



THE NETWORK
OF MAJOR
EUROPEAN
CITIES

WHY EURO CITIES?

Many cities are reviewing their international activities in the context of budget pressures. This paper sets out the case for membership of EURO CITIES by elaborating, with some examples, the following four reasons:

1. Profile

- *An international profile for your city*
- *Building your city's reputation*

2. Influence

- *Shaping the EU agenda*

2. Resources

- *Financial resources: longer and shorter term*
- *Learning resources: professional and organisational development*
- *Information resources: expert advice*

3. Value

- *Six networks in one*

1. Profile

An international profile for your city

EURO CITIES provides a high-profile international platform for ambitious, outward-looking cities. Participation earns international visibility both for your city and the achievements of its political leadership. EURO CITIES events allow you to showcase your achievements to your peers and to influential stakeholders internationally. Hosting such meetings multiplies these benefits. There are also many opportunities for members to represent EURO CITIES at international conferences.



"Hosting the EUROCITIES conference in 2005 was part of Lyon's strategy to gain international recognition. It means better visibility for the main city actors while being able to promote local best practice." Gérard Collomb, Mayor of Lyon, France

Building your city's reputation with the European institutions

The greater your city's involvement in EUROCITIES, the greater are the opportunities to build your reputation by leading on policy issues and representing the EUROCITIES network to the EU institutions. Mayors of cities chairing EUROCITIES forums or elected to the Executive Committee meet bilaterally with European Commissioners and are invited to informal ministerial meetings organised under the rotating EU presidencies. EUROCITIES members are also well placed to take advantage of periodic offers for cities to pioneer European initiatives.

"We became the forum chair for the EUROCITIES economic development forum at the end of 2010. This will help us to build our reputation as experts in cohesion policy or urban regeneration, e.g. when we represent EUROCITIES at meetings with the EU budget or regional policy Commissioners." Ryszard Grobelny, Mayor of Poznan, Poland

2. Influence

Shaping the EU agenda

It falls to local authorities to implement some 50% of EU legislation. Yet the policy dialogue at European level is largely among national governments and the EU institutions. We improve the design and delivery of EU programmes by ensuring they are developed with input from city government. As an acknowledged partner in Brussels, EUROCITIES marshals evidence and ensures that the critical role of cities in Europe's future success is not only understood and but also supported.

The credibility of EUROCITIES as a lobby comes from our extensive transnational membership. Our member cities between them govern a quarter of the EU population, more than any single member state. Because we speak for a distinct, Europe-wide constituency of interest, EUROCITIES provides a powerful political platform.



EUROCITIES is often involved and consulted as an acknowledged stakeholder in EU policy development. Our representative constitution means that the Commission and the Parliament rely more on our views than on those of any single city.

In July 2010 the Council of Transport Ministers endorsed an EU-wide Action Plan for Urban Mobility, presented by the European Commission after two years of lobby work by EUROCITIES. This provides the policy basis for future EU funding to cities for transport projects.

3. Resources

Financial resources: long-term urban priorities and shorter term projects

Much of EUROCITIES' efforts are geared towards making the strategic case for more powers and resources for Europe's major cities. As a result of our lobbying, many EU policies and programmes have an urban dimension - not only those concerning regional development but also policies on, for example, transport, energy, innovation, culture and the social agenda. This creates opportunities for your city to draw on structural European support over a sustained period.

But the 'network effect' of EUROCITIES also means that you have potential partners for short-term European projects ready to hand. Such projects offer cities the chance to bring in often quite significant sums of money to help them deliver their priorities in a particular field, such as climate, mobility, social inclusion or ICT. By virtue of the working relationships created through our forums and working groups, all it takes is an email or a few phone calls to bring together a convincing partnership of major European cities for a transnational project bid.

The integration policy experts gathered in EUROCITIES Migration & Integration working group won EU funding of almost €1m to run peer reviews between 16 member cities and launch the EUROCITIES Integrating Cities Charter.



Learning resources: professional and organisational development

Participation in the EUROCITIES network brings real development benefits for individuals, whether politicians or technical and political staff. Seeing how your colleagues in other European cities deal with similar challenges, and understanding better the strategic context of your work, widens horizons like no other experience. This builds capacity and inspires new thinking back home, bringing real benefits to the organisation as well as to the participating individuals. It is a real strength of our network that among our 140+ member cities there are more than 2,000 people engaged in EUROCITIES' six forums and 40 working groups. All bring local expertise and experience not only to share with each other, but also to inform European policy-making.

And despite the advantages of face-to-face networking, you don't have to travel to benefit. As budgets tighten, much can be achieved through email, conference calls and virtual working.

*"In one hour or less [at a EUROCITIES forum] talking about involving communities in regeneration I learnt more than I could ever learn in weeks sitting at my desk and talking to colleagues just in our city."
Simon Underwood, Lead Officer for International Relations,
Newcastle-on-Tyne, UK*

Information resources: expert advice

EUROCITIES members have the benefit of access to our strong team of European policy experts in Brussels. Our web site is a resource in itself, with a members' area offering partner search and discussion forum facilities alongside news and background information, and access to all our analytical and policy papers. Our monthly EUROCITIES FLASH reports the network's activities and carries updates on new developments. Our Brussels secretariat provides regular funding forecasts giving early warning of project opportunities, and guides to funding programmes when the calls for projects are published.

*"The EUROCITIES Funding Forecast is an excellent tool that allows us to have a head-start on identifying opportunities to apply for European funding. We also use the Partner Search service to find cities with similar interests to join our bids."
Miłosz Gos, Warsaw, Head of International Projects*



4. Value

Six networks in one

With a single EUROCITIES subscription you can network in six forums - economic development, environment, culture, social affairs, mobility and knowledge society. And joining up these agendas through the EUROCITIES network also provides a powerful overview of EU policy. The forums meet up to three times a year around Europe, spawning working groups, projects, dialogue and events. These create opportunities for participation right across your city government. You can even involve your local partners (eg, universities, development companies, NGOs) as expert guests when relevant.

Example: "Many international networks are focused on just one theme, like transport or environment. EUROCITIES' great strength is its capacity to join up these separate issues so we can see where EU policy can be more coherent, particularly in supporting an integrated approach to urban development." Heidi Hesske, Deputy Head of the International Affairs Office, Leipzig, Germany

Further information

If you need further information, materials or advice please do not hesitate to contact Tara Schneider Appriou, who oversees membership relations:

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Tara can also arrange bilateral meetings with secretary general Paul Bevan, or other senior colleagues, either in Brussels or in member cities.

July 2012