(Towards an) EU urban agenda

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European Commission
Regional and Urban Policy

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## EU focus on cities and urban development

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<th>DG/ Agency</th>
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What is the issue?

- Europe is urban
- Cities are key actors in - and for - Europe

BUT... is this reflected in
- ...political priority setting?
- ...policy coordination?
- ...governance?

Is policy in EU adapted to urban realities?
Do we need an **EU urban agenda**?
Response to the calls for an EU urban agenda from Member States, the European Parliament, UN HABITAT, the Committee of the Regions, city stakeholder organisations

Debating at European level

- the urban dimension of EU policymaking
- cities' key role for EU & national policy implementation.

http://ec.europa.eu/cities
Regional & Urban Policy

Questions debated

1. *Why* do we need an EU urban agenda - what is it that needs to be made to work better? Participation of cities in EU policy? Helping cities achieve EU objectives? Awareness of cities’ needs and potential? Improve sector coordination? Improve multi-level governance? ...?


Strong demand for an EU urban agenda

- increase the **quality, efficiency** and **effectiveness of policies** through
  - **better coordination** of policies, actors and governance levels; and
  - **better understanding** of urban development contexts in the conception and implementation of policies

- strengthen **cities’ engagement and ownership** of EU and national policymaking and implementation

- support **cities’ capacity for transition and structural change** to ensure viable urban economies and a socially, environmentally and territorially sustainable development of urban areas.

- **Framework for action; Flexibility; No new legislation; Subsidiarity**
A European model of urban development

- Shared visions and principles...
  - ...of urban development [Liepzig Charter, Toledo Declaration]
  - ...of territorial development [Territorial Agenda 2020]

- Territorial Cohesion objective

- Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union + the European Social Model + ....

- *Is the European model sufficient to guide [sector] policies at EU level?*

- *What should be our objectives?*

- *What instruments?*
Next steps

- Not a single process resulting in a single document
- Different actors with different roles in parallel and partly overlapping processes
  - Intergovernmental cooperation led by the Netherlands;
  - Committee of the Regions will adopt own initiative opinion
  - Eurocities, CEMR, etc. develop own positions
  - UN Habitat seeks a global urban agenda
- The Commission plans to adopt a Communication and launch a public consultation on the "what?" and the "how?"
Problematic issues

- EU vs European urban agenda?
- Role of different governance levels?
- Urban vs. Territorial Agenda?
- Is small vs. big cities an issue?
- Urban poverty
  - Address causes or treat symptoms?
  - Policies at what level?
  - What is the urban dimension of poverty?
  - ...
Thank you!

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