



EUROCITIES - city of Rotterdam high level event
Skilling up for jobs in cities: making the most of the Urban Agenda for the EU
21 September 2016

AGENDA and CONCEPT NOTE

Venue: Rotterdam City Hall, Coolingsingel 40, 3011AD Rotterdam

09.30-10.00	Arrival and registration/welcome coffee
10.00-10.10	Introductory remarks - Ahmed Aboutaleb, mayor of Rotterdam
10.10-10.30	Keynote speech: The people, their skills and the city of the future Marjolein ten Hoonte, Director Labour Market Developments & Corporate Social Responsibility - Randstad Group, The Netherlands
10.30-11.45	Political roundtable - Skills development: the role of cities in the Urban Agenda for the EU and the New Skills Agenda for Europe <i>Moderator: Eddy Adams</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ahmed Aboutaleb, mayor of Rotterdam- Manuela Olhausen, member of Munich city council- Andreas Schönström, deputy mayor of Malmo- Daniël Termont, mayor of Ghent- Tanja Wehsely, member of Vienna city council- Dana-Carmen Bachmann, head of unit, DG Employment, European Commission- Nicolaas Beets, Dutch urban envoy- Marie-Louise Rönnmark, member of the Committee of the Regions
11.45-12.15	The regional institute for transition in the food sector: matching skills with local needs
12.15-13.15	Lunch
13.15-14.30	Thematic workshops Interactive discussions for city officers, stakeholders and institutional representatives on: <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Unlocking potential skills for the next economy With contributions from Ekaterina Travkina (OECD-LEED), Andre Richier (European Commission DG GROW)b) Promoting skills development for social inclusion With contributions from Irene Psifidou (CEDEFOP), Paul Comyn (ILO), Sung Lee (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning)



This event has received financial support from the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation "EaSI" (2014-2020).
For further information please consult: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/easi>
The information contained in this publication does not necessarily reflect the official position of the European Commission.

	c) Tackling the skills mismatch and promoting employability With contributions from Jan Noterdaeme (CSR EUROPE), Dana-Carmen Bachmann (European Commission DG EMPL)
14.30-17.30	Study visits Boat trip including visit to Port of Rotterdam (politicians only) Study visits to relevant projects/initiatives on skills development
17.30-19.00	Reception - with the presence of European Commissioner Pierre Moscovici Venue: Wilhelminakade 139, 3072 AP Rotterdam

A. Why focusing on skills development at local level?

Skills have become the global currency of the 21st century. Without proper investment in skills, people languish on the margins of society, technological progress does not translate into economic growth, and countries can no longer compete in an increasingly knowledge-based global society. But this 'currency' depreciates as the requirements of labour markets evolve and individuals lose the skills they do not use. Skills do not automatically convert into jobs and growth.

The global economic crisis, with high levels of unemployment, in particular among young people, has added urgency to fostering better skills. At the same time, rising income inequality, largely driven by inequality in wages between high and low-skilled workers, also needs to be addressed. The most promising solution to these challenges is investing effectively in skills from early childhood, through compulsory education, and throughout a working life.

Cities play a role and can do even more in addressing the most important challenges related to skills at local level in particular:

- Developing the right skills to respond to the needs of the labour market.
- Ensuring that where skills exist they are fully utilised.
- Tackling unemployment and help young people to gain a foothold in the labour market in a way that makes best use of their skills.
- Stimulating the creation of more high-skilled and high value-added jobs to compete more effectively in today and tomorrow's global economy.

B. Objectives of the event

1. Promoting a political debate among city politicians and high level representatives from the EU institutions on how to build on the role of cities in the skills development field: in particular, politicians should have the opportunity to express the need for a Urban Partnership on jobs and skills, and to cooperate with member states and the EU institutions in the framework of the New Skills Agenda for Europe;
2. Engage in a close dialogue with relevant stakeholders on how to increase the impact of skills development policies at local level (businesses, trade unions, VET agencies, NGOs) with the aim also of exploring future partnerships in this field.



This event has received financial support from the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation "EaSI" (2014-2020).
For further information please consult: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/easi>
The information contained in this publication does not necessarily reflect the official position of the European Commission.

3. Organising technical workshops with the aim of exchanging on best practices, innovative solutions and lessons learnt on skills development at local level. This will contribute to strengthening our network capacity on the theme of skills development.

C. Participants

We are aiming for 70-80 participants including:

- Politicians from European major cities;
- City officers;
- Representatives of EU institutions;
- Representatives from national governments;
- International organisations (i.e. OECD-LEED, ILO), business organisations (such as CSR Europe), NGOs and other relevant stakeholders;
- Rotterdam partners/International Advisory Board;
- Regional representatives from the metropolitan region of Rotterdam / The Hague;
- European Commission and relevant agencies representatives.

D. Background

The employment crisis

The employment situation in Europe remains critical. In the EU as a whole, over 24 million people were unemployed at the end of 2014. Over five million were young people under the age of 25, and 12 million had been looking for a job for one year or more.

The challenges are well documented: low levels of growth and job creation and a mismatch of skills with labour market needs; high youth unemployment and a growing number of young people not in employment, education or training (NEET); rising numbers of long-term unemployed and early school leavers and persisting barriers to labour market access for many groups.

The role of urban areas in employment policies

We need a holistic approach that takes into consideration the contributions that cities can make in developing effective inclusive labour markets to tackle effectively the challenge of work in Europe, and achieve long term sustainable solutions.

The right mix of supply and demand-side interventions, which will come from combining job creation measures with active labour market policies, needs to be tailored to the needs of different city labour markets. This requires collaboration between cities, employers, educational and training bodies, NGOs, financial institutions, trade unions and experts.

Creating the right conditions and quality of life for people, investment, innovation and businesses to thrive is heavily dependent on local factors. Cities are hubs of economic activity and key players in stimulating local labour markets, brokering partnerships locally to connect employers, universities and training institutions; supporting business creation and entrepreneurship; and creating apprenticeship programmes.

Assisting those most in need and furthest from the labour market to enter, or return, to the labour market also requires a local approach.



This event has received financial support from the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation "EaSI" (2014-2020).
For further information please consult: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/easi>
The information contained in this publication does not necessarily reflect the official position of the European Commission.

New opportunities and challenges

In the future, trends such as climate change, resource scarcity, digitisation, robotics, reshoring, electric vehicles, etc. will play a decisive role in our economy and society. Combined with the ongoing urbanisation, the focus of the 'next economy' is therefore increasingly shifting to urban regions in Europe, such as the metropolitan region of Rotterdam-The Hague. This digital, circular and network economy will bring about big changes, also offering opportunities for new economic activities. It is necessary to create a high-innovation ecosystem which will attract high-growth business and highly skilled people to capitalise on these opportunities.

As an example, within the metropolitan region Rotterdam/The Hague, this idea of innovation is already in practice. The Roadmap Next Economy (RNE) is expected to bring investments and projects which will contribute to the economic transition and will boost employment growth.

At the same time, there is the need to reflect on how the actual economy sectors are changing and to what extent traditional sectors are undergoing a massive process of change due to the globalisation of production processes, to the digitalisation and other factors. Particular attention must also be paid to skills development and training measures to tackle this issue.

Main EU policy processes

The **Urban Agenda for the EU** formally approved on the 30th May will bring together the European Institutions, member States, cities and relevant stakeholders, to ensure the urban dimension is strengthened in EU policies. The Urban Agenda identified 12 priority themes, one of which is Jobs and skills in the local economy. The Urban agenda foresees also the possibility to develop thematic European partnerships with the aim of strengthening the cooperation between EU institutions, Members states and cities. Establishing a Urban partnership on Jobs and skills in the local economy would be a great opportunity to capitalise the work that cities do in fostering employment and to maximise the impact of EU initiatives at local level.

The European Commission has launched in June the **New Skills Agenda for Europe** which sets up forthcoming actions to address the main current challenges faced in Europe: the lack of relevant skills to match labour market needs, the insufficient transparency of skills and qualifications, and the difficulty to anticipate and forecast skills. The role of cities is recognized in the Agenda, in particular in the implementation of the Skills Guarantee and of the Skills Profile Tool for Third Country Nationals'. Cities experience and expertise is therefore crucial for the implementation of the actions proposed by the European Commission and can help contributing to the objectives of this Agenda.



This event has received financial support from the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation "EaSI" (2014-2020).

For further information please consult: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/easi>

The information contained in this publication does not necessarily reflect the official position of the European Commission.