

To:
ECTP-CEU Exco/GA

Report:
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Ref:
DG meeting (UDG/NTCCP)

The Joint **Meeting of Directors General** Responsible for Territorial Cohesion, Spatial Development and for Urban Development was held under Lithuanian EU Presidency in Vilnius, 20/21 November 2013.

1. The **Reference Framework for Sustainable Cities (RFSC)**, which is in the stage of implementation, needs to be secured for continuity. The tool is free of charge, available for every European municipality and utilization does not influence EU (co-) funding of municipalities. The Commission (DG Regional and Urban policy) was asked to organize institutional embedding. It was proposed to include RFSC management in Urbact, and DG Regio accordingly increases Urbact funding. Now the challenge is to interest cities using it.

ECTP-CEU should interest planning practitioners and communicate the availability of RFSC. Invite RFSC to give a presentation in our GA.

2. EUKN presented an extensive study about **migration** in Europe. Distinction was made in terms of in-and out migration on the European level, within the member states and the regions, specifying in short term and long term, youth and pensioned people, economic and political motives, and cultural relations. Those flows were related to growing EU: plus eight new countries and plus two new countries and effects of crisis. The EU north, central countries seem to benefit more than others. (Lithuania lost in few years more than 20% of its population, making London second large Lithuanian populated city)
3. The preparation of an **EU Urban Agenda** has been initiated by the Dutch Ministry of Urban affairs, supported by Belgium. It promotes to discuss content of urban issues rather than procedures in UDG, and make UDG more meaningful and effective. It is proposed to develop a rolling agenda enhancing continuity in the work of UDG and relate/merge with NTCCP. Member states are invited to propose issues, mentioned were: reduced energy use, aspects of multi-level urban policy, urban poverty and migration. The Commission (DG Regional and Urban policy: DG R&UP) is fully aware of the central role of cities as motors of development, but is in the position that all sectors contain urban issues and do not automatically see the importance of integrative approaches. DG R & UP prepares Urban Forums, which works on raising the urban profile, together with

Parliament and Committee of the regions. Several countries point to the need of planning the activities and coordinate with Territorial Agenda. All countries support the initiative. NL will summarize the issues raised in the discussion and will check the understanding, prepares ideas for next steps, proposes content issues in next UDG meeting and will coordinate with the work of the Commission.

On behalf of ECTP-CEU this initiative was warmly welcomed. But for successful implementation involvement of practitioners requires special attention in order to develop feelings of co-ownership. Reference was made to the Charter of European planning, which could be a contribution to a vision for European cities. The Commission's intention to involve stakeholders in urban policy-making was promising. ECTP-CEU is happy to contribute.

4. **UN Habitat** invited UDG/NTCCP to contribute to next Habitat Conference. Most country representatives expressed willingness to contribute. It was recommended to liaise with the national Ministries of Foreign Affairs, responsible for development aid.
5. The Polish initiative for a **Roadmap to Integrated Spatial Development** within the framework of EU Territorial Agenda 2020, resulted in a report that promotes: cities as motors of development, an urban agenda, functional areas rather than administrative areas, place-based differentiation and to use spatial development as a neutral basis for policy-making. There is no need to change regulations but the willingness to cooperate of sectors is needed. Spatial planning is challenged to convey the message that integrative approaches may increase the effectiveness of other sectors. DG R&UP notices that the new instrument Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI) takes functional areas as territory, and that Territorial Impact Assessment is in use (for EU policies). Besides there will be a study about territorial aspects of sector policies.
6. ESPON and DG R&UP presented two studies about the **territorial effects of the crisis**, regarding GDP, migration, employment etc. As a surprising conclusion it was noticed that second tier cities do not belong to positive exceptions.
From our side the question was raised which better indicators would represent quality of life. (The categorization of first (capital cities), second etc tier cities seem to implicitly project Christaller's analysis on expected growth). Whereas the studies indicate irrelevance of those analytical categories. It is more interesting to look at the place-based characteristics or even peculiarities cities have, which are not or almost not affected.
7. Luxembourg presented for approval the envisaged organisation of **ESPON** post 2013 as a request for endorsement of the Cornerstones. The proposal was approved by all, so mainlines are settled. Ideas/comments for elaboration are requested to be sent to ESPON Managing Authority in Luxembourg.

ECTP-CEU president to write a letter requesting involvement of planning practitioners in preparing research programmes in order to create co-ownership, which is important for successful application of ESPON results.

- 8.** Greece presented its envisaged ideas for next EU Presidency, which will include a Ministerial conference. Priorities will be: Growth of jobs, integration within the EU zone and migration/mobility and as cross-cutting issue through these priorities the maritime policy.

JCV
Soest 22/11/13