



25th November 2008

**Final statement
by the ministers in charge of urban development**



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**Appendix to the final statement
by the ministers in charge of urban development
for implementing the Leipzig Charter**

The Leipzig Charter on the European Sustainable City, adopted on 24 May 2007, made the following recommendations:

- 1 - Greater benefit can be derived from an integrated approach to urban development policy by:
 - exploring in each Member State the possibility of formulating an integrated urban development programme ;
 - creating and conserving high quality public spaces;
 - modernising infrastructure networks and increasing energy efficiency;
 - focusing on a policy of active innovation in education and training.

- 2 - Special emphasis to be given to deprived urban neighbourhoods in the context of all the cities involved by:
 - sustaining the strategies for upgrading the physical urban environment; notably in terms of high architectural quality and urban design
 - strengthening the local economy and local labour market policy;
 - developing an active policy for education and training in favour of children and young people;
 - encouraging the setting up of an efficient affordable sustainable urban transport system for all.

The Leipzig Charter and the Territorial Agenda are based on the Member-States' conviction of the need to promote the EU territorial cohesion whilst going on towards the Lisbon and Göteborg strategies goals;. The synergy between these approaches is explained in the Green Book of the European Commission on Territorial Cohesion (6th October 2008), , which recognised the essential role of cities in Territorial Cohesion which recognised the essential role of cities in Territorial Cohesion. The intention is to raise the profile of existing and future community policies and to ensure they are fully aligned Reports by the European Parliament, the Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee, as well as the resolution of the European Parliament on the follow-up of the Territorial Agenda and the Leipzig Charter entitled "Towards a European action programme for spatial development and Territorial Cohesion", all meet this approach.

Against this background, it has become necessary for all participants to come together and construct tools for the operational application of the Leipzig Charter and to make these tools available to the relevant stakeholders, to the cities, to other public authorities, to the scientific and technical community, to the private sector, and to non-governmental organisations representing the inhabitants and users.

1 - General principles for implementing the sustainable city

1.1 The sustainable city concept goes back to the Aalborg Charter adopted in May 1994 by the participants at the conference on sustainable cities, which began preparing the local agendas 21 in Europe. These actions enabled many cities and local authorities to equip themselves with reference frameworks for sustainable development to strengthen their policies and ensure that the concept of sustainability was embodied in their plans and projects. Some of these approaches have been singled out, analysed and disseminated through European programmes for exchanging and

promoting good practice. These experiences have shown that attempts to standardise these initiatives in one form or another face significant practical barriers to implementation. The idea of a standardised prescriptive European reference framework for sustainable cities is therefore inappropriate.

1.2 The integrated approach to sustainable urban development is based on harmonisation and synergisation of all public policies that affect the city, from the European level to the municipal level. This will require the development of new ways of organising territorial governance and partnerships between the different levels of administration and other relevant stakeholders.. This is a matter that demands the full attention of the European Union and Member States.. The substantial differences in skills distribution between national, regional and local levels, from one Member State to another, supports the need for very open mechanisms for partnership and cooperation.

1.3 Sustainable development is based on the interaction of three pillars: environmental, economic and social; and how they are integrated and tackled through multi-level governance structures. The European strategy for sustainable development calls for public policies to go beyond traditional sector-based approaches to meet the new challenges confronting the Union by promoting joined- up action on the three pillars. The 4th Report on Economic and Social Cohesion by the European Commission also proposes to take into account these new stakes.

2 - Towards an overarching, flexible open reference framework

2.1 The operational application of the Leipzig Charter implies that all the stakeholders may use a transversal tool that goes beyond traditional sectoral and institutional based approaches. Such a tool should allow all stakeholders, regardless of their culture of origin, the interests they represent or the instruments they use, to interact on the basis of objectives, criteria, methods and measurement instruments defined together. Local stakeholders can complement it and shape it to meet specific local circumstances.

2.2 The task is therefore to devise an open methodological reference framework. This framework could take the form of a questioning and analytical tool that could serve as a medium for debate and a joint search for converging pathways to progress. The differing or conflicting approaches to sustainable, integrated urban development should not be an obstacle to developing more shared solutions.

2.3. The elements that make up the tool should be sufficiently wide-ranging to have the potential to be applied in a variety of urban settings, They might be made more specific and, under the principle of subsidiarity, might even be quantified by stakeholders in the course of local debate on the specific characteristics of their urban spaces..

2.4 This is a tool for local debate and dialogue between different levels of governance. It should not be a tool for third parties to evaluate urban policies. On the other hand, this tool should facilitate access to knowledge of good practice and existing methods for developing locally produced indicators and could support measures to follow-up the implementation of integrated, sustainable and cohesive urban development approaches or the absence of this.

3 - General architecture of the reference framework:

The approach is based on participation by all stakeholders of the city: local authorities, businesses, professional associations, the scientific community, non-governmental organisations, inhabitants

and users. These stakeholders should be able to set up centers under the responsibility of the local authority concerned. The purpose of these colleges would be to:

- select the questions to be included;
- make a joint assessment of the situation in regard to the objectives of sustainable development;
- identify areas for improvement and open up avenues for further investigation;
- select indicators, where appropriate.

The centers could be greatly assisted by the following tools:

3-1: A thesaurus of questions

This thesaurus would be made up of a number of questions related to the themes taken up by the Leipzig Charter and form a core narrative that could be gradually expanded. It would be open so that problems could be considered from the viewpoint of specific local characteristics. These questions should be classified by themes and structured by order of importance.

3-2: A thesaurus of good practice:

The tool would be designed to link these questions to examples of good practice identified, more specifically under European programmes. These questions should be presented in a structured form and should use a common language. The information available would emphasise how these practices could be reproduced.

3-3: A thesaurus of indicators:

Some of these examples of good practice give rise to precise quantitative or qualitative indicators. The tool would give access to methods for calculating these indicators while stressing the precautions to be taken in their use. It would also allow to devise the necessary methodologies for the definition and assessment of quality indicators when it proves more difficult to measure these from a purely statistical point of view.

Furthermore evaluation tools should be available to describe the impact of the policies and measures taken.

In order to implement such a process there could be a need for some technical assistance, in the frame of the implementation of the reference framework mainly for the preparation, monitoring and reporting of the debates; and also for the presentation of the final outputs. This is the reason why it seems useful to organise professional training for these tasks: those professional partners could also play an important role for the capitalisation and dissemination of the results, and processes, and for their on-going improvement.

4 - Methods and agenda for producing the reference framework

To define the architecture and specifications of this reference framework, the French presidency has relied on the support of a pilot group made up of representatives from the Member States, the European Commission, local authority networks and experts on the city.

The French presidency proposes that the production of this reference framework involves two groups:

4.1 A high level group, led by France, made up of representatives of Member States, European institutions, representatives from local authority networks and professional associations and of the

civil society. The Urban Development Group (UDG) would undertake the role of monitoring committee for this group, which would report to the directors general and ministers of urban development.

4.2 A cities work group set up as part of the URBACT II programme and led by one of the cities.

The two groups would work in close coordination, the role of the high level group would be to build the reference framework, based mainly on the experiments, reactions and proposals of the “cities” group. This would include an analysis of how the urban dimension of the operational programmes and national urban policies has been implemented. The role of the “cities” group would be to examine and test existing reference frameworks and proposals by the high level group on specific examples of “test cities”, and to provide a corpus of “good practice”.

The results of the work of these groups should be presented at the 2nd semester 2010 at the latest.

EU urban development ministers met in Marseille on 25 November 2008 at the invitation of the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union to discuss the following topic: *"The sustainable and inclusive city"*.

The European Commissioner for Regional Policy, representatives of the European Parliament, representatives of the Committee of the Regions and the Economic and Social Council as well as representatives from the EIB attended the meeting.

The Presidency also welcomed representatives from candidate countries for accession to the European Union, neighbouring countries and several non-governmental organisations.

The meeting formed part of a set of three linked informal meetings, covering housing and territorial cohesion as well, allowing all these essential components of any integrated urban development policy to be addressed together.

This meeting took place in a context of global financial economic and social crises which could have a considerable impact on the lives of our fellows-citizens and on whole sectors of our economies. We have to use these pressures as an incentive to keep a firm steer in favour of sustainable and cohesive urban development, the only way to maintain new growth without creating any territorial and social disparities.

The need for an urban approach of public policies

-A- In historical and cultural terms, cities are a fundamental and decisive part of European identity. They determine the polycentric structure of European territory and cover up to 70% of the European population. The cities are a social reality and a reflection of social and political choices. As an interactive point of connection between the social, economic, political and environmental domains, and between players in the institutional, private and voluntary sectors, cities are a major positive force in and for Europe. As key players in global competitiveness, they are the main drivers of economic development and innovation. They are large centres of employment, business-to-business services and higher educational and research institutions, providing the services and social and cultural networks needed to ensure that residents enjoy a good quality of life and to foster social cohesion. Their diversity in terms of their size, form and methods of governance is an asset that we should capitalise on. Because cities mobilize the diverse potentials and promote sustainable economic growth, they are at the core of the Lisbon Strategy and the EU Sustainable Development Strategy.

-B- European cities face some major challenges: social cohesion challenge, environmental challenge, particularly the impact of climate change, and challenge of competitiveness in the context of globalisation; the new global energy situation; the financial and economic crises. Cities will have to deal with the tensions and risks of fragmentation of their territories, while simultaneously searching for excellence, integrating new sections of the population and showing solidarity with the most vulnerable people.

Sustainable and cohesive integrated urban development

-C- The complexity of this new context calls for deep changes by the adoption of a multi-sectoral approach. By linking governance, the environment, the economy and social inclusion,

and by combining global and local approaches, blending the very short term with the long term, sustainable development emerges as an opportunity to look at urban problems in a different light and to develop new ways of tackling them. Those in charge of urban policies need to adopt an integrated approach to develop sustainable and inclusive towns and cities.

-D- These challenges represent opportunities to innovate and create new, better quality jobs that are accessible to all, particularly the most vulnerable members of society. Social inclusion policies require simultaneously addressing the issues of economic development, access to employment, education, and training and to decent, affordable housing and high quality transport. Such an integrated approach helps prevent the social inequalities that might represent a hindrance to innovation, economic prosperity and our ability to live together. Sustainable cities are necessarily cohesive, that is to say welcoming, functional and a source of social progress for all.

-E- These issues bring collective and individual behaviour patterns into play. This is why members of civil society and urban residents themselves have a key part to play in designing, developing and managing sustainable and cohesive cities. The complexity of these issues requires local authorities to work with competent urban development professionals in both the public and private sectors, with the support of the financial institutions.

-F- The sustainable city forms part of an open economy. The trading and other relationships of the sustainable city contribute to an overall momentum, and rely in large part on local production and on optimising the commercial, logistical and transport functions.

-G- Urban and rural areas are interdependent. As a logical progression of the EU sustainable development Strategy, the Territorial Agenda and the Leipzig Charter call for a new approach to the relationship between urban and rural environments and to partnerships between urban and rural territories at the scale of functional areas, in order to secure balanced development of all areas based on respect for their diversity. This approach is necessary to ensure fair access to services. Additionally, urban-rural cooperation is necessary in addressing issues related to the development of business clusters, of energy economy, of renewable energy-sources, and of the preservation of natural resources, including more particularly water and the landscape.

Transborder cities are very important for a sustainable, cohesive and integrated urban development in Europe, They have a crucial role in the European cities networks .

-H- This integrated approach needs to take into account the range of scales on which cities function from neighbourhoods to the largest urban areas. It must also be based on multi-level governance to enable coordination between the various local, regional, national and European levels which have an impact on urban development.

-I- At the European level, numerous initiatives have been launched in favour of urban development which include the integration of the urban dimension in the ERDF Operational Programmes, exchange of experiences through the URBACT programme, the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment, capitalising knowledge through the Urban Audit¹.

-J- Ministers paid tribute to the work carried out in 2008, under the Slovenian presidency of the EU. Under the French presidency, they went on with their considerations in order to:

¹ European statistical database which includes 330 indicators and covers 321 cities of the European Union (www.urbanaudit.org)

- 1) give effect to the commitments of the Leipzig Charter
- 2) take into account climate change
- 3) facilitate the use of the cohesion policy for integrated urban development projects.

- 1 - Implementing the Leipzig Charter in favour of integrated sustainable urban development

The Ministers:

- recognising the role played by the cities to foster territorial cohesion as asserted for the first time in the European Commission's Green Paper on territorial cohesion,
- welcoming the resolution of the European Parliament on monitoring the Territorial Agenda and the Leipzig Charter², especially the importance of an action programme for the implementation of the targets of the Leipzig Charter,
- recalling the conclusions of the Council on the contribution of architecture to the different components of sustainable development, technical, cultural, and also environmental, economical and social,
- taking note of the final report of the working group on Action 1.1 of the first Action Programme for the implementation of the Territorial Agenda presented by Slovenia, which invites to a better coordination between urban and territorial policies and constitutes a pre-requisite for the integrated sustainable urban development,,
- aware of their responsibility for ensuring appropriate spatial policies that support more balanced development of cities and regions while respecting their specificities,
- having regard to the major role of local authorities who are accountable for a large part of sustainable urban development policies, in accordance with the subsidiarity principle; paying tribute to the initiatives of exchange of knowledge on the application of the Leipzig Charta by the local authorities, as in the Cities Forum which will take place in Montpellier on 2 & 3 December,
- confirming their support for the concept of "*Baukultur*" as set out in the Leipzig Charter,
- underlining the importance and the relevance of the different approaches and examples presented by the study on "The levers of public action for the development of sustainable cities",
- recognising the importance of urban statistics and comparative indicators at the European level and of the coordination of the information in order to be able draw a comparative picture between cities and to benchmark them; and acknowledging the work of the European Commission's Urban audit in this regard,

1.1 confirm the commitments they made on adopting the Leipzig Charter, particularly their commitment to support deprived city neighbourhoods where the future of the cities is at stake, for a large part; and recommend a regular follow-up of the application of the Leipzig Charter through the meetings of ministers in charge of urban development;

1.2 propose to continue exchanges of views on the implementation of the Leipzig Charta and Territorial Agenda in a prospect of territorial cohesion;

² "Towards a European action plan for spatial development and territorial cohesion"(PA_TA(2008)0069)

1.3 reassert their commitment to reinforce the urban dimension of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy (Göteborg Strategy), and of the Lisbon strategy for growth and employment ;

1.4 propose to work for the improvement of knowledge of the city and to reinforce through training the know-how and the skills, of individuals in partnership with key professional institutes and organisations;

1.5 propose to consider the key role of architecture and urban quality in the process of integrated and sustainable urban development, giving particular attention to heritage, creative and innovative architectural solutions and thus achieve better quality of living environment ;

1.6 propose, working with local and regional authorities, to implement integrated urban development policies in order to ensure greater coherence between urban functions (housing, social and economic activities, education and training, culture and leisure), to develop the levers of public action for the development of sustainable cities; those policies must be in accordance with the circumstances in each country /territory and pay a particular attention to coordination between urban and rural policies and to cross-border dynamics;

1.7 are in favour of a greater consistency between urban functions and of the concurrent implementation of policies of local economic development, education of young people, urban planning and development, and access to high quality transport, including public transport, for the benefit of residents of deprived neighbourhoods ;

1.8 affirm their commitment to carry on with and reinforce the work of the Urban Audit coordinated by the Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat), with the national statistical offices and cities of the European Union involved in this;

1.9 note the conclusions and recommendations of the Jessica (Joint European Support for Sustainable Investment in City Areas - a tool of financial engineering in favour of sustainable urban development - working group appended to the present document. The countries involved in this process emphasise that the Jessica tool could be an important lever for completing ambitious urban development projects;

1.10 decide to build a reference framework for the sustainable city, in a spirit of solidarity, for the application of the Leipzig Charter, based on the appendix attached to this statement; for this purpose invite all actors in urban policy, including the representatives of the cities, the European institutions, the Non Governmental Associations and mainly the cities networks, the scientific and technical organisations and professional associations, to take part in a collective and open process.

- 2 - Taking account of climate change in line with urban development

The Ministers:

- in line with the European strategy for sustainable development and urban environment; and with international agreements on sustainable development
- welcoming the adoption of the European Commission's Green Paper on adapting to climate change in Europe;

- conscious that a significant proportion (69%) of European greenhouse gas emissions are produced in cities and that combating climate change requires an integrated approach to public policy, more particularly by optimising energy efficiency in transport, buildings and public spaces and by reducing the carbon footprint in urban development operations, in line with local, regional, national and European levels;
- considering that climate change is not only an environmental challenge for governments and cities but also an economic opportunity to strengthen their competitiveness at a global level and create new jobs; that innovation in tackling and mitigating the effects of climate change and adapting to its consequences is a factor in increasing the attractiveness of particular areas; and is also a factor in conserving resources, more particularly water resources;
- considering, given the risk of aggravating fuel poverty associated with the effects of climate change and the energy crises and underlining that the need and participation of all social and economic stakeholders have to be taken into account in policies to support sustainable development and fight against climate change ;
- conscious of the need to take urgent action to support sustainable urban mobility for all, emphasising the need to provide deprived sections of the population with urban transport that meets their needs and supporting initiatives to open up deprived neighbourhoods by improving access to transport services;

2.1 suggest to the European Commission that it should take into account the role of cities and regions in its ongoing work on climate change mitigation and adaptation ; and underline the importance of investments in this field as one of the solutions to the financial and economic crises ;

2.2 invite the relevant authorities to set up integrated urban sustainable energy-climate mobility policies taking into account the environmental, economic and social dimensions together;

2.3 propose that European research programmes should examine the consequences of climate change on the most deprived sections of the population, and underline the importance of partnership between enterprises and universities ;

2.4 propose to promote exchange of best practices and networking at national, cross-border and cross-national levels, and knowledge capitalisation; underline the importance of such networks, and more particularly the European Urban Knowledge Network (EUKN) and the specialized European networks of local authorities³ as well as of the dialogue with cities in third party countries; with a view to asking the European Commission to support the efforts to capitalise on the results and data gathered as part of the Urban Audit, the activity of the ESPON observatory, the Urbact programme, the data and analysis of the European Environmental Agency and European research programmes;

2.5 encourage local authorities and other bodies, where appropriate, to carry out an initial assessment of the measures currently under way and draw up territorial climate strategies in conjunction with the national planning documents, the local Agenda 21 programmes, and the local urban planning documents ;

³ Energie-Cites has a data base of 500 good practices (www.energie-cites.eu)

2.6 undertake to strengthen cooperation between countries to develop greenhouse gas reduction strategies in urban areas, in line with the objectives set by the European Union;

2.7 undertake to promote the role of urban planning in adapting climate change and mitigating its impacts and in this view to promote the compact city and act to ensure that sustainable urban development contributes to this and to limiting urban sprawl; support the exchange of ideas on the tools to be used in this regard with particular attention to addressing this issue upstream in the planning system;

2.8 undertake to promote appropriate policies to improve the energy efficiency of existing and new buildings in both the public and private sectors and the use of renewable energy.

- 3 - Promoting the use of cohesion policy in support of urban integrated development

The Ministers,

- taking into account the important role of the Cohesion policy in favour of sustainable integrated urban development, and, in particular, through fostering the urban dimension of the Operational Programmes,
- acknowledging the publication by the Commission at the time of the meeting of Ministers of the working document by the Directorate-General for Regional Policy entitled “Fostering the urban dimension - Analysis of the Operational Programmes co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (2007-2013)”

3.1 welcome the fact that that the urban dimension of the Operational Programmes is being taken more into account, leading notably to a significant increase in the proportion of ERDF funds over the 2007-2013 period ;

3.2 propose to promote integrated urban operations in the framework of the implementation of the Operational Programmes ; in this respect invite managing authorities to ensure support to integrated urban projects and of the involvement of the cities and local stakeholders concerned ;

3.3 invite the Commission to update its analysis of the ways and means of taking the urban dimension more into account through cohesion policy when it publishes its strategic report on economic and social cohesion in 2010 on the basis of the reports expected from the Member States in 2009, in accordance with Article 30 of Council regulation 1083/2006 of 11 July 2006.