



EFP Deliverable– WP 5.25 – Policy Brief

EFP Policy Reflection: Urban Europe development of Foresight Themes

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Joint Programming Initiative – Urban Europe National Policy Activity

**URBAN EUROPE
developed three
Foresight topics**

The Joint Programming Initiative – Urban Europe plans a foresight activity with a time horizon of 2050+. In the present pre-foresight phase, the EFP workshop in April 2011 led to the elaboration of three foresight topics within the JPI of which the first shall be realised in this year.

Taking up the holistic approach of URBAN EUROPE this offers potential for the following investigations:

- Conditions and requirements for radical urban innovations and pioneer cities – Topic: Urban megatrends and innovation drivers
- Understanding the role of cities as part of (international) city-networks - Topic: European networks of cities
- Adaptability of cities and the requirement to manage uncertainties – Topic: Adaptive urban regions

In November 2011 a multi-national workshop was organised by the JPI in cooperation with EFP. Participants came from the JPI and participating countries (Austria, France, Finland, Netherlands and Germany) both from ministries and from research organisations. The foresight topics were further developed using the expert inputs.

This policy paper summarises the three topics identified

Topic 1: Urban megatrends and innovation drivers

Megatrends and the Cities are the places where the main future innovation needs will materialize



related opportunities for cities

first. They are the places where megatrends, i.e. major and long-standing trends in society, economy and technology, will show their full impacts. This is a big challenge, but it also offers major opportunities for cities to position themselves as pioneering innovation leaders. If they manage to provide the right conditions and settings, they can both stimulate and enable innovative activities, and at the same time tackle long-term urban development challenges.

Pioneering in urban living labs to tackle Grand Challenges

Development areas within cities and urban periphery can be seen as eco-systems or living labs where such new innovation opportunities can be pioneered and put into practice. They can be understood as breeding places for innovations attracting creative and knowledge workers taking advantage of cultural and professional diversity. The challenge is how to set up such innovation hubs in a global context, how to ensure that the most promising themes are addressed, and how to make them attractive. What are the key success factors for such pioneer hubs? Which conditions, management concepts, infrastructure and/or diversity are crucial for establishing and maintaining such hubs?

Explore the role and prospects for 'urban intelligence' in the face of major challenges

In the face of these challenges, cities need to become more strategic, innovative and adaptive to exploit upcoming opportunities; the reality is, however, that many forms of governance are slow, inefficient and obsolete. Against this background, the core concepts and objectives of a first Foresight activity can be summarized, as to explore the role and prospects for 'urban intelligence' in the face of major challenges that cities are likely to face in the future:

Topic 2: European networks of cities

Coopetition of networks of cities

We are facing a competition of global regions and of world cities for motors of growth. In the BRIC countries, fast growing megacities and networks of cities are already competing with Europe on many levels. The core question is: what will be Europe's challenges and competitive advantage in the light of global long term dynamics? How can cities within networks manage and benefit both from cooperation and competition? Can this be improved intentionally, e.g. by public policies? What should strategic policy instruments look like? How can urban regions, nation states and the European Project benefit from connectivity taking into account all forms of physical linkages (mobility, logistics, ICT ...).

Demonstrate how networks of cities can find a balance between

The main goal of the foresight should be to develop shared visions and options for the future of European networks of cities and or a specific network of cities, involving stakeholders from several cities. This should demonstrate how a concrete network of cities can identify win-win



competition and cooperation

situations and to find a balance between competition and cooperation. Such networks of cities could be defined in terms of interactions involved (scientific cooperation, knowledge based services, value chains, innovation processes ...) or in terms of urban infrastructures (e.g. energy, housing, transport, ICT ...), industry, diversity and cultural aspects.

Topic 3: Adaptive urban regions

Multi-level, multi-actor governance processes and participation in policy development

An Adaptability Foresight could address topics as broad as city management, infrastructures, urban ecology or uncertainty management helping to better understand and anticipate challenges ahead of us in a world of growing population and megacities, shrinking or growing populations in different European cities and agglomerations, growing conflicts, shrinking resources and global and local climate change.

How to adapt to Grand Challenges with respect to city management and urban infrastructures?

The most important question to be asked is: How can urban regions become able to adapt to new and often unexpected opportunities and threats influencing their development as centres of economic activity and the wellbeing of the urban population?

Furthermore, infrastructure related adaptability strategies could be addressed in order to deal with the core question of how to develop and maintain urban infrastructures in the light of expected and yet unexpected environmental challenges related to local climate change and resource availability. This could take into account the consequences of the financial crises on public and private budgets for large scale investments and maintenance costs.



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