



**EUROCITIES  
Forum**

**Economic Development**

**strategy paper 2014**

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<b>Associated partners</b>	<p>Almere - Bakirkoy - Donostia-San Sebastian - Fuenlabrada - Linkoping - Netwerkstad Twente - Preston - Reims metropole - Saint-Nazaire - Wolverhampton</p>
<b>Associated business Partners</b>	<p>GDF Suez</p>

## Contribution of the forum to the EUROCITIES work programme 2014

The EUROCITIES work programme 2014 focuses on three policy priorities: citizens, jobs and climate.

The economic development forum will actively contribute to all of the EUROCITIES priorities:

- to the **citizens** theme mainly through WG Cohesion Policy, WG Entrepreneurship and SMEs, WG City Attractiveness and WG Integrated Urban Development.
- to the **jobs** theme through the work of the whole forum as well as working groups: WG City Attractiveness, WG Cohesion Policy, WG Entrepreneurship and SMEs, WG Innovation, WG International Economic Relations, WG Integrated Urban Development, and WG Metropolitan areas.
- to the theme of **climate** mainly through the work of the WG Entrepreneurship and SMEs, WG Integrated Urban Development and Metropolitan Areas.

## Forum priorities for 2014

### 1) Employment and entrepreneurship

Increase self-employment; focus more on start-ups and microfinance; support EU businesses moving up the international value chain through trade with emerging economies, and in particular the BRIC countries; encourage vocational and entrepreneurship education. Explore potential projects through COSME and other relevant programmes and instruments.

### 2) Innovation

Open and smart cities, smart specialisation, cross-sectoral cooperation, cross-innovation and spillovers from creative industries to other industries and triple-helix cooperation. Explore potential projects through Horizon2020 and other relevant programmes and instruments.

### 3) Area-based cooperation

Working at different levels from the neighbourhood to the metropolitan area level through integrated approaches in urban development, planning and urban regeneration schemes. Promoting the importance of metropolitan areas - fostering a better recognition of metropolitan cooperation by EU institutions.

## Operational / forum management issues

EDF has a steering committee, composed of the Chair and Vice-Chair of EDF, and the Chairs of the working groups, and EUROCITIES policy advisor and other colleagues supporting working groups of the forum, which acts as a strategic board for the forum.

The forum meetings are always organised following a standard format which is then adapted:

*Wednesday afternoon:* steering committee, working groups meetings in parallel and an informal dinner.

*Thursday:* working groups meetings, business meeting, visits and official dinner

*Friday morning:* thematic conference and goodbye lunch.

## Forum meetings

The economic development forum will meet 2 times in 2014:

- 1) In Utrecht on 26-28 February on 'Resourcing the local green economy'
- 2) In Brno in September on 'metropolitan cooperation'

3) but will have an extra meeting with only WG meetings in Brussels in June.

### **Working groups**

EDF has 7 working groups in 2014: 3 WGs receiving policy support from EUROCITIES Brussels office: WG Cohesion Policy, WG Entrepreneurship and SMEs, and WG Innovation - 4 WGs receiving administrative support: WG Integrated Urban Development, WG Metropolitan Areas, WG City Branding and Attractiveness and WG International Economic Relations.

#### **1. WG Cohesion Policy (Leipzig)**

##### ***Main objectives:***

- establish overview and gather evidence of the implementation of the urban dimension in the new structural funds.
- close regular contacts with the European Commission regarding the implementation of new instruments (incl. Innovative Actions, ITIs, CLLD) and involvement of cities in the programming phase
- active involvement at EU institution events on Cohesion Policy
- ensure visibility with the new MEPs in EP REGI post European elections

##### ***Proposed actions:***

- follow-up of the implementation of SF regulations and evaluation of involvement of cities in the process
- Urban Forum and urban agenda (including new urban challenges)
- overview of allocations to urban areas in the next round
- follow-up of the implementation of innovative actions through meeting with DG REGIO
- following the implementation of ITIs and CLLD through meetings with DG REGIO
- continuing relations and meetings with DG REGIO, EU Presidency and EP REGI Committee on the implementation of the urban dimension of the new regulations
- continued input into the structured dialogue with DG REGIO/EMPL
- establishment of strong contacts with the new members of EP/REGI after the European elections
- follow up of implementation of transnational programmes: URBACT, INTERREG
- feedback on the use of new financial instruments in cities
- increased co-operation with other WGs: Integrated Urban Development, Metropolitan Areas, ESF Task Force

#### **2. WG Entrepreneurship and SMEs (Glasgow-Liverpool; Barcelona)**

The WG will help the forum to achieve its central objective of 'employment and entrepreneurship', and especially focus on supporting business creation and development, and also skills development.

##### ***Main objectives:***

1. Exchange between member cities with the aim of developing new policies and instruments to support entrepreneurs and SMEs on the following issues:
  - a. development of local strategies to support SMEs and entrepreneurs.
  - b. internationalisation of companies, particularly in view of how they can take advantage of COSME programme.
  - c. financial support and access to finance, by municipalities and private capital for instance venture capital.
  - d. development of latent entrepreneurs including those aged 50+, young people (addressing high youth unemployment), from ethnic and migrant communities and disabled entrepreneurs.
  - e. improved rates of entrepreneurship among women.

2. Lobbying European institutions to make sure cities' support to entrepreneurs and SMEs is recognised and supported. This includes:
  - a. funding programmes: COSME programme 2014 - 2020; Horizon 2020.
  - b. other initiatives including: European Small Business Act, Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs, European Enterprise Awards.
3. Contribution to Economic Development Forum meetings.
4. Cooperation with other EUROCIITIES relevant working groups

***Proposed actions:***

- the WG will help the forum to achieve the goals outlined in the 2012 EUROCIITIES' response to both COSME and Enterprise 2020 consultations
- three WG meetings alongside EDF: in February (Utrecht), June (Brussels) and September (Brno).
- EDF in Utrecht focusing on 'Resourcing the local green economy: with a joint meeting with WG Greening the local economy of our environment forum
- improved collaborative working and exchanges of information between member cities of the WG.
- analysis of the main obstacles for the internationalisation of companies.

**3. WG Innovation (Netwerkstad-Twente)**

The innovation group will work on the development of next generation cities through the review of innovation systems and processes - providing a platform for exchange of experiences among cities.

***Main objectives:***

- to understand and review how innovation systems and processes are being implemented across the EU and the role cities can play.
- to examine existing EU funding projects on innovation and other relevant research findings in order to improve (urban) innovation policies.
- to review programmes that stimulate or support innovation in Europe and elsewhere.
- to produce a report that identifies strategic policy options for local government to establish innovation processes/structures to maximise growth.
- focus on specific drivers of innovation such as open data, financing and skills.

***Proposed actions:***

- members of the WG will be asked to make presentations on their city's (open) innovation structures at WG meetings.
- members will also be asked to answer questionnaires in order to prepare the report on cities' (open) innovation structures and give comments to the draft report.
- wherever possible the WG will make use of EUROCIITIES new web based tools to encourage maximum participation.

**4. WG Integrated Urban Development (Munich, Stockholm)**

The WG aims to improving cross-sectoral and integrated work and develop policy recommendations on how to better support integrated urban development - in relation with the Leipzig Charter for sustainable European cities and its implementation.

***Main objectives:***

- learning through exchange
- improve integrated planning, development, and implementation in concrete projects
- consider spatial dimension in all projects and policies

- foster cross-sectoral and integrated work within EUROCITIES
- special focus on Smart Cities and Communities projects for strategic development and urban district development.
- explore how to involve citizens and organisations in urban planning

***Proposed actions:***

- themes for the year: Densification and participation; funding integrated projects; CO2 neutral urban development
- 2 meetings alongside the forums and one additional meeting in Berlin in May
- close cooperation with EDF host cities to prepare site visits and in-depth knowledge of local examples relevant for the WG
- networking between different EUROCITIES Working Groups (cross-visits) and common meetings
- presentation of insights and recommendations for daily practices

**5. WG Metropolitan Areas (BrabantStad, Oslo)**

Advising EUROCITIES on issues around metropolitan governance and integrated local planning.

***Main objectives:***

- Learning through exchange on key issues and mechanisms for regional cooperation for cities in metropolitan areas:
  - strategic planning
  - urban-rural issues
  - governance
  - transport and flows
- Recognition for the role metropolitan areas play in execution of Europe2020 goals in EU and national policy

***Proposed actions:***

- promotion of results of the MAIA research
- policy input, follow up implementation of EU funding in practice - dialogue with EP UIG, DG Regio, OECD, and possibly others
- conference within European Parliament early 2014
- strengthened dialogue with, or even support from, ESPON or other EU research/regional programme -> follow up link with ESPON TANGO project and MAIA.
- meetings: at EDF in Utrecht, additional meeting in Terrassa, in Brno in combination with EDF Sept. 2014. Possible joint meeting with Cohesion Policy working group in June 2014, Brussels.

**6. WG International Economic Relations (Utrecht, Espoo)**

***Main objectives:***

- exchange knowledge on how to organize international relations together with other players in the area and define the role of the local government. See examples of successful trade missions including costs/results/benefits/businesses involved.
- collect facts and figures about European economic trade/export/import and type of economic activities. Explore European funding possibilities.
- exchange knowledge on doing business with US/Russia/Brazil.

***Proposed actions:***

- description of the role of the municipality in international economic relations; 'to do and not to do list'.
- knowledge on European Funding for international economic relations and how to organize a successful trade mission as a municipality.
- knowledge on doing business with US/Russia/Brazil and facts and figures on European business outside Europe.
- 3 meetings: Utrecht in February, Brussels in June, and Brno in September.

**7. WG City Branding and Attractiveness (Genoa, Rotterdam)**

The WG focuses on building the identity of the city: using city branding/marketing can reinforce strategic plans for growth and prosperity by attracting investment, business, people and tourists.

***Main objectives:*** Share and develop knowledge and experiences about the concept of branding/marketing in the different cities and areas.

***Proposed actions:***

- sharing good practices on competitive identity, role of stakeholders, funding, media partnership, and the role of social networks
- involving international experts
- developing case stories
- analysing existing projects and developing a common project
- opening up the working group to new partners in EU neighbouring countries in particular
- 3 meetings planned in 2014
- continuing cooperation with Citylogo (project funded by URBACT programme)

**Contribution to the European policy processes**

The European agenda is driven by the Europe2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. Therefore most of the forum's contribution to the European policy process will be driven by this strategy. Amongst the foreseen activities, these themes will be tackled:

- implementation of Cohesion policy programmes 2014-2020
- innovation and economic development policies, including implementation of programmes such as COSME and Horizon 2020

**Cooperation with other EURO CITIES forums**

- culture forum: on cohesion policy and creative industries.
- environment forum: on cohesion policy, and financial and growth issues from an economic and sustainability point of view, cooperation on climate and energy efficiency with WG Integrated Urban Development (IUD). Also for the preparation of the EDF meeting in Utrecht and in particular the joint meeting between WG Greening the Local Economy and WG Entrepreneurship and SMEs.
- knowledge society forum: on cohesion policy, entrepreneurship and SMEs and innovation, Smart Cities and Communities.
- mobility forum: on cohesion policy, cooperation with 'Metropolitan Areas' WG on the issue of flows between cities and the surrounding region, cooperation with WG IUD.
- social affairs forum: on cohesion policy, entrepreneurship and SMEs, employment, innovation, on housing issues and densification with WG IUD and Metropolitan Areas.