LAUNCH EVENT
COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE ON CITIES

Friday 5th October 2018 09:30 - 12:30

BERLAYMONT – ROOM JEAN REY
RUE DE LA LOI 200. BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

Context

Cities are the places where many challenges faced by the EU, such as unemployment, migration, air quality, are experienced first-hand by its citizens. Cities are also places where opportunities can be seized, such as innovation, clean mobility, reduction of inequalities, social inclusion, etc.

The European Commission and EU Member States clearly recognise that the local dimension is crucial to the formulation and implementation of numerous EU policies and where they can impact effectively on citizens' life.

The Urban Agenda for the EU, launched in May 2016 with the Pact of Amsterdam, gives a framework to stimulate growth, liveability and innovation in the cities of Europe and to tackle successfully social challenges. Globally we have the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda which the EU and its Member States have been instrumental in the development thereof. The European Council recognises that the Urban Agenda for the EU is a key delivery mechanism of the global goals within the European Union.

In view of this centrality of the urban dimension, the **Knowledge Centre for Territorial Policies** (KC-TP) – jointly set up by JRC and REGIO - is now fostering the creation of a Community of Practice on Cities (CoP-CITIES). It will allow addressing specific challenges and features of cities and urban systems (including for instance social polarisation and spatial segregation, housing unaffordability, and demographic trends) promoting the adoption of a 'territorial' point of view, i.e. placing the 'territory' and not the 'theme' at the centre of the analysis.

Objectives of the Community of Practice on Cities

The mission of the **CoP-CITIES (fully embedded in the KC-TP)** is to tap the potential of an extended pool of expertise to improve information sharing and enhance collaborative work among relevant stakeholders, including with EU citizens. The CoP-CITIES intends therefore to offer a place and open platform for the exchange of knowledge and practice within the Commission, with other European institutions and beyond, adopting an operational and pragmatic approach – in this sense, it will complement more formal organisational arrangements such as internal Commission inter-service groups and established networks working on urban issues.

The overall aim of the CoP-CITIES is knowledge management on urban issues in order to support:

a) strengthening European policies related to cities and
b) discussing potential future challenges and opportunities for cities.

The CoP-CITIES complements and further expands the policy reach of the KC-TP on two themes of high relevance for urban development, namely:

- The contribution to the global actions on sustainable urban development, ensuring coherence with relevant EU actions for both internal and external dimensions;
- The investigation and application of new technologies such as Artificial Intelligence and new Big Data sources that offer an unprecedented opportunity to investigate the urban phenomena but also new solutions to urban challenges.

As the urban environment is an ideal framework for the development of new participatory techniques, the CoP-Cities will aim – in the medium term – to foster the engagement of a wide range of stakeholders, from 'traditional' ones to urban communities who might not have a permanent presence or role in the city. In combination with top-down approach to urban policy, co-creation gives citizens, local officials, researchers and the private sector an equal say in the decision-making process. As such, the CoP-Cities would have the ambition to be instrumental for the localisation of policy principles, beyond traditional and formal consultation processes.

About the event

The CoP-CITIES is an initiative of the European Commission, open to external stakeholders (cities and networks of cities, International and Intergovernmental Organisations and research bodies). It builds on and brings together ongoing work and expertise on cities by JRC and REGIO.
JRC and DG REGIO together are organising this launch event for the Community of Practice on Cities.
Specific objectives of the event are to:

- Launch the Community of Practice on CITIES;
- Invite other EC Services and stakeholders to join the CoP CITIES;
- Discuss next steps and future developments.

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Openings - Vladimir Šucha (JRC - DG) 09:30-10:00

2. Key Note: The Urban Dimension of EU Policies - Laura Hagemann (REGIO) 10:00-10:20

3. Views from selected stakeholders 10:20-11:05
   - The New Urban Agenda - Paulius Kulikauskas (UN-Habitat)
   - The Role of the Local Dimension: the Experience of Amsterdam - Marike ter Linden (City of Amsterdam)
   - The Role of the Local Dimension: the Experience of Sofia - Doncho Barbalov (City of Sofia)

Coffee break 11:05-11:15

4. Roundtable discussions 11:15-12:15

   Moderator: Charlina Vitcheva (JRC - DDG)
   - Role and scope of the CoP-CITIES
   - Foresight and research questions

5. Conclusions and Next Steps: Charlina Vitcheva (JRC – DDG) 12:15-12:30

Chairman: Alessandro Rainoldi (JRC - HoU)
The session will be streamed

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