensuing debate with the audience built further on the importance of territorial solidarity between the different cities, rural areas and smaller municipalities of a region, which follows the model of a “polycentric region”, and sets up appropriate structures to coordinate the various services (for example, education, labour market, environmental services, transportation). Moreover, the depopulation problems of many small shrinking towns in Europe and the need to explore new ways of maintaining stewardship of the natural capital in rural areas were emphasised.

Connie Hedegaard summarised the workshop in eight clear messages:

• Integrated sustainable urban planning is of utmost importance. It needs, for example, to combine spatial planning with ecosystems management and, in particular, much more efficient transport planning. In contrast to cities, the EU had no direct power in this area.

• Climate change policy needs to be mainstreamed in all sectoral urban policies, with a thinking across silos and ownership not only by the environment deputy mayors, but by the city mayors.

• A long term vision for a city is needed, even if this is difficult to agree on and can compete with the short-sightedness of elected local politicians.

• Local authorities need to engage their citizens in a positive vision for their city and better explain the co-benefits for citizens.

• More investments in resource efficiency and recycling of resources (e.g. energy, waste, brownfield development) are needed – their closeness to citizens, compared to the EU, makes cities important for raising awareness on this subject.

• The EU still needs to further improve its sharing of best practices (and also of bad experiences).

• Cities need to attract additional financial resources to their low-carbon and resource efficient development path, be it through private investors, public-private partnerships or EU funding. The EU has proposed a 20% mainstreaming of climate change in the new Multiannual Financial Framework to support this development, yet Member States want to maintain their flexibility in resource allocation.

• There is a need to move beyond GDP – the future economic model needs also to include social and environmental costs. Cities could take the lead on this new way of thinking.

“It would be extremely good for all of us if the cities took the lead in showing us how things have to be much more integrated. This is also true for the way we measure what growth really is.”

Connie Hedegaard
Global European cities are cities that play a role in the European and international economic system (they are not necessarily megalopolises). The plenary session looked into how urban planning, architecture and governance can contribute to enhancing the attractiveness, creativity and connectivity of the cities that further ensure economic prosperity and social cohesion, and create jobs.

The session was moderated by Kim Bildsøe Lassen, from the Danish Broadcasting Corporation. Jan Gehl, from GEHL Architects ApS, made the introductory statement. Speakers included Michel Delebarre, President of the Committee of the Regions Commission for Territorial Cohesion Policy and Mayor of Dunkirk, France; Alija Behmen, Mayor of Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Hella Dunger-Löper, Berlin State Secretary for European Affairs, Germany, and CoR rapporteur on “Future cities: environmentally and socially sustainable cities”.

Jan Gehl gave an inspiring introductory statement on how cities can be made more liveable and sustainable. He underlined that he felt proud and happy to be living in a city like Copenhagen, which has constantly improved during the last decades. He remembered how in the past a major purpose of city planning was to make more room for cars, but this approach took a toll on quality of life in cities. This car-centred approach started changing in Copenhagen about fifty years ago. The objective was to reduce car use and give more room to pedestrians and cyclists. It all started with one street in the city centre, which, despite initial resistance, turned into a great success. Mr Gehl emphasised that in Copenhagen there is a city-wide policy of improving the conditions for pedestrians. Streets which used to have four lanes have been reduced to two lanes, allowing for much more space for pedestrians and bicycles. He also referred to the emphasis put on improving and fostering the cycling experience in Copenhagen, especially since the 1973 oil crisis. Now Copenhagen boasts a city-wide cycling network that constitutes a real alternative transportation system used by 37% of people commuting to work, to the point that there is currently a problem of congestion in the cycling lanes. The solution has been doubling the cycling lanes which made sense because a cycling lane can take five times more people than a car lane. The fact that many of these actions were implemented at a time of financial constraints for Copenhagen demonstrates that policies which improve the quality of urban life do not necessarily require a lot of money. This strategy was replicated in Barcelona in the 1980s and in Lyon in the 1990s. Mr Gehl stated that Copenhagen has experienced a major shift of paradigm. Every city should promote healthy lifestyles through “people-oriented” or “people first” urban policies. Europe was exporting this urban quality philosophy. He concluded his
presentation by referring to New York, which has been awarded Singapore’s Lee Kuan Yew World City Prize for its efforts to make the city greener and more pedestrian- and cycling-friendly, getting inspiration and ideas from European cities.

Michel Delebarre presented four “recommendations” and commented on the proposals included in the legislative package on Structural Funds. His first recommendation was to avoid the usual pitfall of the false distinctions between urban and rural development. He stressed that administrative or legal definitions of a city do not count for much; what counts is the role of cities as places of convergence for social and economic life and the increasing integration of urban and rural territories. Therefore, he indicated that talking about “rurban regions” is probably more accurate and appropriate for describing today’s Europe. Mr Delebarre called on the European institutions to introduce changes in the urban development approach that is emerging from the European Commission’s proposal for the next ERDF regulation. Goals should not only be focused on social and territorial cohesion as seems to be the case with the proposal to allocate at least 5% of cohesion funds to urban development. He pointed out that the urban dimension should be part of a broader regional development strategy that takes into account the role of cities as growth engines for regions. He insisted that the urban strand of operational programmes should consider cities in the context of an integrated approach that would include neighbourhoods, cities, metropolitan areas and rurban zones. He thus pleaded for a more “territorial” type of planning which could tap into different funds instead of a single dedicated fund. His second recommendation was not to set cities off against each other. In this regard, he warned against “ideal cities”, namely those being planned in China, Russia or the UAE. He emphasised that, beyond these urban utopias, a lot is happening on the ground and we might not be paying enough attention to already existing cities that could serve as a model for sustainable development. His third recommendation was to focus on innovative urban projects rather than on just raw statistics. In his opinion, the urban platform proposed by the European Commission should not be based on population numbers but on the quality of integrated urban strategies for sustainable development. As for GDP, Mr Delebarre reminded that it is a simplistic indicator which masks far too much the complexities of territorial cohesion. His fourth and last recommendation was that the European Union should play its part in fully supporting multi-level governance and a partnership approach. Finally he noted that EGTC can play a crucial role in promoting the urban development.

Alija Behmen made the point that cities are engines of cultural and social change and transformation. Each city is like a living organism; every city is different but they also share common features that form the basis for network cooperation. He emphasised that cities are the level of government closest to citizens and they act as link with higher levels of government. Democracy needed above all a responsible and open government which at the city level means reliable and resolute mayors with a clear vision of how to improve urban life. Mr Behmen drew attention to the fact that economic and social changes have brought a new sort of city, the global city. Global cities face complex challenges such as social inequality, the disappearance of small and medium enterprises, the need for highly-skilled workers that sometimes contrast with high school drop-out rates of early school leavers; they are also an important destination for migrants. He warned about the increased dangers of social polarisation. Nevertheless, he stressed that all these challenges can be overcome with good management in the financial and governance spheres. Over the past decades, more and more tasks have been transferred to the local level, but the fact that political decentralisation has not been accompanied by fiscal decentralisation can, in Mr Behmen’s view, undermine good governance in cities. Finally, he referred to urban development actions in Sarajevo that include the regeneration and renovation of existing suburbs, the improvement of the quality of the building stock and the protection of the environment and cultural heritage.

Hella Dunger-Löper expressed her belief that European urban areas belong to European cultural heritage and need a clear vision involving rediscovering the power of local communities and the potential of local democracy as engines of change and integrations. She stressed that instead of building a Europe of markets we need a real social Europe. The promises of social improvement, progress, better education and better opportunities for all need to be materialised and these needs better practices in urban policy. She then illustrated these points with some examples from Berlin. The speaker noted that, after the fall of the Wall, Berlin experienced dramatic and rapid changes that in other cities had taken place over a long period of time. Despite industrial decay, massive unemployment and social tensions, which can have negative effects on social cohesion, after the reunification Berlin managed to identify key areas for its future development. Among them were investments in infrastructure, such as the construction of a new airport, and in science, education and culture. She stressed that...
Berlin is gradually reaping the fruits of this strategy with for example the birth of high-tech clusters. Berlin is now experiencing stable growth; new jobs have been created; its universities are attracting people from all around the world and child-care facilities help people to achieve a better work-life balance. Nevertheless, she stressed that European support is still needed to maintain these initiatives in the future. She also underlined the importance of mobility issues for local economies and quality of life in cities. On the issue of integration and on the way cities deal with migrants she suggested that cities only can be successful if they are open, tolerant and able to integrate people from different religious, linguistic and ethnic backgrounds. This only can be ensured with citizens' participation. In conclusion, she called upon the EU institutions to integrate all mentioned aspects into the future cohesion policy: Europe not only needs rescue packages, it also needs strong cities and more social cohesion.

The importance of active ageing and mobility for all groups were raised as important topics in the debate with the audience. The speeches also touched on the importance but also the risks of flexible work which might oblige people to move too often. It was suggested that the solution could lie in better active labour market policies.

“Urban development does not mean that you invest just in concrete but you have to invest in participation and cohesion, too.”
Hella Dunger-Löper

Recent CoR publications

- **CoR opinion on the Contribution of the EU’s local and regional authorities to the UN Conference on sustainable development 2012 (Rio+20), rapporteur Ilmar Reepalu, president of the ENVE Commission, Mayor of Malmö, Sweden**
  
  In the opinion adopted in December 2011, the CoR calls for explicit recognition at Rio+20 of urbanisation as one of the key emerging challenges that the world needs to address, and for greater support for the exchange of experience and transfer of knowledge on sustainable urban development between subnational governments and local authorities on a global scale.

- **The Governance of Metropolitan Regions – European and Global Experiences**
  
  CoR publication on metropolitan governance, produced in partnership with the Forum of Federations, a result of the conference on the common vision of the "urban dimension" in EU policy.

- **Urban Governance in the EU. Current Challenges and Future Prospects**
  
  CoR publication on urban governance, focusing on strategic and forward urban planning across Europe. It gathers material from a number of conferences on urban matters including territorial governance and environment and demographic change.

- **The European Union and the Urban Dimension**
  
  The report commissioned by the CoR attempts to identify urban realities in Europe and addresses the theme of integrated strategies for the sustainable development of territories and ways of regulating them within cities and urban regions. It also covers the role of the EU and Member States in building the urban environment and discusses the future options opened by the Europe 2020 strategy for cities and urban regions. An executive summary was distributed during the Summit.

- **The future of EU cohesion policy as seen by regions and cities**
  
  A CoR brochure on future cohesion policy for the period 2014-2020 looks at both the strengths of cohesion policy and the challenges it faces. It explains the CoR's position on the Commission's legislative proposal and gives an insight into the ongoing political debate.

All publications are to be found on the CoR website [www.cor.europa.eu](http://www.cor.europa.eu)
The city in its environment: synergies between cities, towns, villages, regions and rural areas

This plenary session looked at best ways to organise peri-urban spaces to ensure mobility, shared responsibility, funding and the best use of resources. Many European cities are of medium size and create economic wealth, social cohesion, a good quality of life and cultural and technological innovation only through interaction with the cities or towns that surround them and in association with higher administrative levels, particularly regions.

Alfonso Vegara, architect from Fundación Metrópoli, offered in his keynote speech some thought-provoking ideas on cities as the new actors in the global economy. Ramón Luis Valcárcel Siso, First Vice-President of the Committee of the Regions and President of the Murcia Region, Spain; Wolfgang Schuster, Mayor of Stuttgart and President of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) and Enrico Rossi, President of the Tuscany Region, Italy, and Member of the Committee of the Regions joined a debate moderated by Kim Bildsøe Lassen, from the Danish Broadcasting Corporation.

Alfonso Vegara called for a culture of innovation as the only strategy that ensures cities’ long-term sustainability. The world will see a new scale of cities, which will imply a new scale of competition and require a new scale of thinking and planning: examples he gave were the “America 2050” supercities model, with ten emerging megaregions in the USA, the “European Diagonal Network” model, expanding from Lisbon to Milan, including 135 million inhabitants within a four-hours travel time by high-speed train, or urban innovation in the emerging “Malacca Straits Diagonal” between Penang and Singapore.

Moreover, he quoted findings that in the next 30 years, cities would receive investments estimated a $350 trillion (seven times the world’s GDP in 2010) for the construction, management and maintenance of urban infrastructures. He drew attention to the fact that the economic sector of urban solutions will achieve an unprecedented relevance in this context. These major investments will be detrimental to our planet, if they do not adhere to sustainability criteria. However, they also bring key opportunities for the green economy. Many major (IT-) companies were discovering the market of smart and green urban solutions. He believed that there are lessons to be learnt from Singapore for urban innovation in Europe: as the most innovative city in Asia, the development of Singapore was based on a “living laboratory” approach, which included attracting innovative business, becoming a reference site for the first adoption of their urban solutions and then exporting these solutions worldwide.
Mr Vegara then presented the City of Bilbao and the Basque Country as examples of how to boost urban innovation in Europe. He focused on three specific projects. First, he gave an overview of the project of transforming Bilbao into a knowledge-society economy, following a phase of urban transformation symbolised by the so-called “Guggenheim effect”. This included for example the development of a future Technology Park in the city centre, the conversion of the inner-city motorway into public parks, and the focus on three major innovation axes. Second, he presented the project of “Bilbao Next”, a new metropolitan area, which aims to place Bilbao in the new economic order, by thinking outside the traditional municipalities’ borders and making full use of improved transportation systems. Finally, he introduced EUSKADI, a city innovation platform created in the Basque Country.

Ramón Luis Valcárcel Siso shared some reflections on the historic development of the European city model, with emerging urban sprawl undermining the image of the historic cities. He advocated an end to urban sprawl and stressed that urban planning disciplines gave local decision-makers a huge number of ideas to transform their cities and to redefine the interaction between urban and rural areas. He supported the “compact city model”, as promoted for example by the European Environment Agency, as the new sustainable urban development model for European cities to follow. There was a clear link between the “compact city model” and the Europe 2020 strategy. Reducing transportation needs and resource efficiency would contribute to sustainable growth, reinforcing neighbourhood relationships would contribute to inclusive growth, and promoting a new economic and more competitive urban fabric would contribute to economic growth. He stressed that further indicators and research was needed to support this development.

The speaker showcased the specific situation of his city and the region of Murcia. The city of Murcia was a complex metropolitan area covering several municipalities, surrounded by the “orchards” area with its important cultural and natural heritage. He outlined some tools the city and region of Murcia are using to protect these rural areas as a key element of territorial cohesion, including spatial planning guidelines that were established for the whole region, or the participation in the European, EU-funded “Reverse” project, which looks among other things on how to link the city with the surrounding environment, inner-city gardening, or protection of urban ecosystems.

Wolfgang Schuster believed that Europe’s cities will in future be increasingly interlinked, due, for instance, to the expansion of digital networks and increased mobility. He therefore called on the audience to think of European cities on a “larger scale”, which he considered the only way for Europe’s cities to function and compete at global level. This entailed for example further investments in high-speed train connections and bigger research and innovation clusters. Moreover, he stressed that cities were already interlinked in socio-economic and cultural terms at a regional scale, including the provision by their surrounding territories with ecosystem services such as water, energy, food and recreation. Various types of cooperation structures and agreements had been successfully put in place by cities, their neighbouring municipalities and surrounding regions to address and coordinate these link-ups. Such cooperation often involved a joint public transport and fare network, a joint regional and spatial planning to limit urban sprawl, agreements on financial transfers, and joint marketing for tourism and regional business development. However, Mr Schuster believed that there was no one-size-fits-all approach: custom-made solutions were needed that were adapted to the local circumstances, based on partnership instruments rather than on additional administrative layers. He in particular stressed that continuous improvements in mobility solutions and in improving carbon efficiency were necessary.

In conclusion, Mr Schuster drew consequences for future EU cohesion policy: in order to create the right balance between cities and surrounding regions and to support the key role cities play in territorial cohesion, cohesion policy should apply to both cities and regions, promote integrated sustainable urban development and support the move to a “governance in partnership” based on effective collaboration of all governance levels, as a pre-condition for efficient implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy. In this context, he believed that was more than ever vital that Europe’s “family” of local and regional authorities and their institutions and associations speak with one voice.

“There is a strong link between the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and the development of the European city model.”

Ramón Luis Valcárcel Siso

“What we need is governance in partnership with all levels working together to find and implement joint solutions.”

Wolfgang Schuster
Enrico Rossi gave an overview of the challenges that his region faced in territorial cohesion. The major challenge was climate change, resulting, for Tuscany, in increased droughts and flooding of cities, and highlighting the importance for cities of sustainable land use management in the rural areas surrounding them, including in particular forest management, soil protection and water retention measures. Moreover, investments were being made in rural areas to promote new forms of agricultural production and tourism, in order to attract young people to stay in or to move to the countryside and to limit the depopulation of small villages. Other priorities for Tuscany to ensure territorial cohesion were the reduction of urban sprawl and the promotion of renovation of existing buildings, improvements in public transport, and the roll-out of broadband. For all these actions, co-funding by the EU, be it agricultural funding or from the European Social Fund, had been crucial and Mr Rossi stressed the need for ongoing European projects and funding to further assist the EU regions. In summary, Mr Rossi said that in order to be efficient, a holistic approach at regional level is needed, integrating the various cities and the countryside of a region, based on the principles of co-existence, subsidiarity, governance in partnership and closeness to the citizen.

Kim Bildsøe Lassen invited Alfonso Vegara to comment on differences between the Singapore and the European city paradigm. He stressed that, in contrast to Singapore, whose experienced professionals had helped develop cities for example in China and India for instance, Europe could make much better use of its potential as a global frontrunner in the field of sustainable cities, offering an unprecedented opportunity for European construction and other industries specialised in green city innovations. Asked whether cities should not only aim to create new job opportunities for the young generation, but also protect existing employment and skills, Wolfgang Schuster replied that a combination of both approaches had to be applied and new pathways followed that would make it possible to tackle youth unemployment. He advocated flexicurity tools as a possible solution, as using them had helped Stuttgart successfully maintain jobs during the economic crisis. Following a call from a participant for a new societal consensus at the level of regions and solidarity between cities and rural areas, he underlined the importance of a systematic policy for rural areas, aimed in particular at ensuring sufficient basic supply.

The European Commission adopted legislative proposals for cohesion policy for 2014-2020 in October 2011. In order to strengthen the role of cities within the context of cohesion policy, these proposals aim to foster integrated urban policies in order to enhance sustainable urban development. The European Commission feels that cities are the engines of the European economy and can be considered as catalysts for creativity and innovation throughout the EU. Some 68% of the EU population lives in a metropolitan region, and these regions generate 67% of the EU's GDP. However, they are also the places where persistent problems such as unemployment, segregation and poverty are at their most severe. The policies pursued in relation to urban areas therefore have a wider significance for the EU as a whole. The various dimensions of urban life – environmental, economic, social and cultural – are interwoven and success in urban development can only be achieved through an integrated approach.

The closing session benefited from the insights of Martin Schulz, President of the European Parliament; Helle Thorning-Schmidt, Prime Minister of Denmark and President-in-office of the Council of the European Union and Mercedes Bresso, President of the Committee of the Regions.

**Martin Schulz** noted that cities were always at the heart of Europe and had a great power of attraction. By 2050, 80% of the world’s population would live in cities and this situation would create new challenges. According to Mr Schulz, a cornerstone of the European social model is open and equal access to utilities and public services and it was up to the EU to guarantee adequate standards thereof. However, the crisis affected many public services. Cities had to deliver more with less budget to satisfy citizens’ basic needs. This was the first challenge. Secondly, during the industrialisation era, urbanisation occurred and was based on cheap and unlimited oil supplies. Nowadays, urbanisation should continue without polluting the climate and it thus needs sustainability, development and innovation in order to do so. Finally, cities face the challenge of social exclusion.

Cities of tomorrow need to embark on a new vision to tick the boxes both of energy efficiency and of social inclusion. Sustainability and innovation were two sides of the same coin. Mr Schulz emphasised that local and regional authorities are key players in ensuring social cohesion, an inclusive society, a reduction of CO2 emission and efficient, environmentally friendly transport. Success also depends on support from citizens. European cities have, historically, been spaces of democracy, where citizens share responsibilities and ownership of political commitments. EU influence on local and regional level has increased over the last few years. Europe is people-centred, governed by the principles of decentralisation, subsidiarity and being close to its citizens. On the other hand, urban policy is becoming more prominent on the EU agenda. Mr Schulz noted that for the years 2007-2013, EUR 21,1 billion was budgeted to support projects in urban areas. The JESSICA had been created to support regional and local investments. Local and regional authorities are also vital partners in achieving the goals of the EU 2020 strategy including smart and sustainable growth. In order to achieve the EU 2020 goals and avoid the traps of the Lisbon strategy, it is essential to strengthen cooperation between local authorities, local parliaments, national parliaments and the European level. Mr Schulz concluded that the EU budget is not a deficit budget but the biggest stimulation for growth in Europe. While cutting the budget, the heads of states or governments diminish their own growth potential, which was also true for net contributors. Regions and cities will have to bear the financial burden if EU funding is removed from cohesion policy. Liveable and economically strong cities need ambitious investments and, in the end everyone will profit from sustainable and inclusive growth.

**Helle Thorning-Schmidt** praised the conference as a facilitator of sound debate on the key challenges that Europe faced today. She pointed out that regional and urban identities were older than nationalities; they had a long history of competition and exchange and they were the key drivers which need to be protected today. While Ms Thorning-Schmidt called for greater discipline for the national budgets, she felt that fiscal consolidation is only one way of sustaining and modernising the European social market economy. She saw the need to modernise the current market model to give it more core values such as solidarity, social security and equal opportunity.

“Europe will only be able to maintain its advantage of being a ‘first mover’ in the green economy if we act ambitiously in engaging national governments but also regions and cities, international organisations and the private sector”.

**Martin Schulz**

“...The development of cities will determine the future of our planet. A Europe centred on the concerns of the people is a Europe of cities and municipalities: decentralised, respecting subsidiarity, more democratic and close to the citizen.”

**Helle Thorning-Schmidt**
The speaker stressed that the role of mayors of cities and heads of regions was crucial in the EU’s transition to a green economy. She noted that climate change and energy efficiency have been on the Danish agenda for years and that the City of Copenhagen and the Capital Region of Denmark have taken steps to diminish CO₂ emissions, in the same way as many other cities and regions in EU. This shows that the green agenda is not only a European and global issue but a regional and urban one too. Climate change has become part of urban policy and city authorities are in the front line of the sustainable development by implementing urban renewal, greener transport systems, or efficient heating systems. She called on national authorities to mainstream urban sustainable development in the national policy planning.

Ms Thorning-Schmidt underlined that sustainable development and green growth were vital aspects of her government, as the necessary political agreement had been achieved for their plan, seemingly the most ambitious in the world. The key element of this plan is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 34% by 2020; in turn, 35% of energy consumption will come from renewable sources and the construction of windfarms, which would produce resources equivalent to the consumption of 1.5 million homes. As a result of this agreement, approximately 8,000 green jobs will be created in the energy sector.

Ms Thorning-Schmidt acknowledged the difficulties accompanying the transition towards a green economy, as people might well have to deal with crises, austerity measures and unemployment and, from that perspective, sustainable development would seem very remote. Nevertheless, she believed that the EU cannot afford not to embrace this green growth, as it would enable the creation of knowledge-based new jobs in green energy and would thus free the EU from oil dependency. In support of her statement, she cited data gathered by the European Commission: investments in innovation will require a reduction by 80% of greenhouse gases emission and will generate 1.5 million jobs. According to the Commission’s estimates, the energy efficiency directive is expected to deliver additional 2 million jobs. She called for the creation of green jobs as soon as possible and pointed out that appropriate legislation was the first step in the right direction. Europe would only be able to maintain its advantage of being a “first mover” in the green economy if all stakeholders are engaged.

Mercedes Bresso congratulated the Summit participants for achieving the goal of putting European cities at the heart of the debate. The CoR President stressed, as the final message of this Summit, that cities were the future of Europe and they held the key to a European “renaissance”: cities that are not surrounded by walls or motorways, but by streets, squares, open places where community life was built up and citizenship could be expressed. She called for decentralisation where administrative and territorial borders blur, opening up endless possibilities for fostering rural-urban relations. Ms Bresso said that one of the challenges to be faced is the harmonious development of a territory and rational use of its resources. She called for synergies between villages, cities and regions. She emphasised that cities are on the front line for driving sustainable development, by overcoming challenges such as climate change, excessive use of natural resources, housing policy, urban regeneration, renewable energy production, reduction of greenhouse emission, better management of waste and less polluting public transport. All these aspects are to make citizens’ lives easier and cities more beautiful. In addition, cities and regions have to deal with education, training, health, mobility and requirements from business and industry, supporting research and innovation and striving to become more competitive. Against this backdrop, the support of cohesion policy was more crucial than ever. She called on the EU institutions to support cities as vital elements in the democratic process with a pivotal role to play in bridging the gap between the EU and its citizens.

After viewing the video messages from the Presidents of the CoR Political Groups, Ms Bresso read out the Copenhagen Declaration, which had been agreed by the Bureau of the Committee of the Regions the day before and invited the Summit participants to express their support by acclamation.

“Our towns and cities, together with rural municipalities, constitute the most noble level for exercising solidarity: intergenerational and intercultural solidarity, coupled with guaranteed access to public services and to decent housing and, above all, a rejection of spatial segregation.”

Mercedes Bresso
Study Tours

The City of Copenhagen and State of Green, the official brand for energy, climate adaptation and environmental activities in Denmark, offered Summit participants four study tours to green projects.

On the Waste-to-Energy study tour, participants learned that every day Amager forbrænding relieves the inhabitants and companies of the five capital municipalities Dragør, Frederiksberg, Hvidovre, Copenhagen and Tårnby of their waste and supplies energy to their households in return. In total, this amount to 420,000 tonnes of waste which is converted into electricity and district heating supplying approximately 100,000 households.

On the Green Building, Green City study tour, participants learned about the City of Copenhagen’s 2025 strategy for sustainability and had the opportunity to see one of several harbour baths and to visit BIG’s prize-winning 8 House (8-tallet). At 8 House, closeness is the watchword in the 60,000 m² building; the tranquillity of suburban life goes hand in hand with the energy of a big city.

The boat tour to Middelgrunden offshore wind farm showcased Denmark’s achievement as the first country in the world in which wind power represents more than 20% of the electricity supply. It is realistic to assume that, by 2020 wind power should represent 50%. The Middelgrunden offshore wind farm supplies some 3% of the electricity consumption in Copenhagen.

The Avedøre Power Station study tour gave participants the opportunity to visit a combined heat and power plant that has facilities consisting of several parts which, combined, can make record-high use of the energy in the fuels. By simultaneously generating heat and electricity, the plant utilises as much as 94% of the energy in the fuels and has an electrical efficiency of 49% - an achievement that makes the unit one of the most efficient in the world.

Follow-up

Rio+20: the future we want for Europe’s Regions and Cities

The findings of the 5th European Summit of Regions and Cities and the exhibition will be used as part of the CoR contribution during the Rio+20 summit (20-22 June). Conclusions from the workshops and extracts from the Copenhagen declaration feature in a brochure setting out CoR activities in the run up to Rio+20 and key messages on the green economy and governance. This new publication will accompany the side event being organised by the CoR in the EU pavilion at the Earth summit on 21 June. The objective is to provide information about the key role of regional and local authorities in decentralised cooperation and international environmental governance and to showcase best practice in sustainable development/green economy.

Beautiful, green, smart and inclusive: Colourful cities

The exhibition will be shown on CoR premises between 7 May and 1 June - including during the Forum on the Common Strategic Framework on 10 May, the inter-institutional Open Doors Day on 12 May, when about 3,500 visitors are expected, and the European Green Week from 22 to 25 May. Finally, on the occasion of the OPEN DAYS (8-11 October), the exhibition will be set up in the European Commission headquarters, the Berlaymont building.
We, the Members of the Committee of the Regions, the elected representatives of the European Union's local and regional authorities,

Whereas the changes experienced by European cities over the centuries have helped to reorganise population distribution, to encourage trade and to foster creativity in various fields of law, politics and economics;

Whereas industrial change, globalisation and the advent of new information and communication technologies have brought about disparities between cities, deriving from natural, structural or historic constraints or from institutional capacities that are sometimes lacking;

Whereas cities have to meet the ever more pressing demands of their inhabitants at a time of public finance cuts and provide a satisfying and inspiring social framework that embraces both architectural quality and better access to services;

Whereas, 20 years on from the third Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, the goals of sustainable development and reducing poverty have yet to be achieved, and the Rio+20 Summit will be an opportunity to renew political commitment to global, joined-up action to achieve sustainable urban development;

Whereas there are many European examples that illustrate how local potential is rising to the internal challenges of cohesion, security, unemployment and poverty and to the external challenges associated with the environment, migration and international competition;

Declare that the European Union has a key role to play in reducing regional disparities, not least by means of an appropriate European budget, a stronger cohesion policy and a political and legislative framework that is conducive to the development and autonomy of cities;

State that the European Union’s work can have a tangible impact only if cities and regions are given a central role in implementing the Europe 2020 Strategy and made full partners through multilevel governance;

Stress that cities are vital tiers in the democratic process, which, as part of multilevel governance and a better implementation of the subsidiarity principle, can develop new forms of citizen participation in public and political life;

In order to secure greener, more beautiful and more attractive cities, we confirm our commitment to climate-neutral cities that are economical in their consumption and efficient in production. Spatial planning must ensure symbiosis between urban and natural areas while preserving and enhancing natural and cultural heritage, including architectural heritage;

We point out that cities are in the front line when it comes to promoting sustainable development by means of housing policy, urban renewal policy, resource management policy (including renewable energies, water and waste) and urban transport policies that give priority to public transport and "soft" transport measures;

In order to secure more inclusive cities, we acknowledge the fact that cities are first and foremost places of "coexistence", where inclusiveness must be an ongoing goal, which means making public services accessible to all, refusing to allow ghettoisation, responding to situations of poverty and promoting a social mix in communities, including through policies encouraging active ageing, social innovation and mutual support between generations and cultures;
In order to secure more competitive cities, we stress the need for cities to invest as a priority in human capital, education and health, physical infrastructure and new technologies, with a view to developing innovation, research and creativity leading to the creation of high-quality jobs and helping to improve the standard of living;

In order to integrate cities more closely with their regions, with a view to the harmonious development of urban and rural areas, we would like to see the strengthening of cities’ links with European transport networks and of their capacity to develop trade and ties with the surrounding peri-urban and rural areas, so as to help them avoid urban sprawl, to encourage the formation of a balanced network of small and medium-sized towns and to promote local agricultural products;

We call:

• on the European Union to work towards these goals by providing financial support for a cross-cutting urban policy for the Europe of tomorrow;
• for the Europe 2020 strategy to be localised in order to empower regions and cities to spearhead a bottom-up dynamic of innovation;
• for European policies to give greater priority to territorial cooperation between European cities;
• for the role of cities and regions in framing and piloting European policies to be strengthened, in particular as regards integrated strategies for sustainable regional development and a carbon-free economy;
• for the participation of cities and regions to become mandatory as part of the systematic practical implementation of multi-level governance;
• for the decentralisation process underway in most European Union Member States to be taken further, and cities and regions granted greater financial autonomy;
• for European policies to promote the role of “local task forces” made up of elected representatives, practitioners and civil society players who are capable of successfully bringing about change, by involving other partners in integrated, cross-sectoral approaches;
• for this vision of tomorrow’s cities, the role of urban policy and the European social model to be upheld and championed at the Rio+20 Earth Summit and within other sustainable development initiatives such as the Covenant of Mayors. The Rio+20 Summit should, in particular, recognise the need to mainstream sustainable urban development policies as a key ingredient in national sustainable development policies.

Copenhagen, 23 March 2012
Media

A media partnership was agreed with 'euronews', which reported and broadcast about the Summit. In the context of the 'metropolitans' format, good practices from the cities of Malmö, Dunkirk and Lorca were broadcast by 'euronews' before and during the Summit and others will follow. 'euronews' issued a global “Focus” on 23 March, alongside interviews with UNEP Director Achim Steiner, Frank Jensen, Lord Mayor of Copenhagen and António Costa, Mayor of Lisbon, recorded during the Summit.

A TV studio was set up which was used not only by 'euronews' but the European TV journalists, who interviewed several speakers, including the President of the European Parliament, Martin Schulz. The CoR communications team used the studio to conduct interviews with several speakers and delegates, including the Danish professor of urban design, Jan Gehl.

The 70 or so print, radio and TV journalists who came from all over Europe to attend the event were also invited to two press conferences where they were given the opportunity to put questions to the President of the European Parliament, President of the Committee of the Regions, the Lord Mayor of Copenhagen and the President of the Capital Region of Denmark.

The two days of the Summit were covered by live web streaming via the CoR homepage. In addition, a twitter discussion was launched at the same time and integrated into the web streaming page, via the hash tag #corsummit.

Survey results

An online survey was launched on 26 March inviting participants to indicate their views on the content, quality and logistics of the event. An overwhelming majority of 80% appreciated the relevance of the chosen topic, the choice of speakers and moderators and the format of sessions and debates, while over 90% expressed their satisfaction about the organisation and communication prior to the event. The main critical remarks addressed the gender balance of the panels and it was felt that more workshops with fewer participants would encourage a more interactive debate.