

Metropolis
Commission 3
2nd working meeting, Barcelona, 5 - 6 October 2010

(Welcoming - 6 October - 9:00)

(Greeting)

I am happy and grateful to be here, at the second working meeting of the METROPOLIS Commission on Integrated Urban Governance. First, I would like to thank the City of Barcelona, for hosting not only the Board of Directors meeting, but also our C3 meeting yesterday, and today. I express thanks to the Secretariat General of Metropolis. They obviously have done a marvellous job in preparing the meetings taking place during this week.

As you may know, Porto Alegre and Mexico State hold the vice presidency of our Commission on Integrated Urban Governance, while Berlin holds the presidency. On behalf of our Senator, who is the Commission president, I am therefore pleased to welcome you to this event today.

We will have a real working meeting today. Not that you were not working yesterday! We had interesting and useful case studies presented and an impressive field visit yesterday. Today, however, we will deal with the core of our work: the manual on Integrated Urban Governance. After additional case studies presentations, in the form of posters, we will start work on the manual. The Berlin team has prepared a draft version which was sent to you some weeks ago. The team depends to a large extent on your experience, your comments and suggestions, in order to make the manual as useful as possible, for cities all over the world.

All these cities face large-scale and complex challenges. Globalisation, the recent economic downturn and financial crisis, are factors behind many developments in recent years. Like a lot of other cities, we in Berlin have realised that many challenges and tasks cannot be dealt with successfully in the traditional way, with each of the municipal departments working on its own. Cooperation between departments and inter-disciplinary action are becoming more and more necessary. Potential in civil society needs to be tapped, and our citizens need to become involved in decision making.

This was one of the lessons Berlin learnt during the years after unification, when two very different 'cities' - East and West Berlin - had to be turned into a single socio-spatial urban entity, through urban planning and management. There were no examples to follow, no experience to draw on. Politicians and administrators on their own were not able to tackle the challenges of unification. We needed to rely on the knowledge, experience, sometimes on visions, of experts who were not civil servants, from the commercial sector and NGOs, or members of the public. I know of no other city in which there were such intensive public discussions taking place, about urban development in general, also about individual projects themselves, which was our experience in Berlin during the 1990s.

Well, now we have completed unification – in spatial, in infrastructure terms, and also in our minds. Nowadays, we are facing new challenges. Socio-spatial segregation, fragmentation, difficult social and economic situation of some neighbourhoods: these are issues we now have to tackle. We are currently working on a socio-spatially oriented approach for the whole city, as part of our framework strategy for socially integrative urban development. This integrated approach is already being tested and further developed in some city districts. Its main

characteristic is close cooperation between municipal departments and between disciplines, and by extensive participation of civil society.

So, you see, Berlin has learnt many positive lessons in the field of Integrated Urban Governance. And we have had many successes. But, we have made some mistakes, there are things we need to improve. Yesterday we had a presentation about the 'neighbourhood mothers' project, where in particular we aim to reach socially disadvantaged women and families – many have an immigrant background. A good project – after all, it received a Metropolis World Award in 2008. All the same, we still have not yet achieved the success we would like in reaching these groups.

Several Metropolis cities have had similar results using integrated approaches. We only need to think of participatory budgets in Porto Alegre, or activities in the City of Barcelona, as we saw and heard in presentations yesterday. But in these cities too, there is still a lot of work to do.

This conviction prompted us to set up the Metropolis Commission on Integrated Urban Governance, as a platform to exchange information and experience. Berlin's integrated approach, for example, has on the whole had positive results. However, it has involved a steep learning curve. Other cities have had similar experience. We hope to learn from these lessons, so that our future practices can be fine-tuned.

And we want to share this experience and day-to-day practice, this learning process, with Metropolis and also non-Metropolis cities which are not members of our Commission. The manual is the means to do so.

So - let's now start work on this.

Thank you very much.