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Policy Paper

Metropolitan Regions in the Danube Region

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# Executive Summary

Based on the action plan for EUSDR Priority Area 10 this policy paper on Metropolitan Regions in the Danube Area provides an overview on current methodologies, approaches and practices in relation to the definition/understanding of metropolitan regions / functional urban areas.

In practice, metropolitan areas already follow some kind of governance model according to the tradition of cooperation, political alliances, relationships between governmental areas and the local configuration of the various stakeholders (public as well as private). These balances modulate the type of governance that evolve over time. There are many examples of cities/regions that have a model of metropolitan governance more or less institutionalized: from metropolitan government to sectorial agencies, from a strategic plan to cooperation between municipalities, etc.

In urban agglomerations various public, private or mixed capital entities from different territories are acting, with varied and diverse functions. Apart from the coordination of all of them, one of the biggest challenges is to ensure efficiency and economic viability of services management in areas that generate great benefits such as water and territorial sustainability.

Based on the OECD/EU/Eurostat definition, there are 28 capital city metropolitan regions and an additional 249 other metropolitan regions in the EU-28. According to the European Commission (2014), the totality of European metropolitan regions accounts for 59% of the EU population, 62% of EU employment and 67% of EU GDP. Therefore, daily commuter flows towards the metropolitan core are increasingly important. Within the area of the EUSDR 70 metropolitan regions can be found.

Currently, the reforming processes in France and Italy show a tendency to recognize the metropolitan fact, but with limited competencies and a reduced territory of application. There is still a big discrepancy between planning process and competencies and administrative borders, which asks for governance and institutional cooperation across borders and sectors. Thus, following main recommendations have been identified:

* Stimulate a more active collaboration between stakeholders vertically across governance and horizontally across sectors and disciplines. Expend the geographical scope of the urban nodes and focus on regional cooperation on the FUA level. Regarding this, also provide incentives for public-public and public-private cooperation and for the involvement of civic society.
* Support collaborative planning at different policy levels (urban, Functional Urban Area (FUA), national, transnational).
* Develop a value oriented comprehensive policy (fact based, using indicators, monitoring for assessment of value and focused on capturing values).
* Support the common understanding of the responsible actors at different policy levels (urban, Functional Urban Area (FUA), national, transnational).
* Stimulate further development on fact-based policymaking and planning, including the creation of a data collection framework and applying the relevant datasets.
* Support the development of FUAs for small and medium-sized cities
* Initiate the development of a narrative for the FUA
* Facilitate the collaboration at FUA level
* Ensure proper funding schemes for FUAs
* Encourage politicians to cooperate beyond their administrative borders and beyond sectors
* Stimulate the capacity building within local and regional administrative units

# Introduction and Objective of the Document

Cities can no longer be analysed strictly within their administrative boundaries, without considering the support role of the peri-urban territory in providing elements such as goods, workforce and land-resources. Defining strong urban centres, that rely (through workforce, land resource) on the adjacent territory as well, would improve an efficient territorial management and resource exploitation, as well as lead to an increase in the general access to services and facilities for the population. Metropolitan areas have a wide range of functions and activities within their regions. Key functions and activities can in many cases be managed with greater efficiency and effectiveness at the level of metropolitan areas than within the limits of the much smaller historic administrative boundaries.

By cooperating at metropolitan level on a wide range of issues, cities are actually already responding to major European challenges. However, the geographical scale can differ in the same metropolitan area from one issue to another. For example, public transport and water supply do not necessarily have to be managed by the same groups of local and regional authorities. The mismatch between the urban reality and political definitions explains why the metropolitan / city-region scale is important for a wide range of political or administrative functions. However, public functions provided on this scale are not necessarily linked to a uniform definition of metropolitan areas.

Following the need of cooperation and governance across administrative borders and sectors and according to the work programme of Priority Area 10 of the EUSDR the present document gives an overview on the topic of functional metropolitan regions in the Danube Region. The paper should help to identify potentials for cooperation of metropolitan areas in the Danube Region. Building on the experience of the Centrope project, the Policy Paper on Metropolitan Regions is intended to provide a guide for cities and municipalities to develop/define functional metropolitan regions with transnational added value for the Danube region. The Policy Paper presents areas of cooperation that can be developed by cities and municipalities according to the specific needs and challenges in the regions.

The Policy Paper on Metropolitan Regions in the Danube Region takes into account the following framework conditions:

* The drafting of the document is based on a comprehensive desktop research.
* No additional data collection/elaboration of questionnaires/interviews etc. are to be conducted.
* The elaboration is being done in close cooperation with PA10.
* The elaboration and validation of recommendation takes place within a dedicated workshop.

# Definition and Characteristics of Metropolitan Regions

In general, there is no single definition of the term “Metropolitan Region”. Sometimes, the terms “functional urban area”, “daily urban system” or “larger urban zone” are used to cover the same (or very similar) issues in practical operations of person transport/commuter flows. The term “cargo-oriented development” or “logistics cluster” is applied as an equivalent term for freight transport. At the same time metropolitan areas differ across Europe and beyond in terms of function and size and there is no “one size fits all” definition. There are several examples of how territorial governance in urban areas can be strengthened through recognising and adapting to functional geographies.

#### **Metropolitan areas - Overview of types**

There are several different partly academic/research-based approaches to identify metropolitan areas, which can be found across Europe.

*A* ***Morphological Urban Area (MUA)****, describes the continual built-up area, with a defined level of density and functions relating to human activities such as housing, employment, leisure, infrastructure and trading. This interpretation is important in as much as it relates to building structures, infrastructure and services that have a clearly urban character. This definition is very important for dealing with a range of technical and political issues, but usually too narrow to develop effective development strategies. It is better suited for environmental issues such as land-use change or greenhouse gas emission or housing development and transportation policies. Currently, GIS techniques based on aerial or satellite imagery are being used to identify metropolitan areas worldwide.*

*A* ***Metropolitan Region*** *is an area consisting of a densely populated city and its less-populated surrounding territories, sharing industry, infrastructure, and housing. It usually comprises multiple jurisdictions and municipalities. Metropolitan areas identified using this approach can be easily used by public administrations in terms of governance issues since metropolises are contained within administrative boundaries.*

*A* ***Functional Urban Area (FUA) or Larger Urban Zone (LUZ)*** *consists of a city and its commuting zone. Functional urban areas therefore consist of a densely inhabited city and a less densely populated commuting zone whose labor market is highly integrated with the city.*

*The FUA can be defined as travel-to-work area. Principally it is an agglomeration of work places attracting the work force from the surrounding area. If a certain share of the labor force in a defined area are out-commuters it is attached to the municipality to which the largest portion of commuters goes. This method is good for defining the most pronounced employment centers to which the simpler threshold level of commuting applies. In many international studies, a commuting- flow threshold of either 15 or 20% is used to determine whether a municipality is attached to a particular center or not. Defining the threshold can have a strong political motivation, e. g. in Finland the Ministry of Labor applied a 5% level, which obviously is a result of a political decision that aimed at stimulating labor mobility and has little to do with actual functional areas or demarcating the fringe around centers. A core area may consist of several municipalities, i.e. it may be multinodal, i.e. multiple strong travel-to-work area centers can be identified within a single urban region. Furthermore, especially in large urban regions FUAs are two-tier urban regions as there are strong and weaker centers. The district centers can be considered as subdominant or near-by centers of the wider conurbation. This approach tracks the existing structure of labor and housing markets accurately and provides relevant data for defining peripheral areas.*

*The* ***Daily Urban System (DUS)*** *refers to the area around a city, in which daily commuting occurs. It is a means for defining an urban region by including the areas from which individuals commute.*

*DUS mainly focuses on urban cities, where majority of the commuting flow take place. The daily commuting includes both work and leisure, contributing to high density in the daily urban system.* [*Urban sprawl*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Urban_sprawl) *is the possible outcome of an expansion of the daily urban system. Therefore, it includes multiple local governments, economies, and demographics. Daily urban system attempts to show how far away people who commute into a city are living. It shows how much sprawl has occurred.*

*In urban planning, a* ***transit-oriented development (TOD)*** *is a type of urban development that maximizes the amount of residential, business and leisure space within walking distance of public transport. The emphasis is on developing housing close to public transportation and retail business and thus to increase public transport ridership by reducing the use of private cars and by promoting sustainable urban growth. Walking and bicycle pathways also give citizens of these communities more healthful travel options.*

*A* ***Cargo Oriented Development (COD)*** *is an area where manufacturing, warehousing, distribution, and freight forwarding operations are consolidated with access to a multimodal transportation network. The purpose of these strategies is to increase close local employment opportunities by bringing distribution and industrial operations together to serve industry needs. By improving abandoned lands and developing vacant properties with COD in mind, employment and living quality is improved within these clusters.*

#### **Metropolitan Areas/Functional Urban Areas according OECD**

In 2012 the OECD Territorial Development Policy Committee and its Working Parties initiated a process to provide a common framework to better understand urban areas in order to be able to compare national urban policies in OECD countries. OECD defines a metropolitan area as a social, economic, geographical and political space defined by shape, size and nature and by the interactions between individuals and organizations. Metropolitan areas can present a monocentric or a polycentric structure of an urban agglomeration. The merging of cities into metropolitan areas results either from a process of incorporation when dominant cities extend their sphere of influence over a larger territory by incorporating smaller cities, or from the fusion of smaller cities as a result of continuing upscaling of urban activities. Both forms of metropolitan areas require spatial planning policy and instruments that adequately address the degree of integration between a variety of urban functions and between the local authorities of the core cites and surrounding municipalities.

When comparing metropolitan areas key considerations have to be made whether these units are defined based on administrative boundaries, continuity of the built-up area or functional measures such as commuting patterns or other parameters and to the size of components to be aggregated.

#### **Identification of Metropolitan Areas**

Several methodologies for identifying metropolitan areas have been developed at the national and international level. The level of comparison of metropolitan areas is directly influenced by the approach used for their identification (see. Chapter 2.1). The demarcation of a metropolitan area differs notably depending on the methodology used. Against this background, the OECD, in collaboration with the EU (Eurostat and EC-DG Regio), has developed a definition of urban areas, which categorises metropolitan areas of different sizes beyond the administrative boundaries. The definition chooses as input smallest administrative units for which national commuting data are available. The combined OECD/EU/Eurostat method uses population density as a starting point to identify urban cores, but it also considers commuter flows to identify the areas whose labour market is interconnected with the cores.

According to the methodology, an urban core consists of a population cluster with a density of at least 1,500 inhabitants per km². A municipality is part of the urban core if at least 50% of its population live in the cluster. Afterwards the methodology identifies the “hinterland” as the “worker catchment area” of the urban labour market, outside the densely inhabited core. All municipalities having at least 15% of their employed residents working in a certain urban core are defined to be part of that urban hinterland as well.

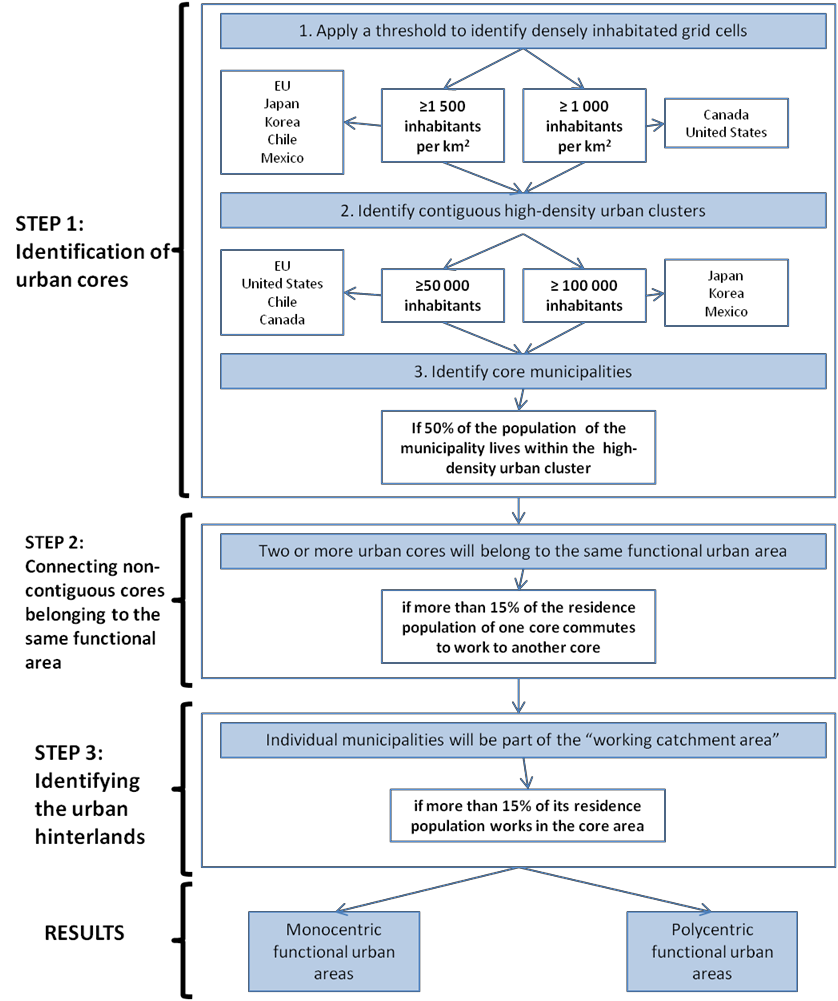


Figure 1: Procedure to define Functional urban areas in OECD countries

Based on those steps, Eurostat defines metropolitan regions as **functional urban areas** making it possible to compare functional urban areas of similar size across countries. These areas are agglomerations of at least 250 000 inhabitants. Each agglomeration is represented by at least one NUTS 3 region. If in an adjacent NUTS 3 region more than 50% of the population also lives within this agglomeration, it is included in the metropolitan region. As the metro-regions are based on agglomerations, which include the commuter belt around a city, this approach corrects the distortions created by commuting and the GDP per inhabitant becomes meaningful, whereas comparison of GDP per inhabitant of NUTS 3 regions is far more difficult to interpret, since the difference may be partly artificial.

The functional approach seems to best capture the socio-economic characteristics of a city, too. The social and economic area of influence of metropolitan areas often does not fit within administrative boundaries or continuous built-up areas. The functional approach has the advantage of capturing urban areas’ interactions, and thus identifies self-contained socio-economic urban units. In addition, the functional approach is capable of defining the extension of metropolitan areas over time while the administrative approach captures static urban forms. Furthermore, the functional definition of metropolitan areas proved to be effective in delineating both the densely inhabited urban cores and the hinterlands of the cities.

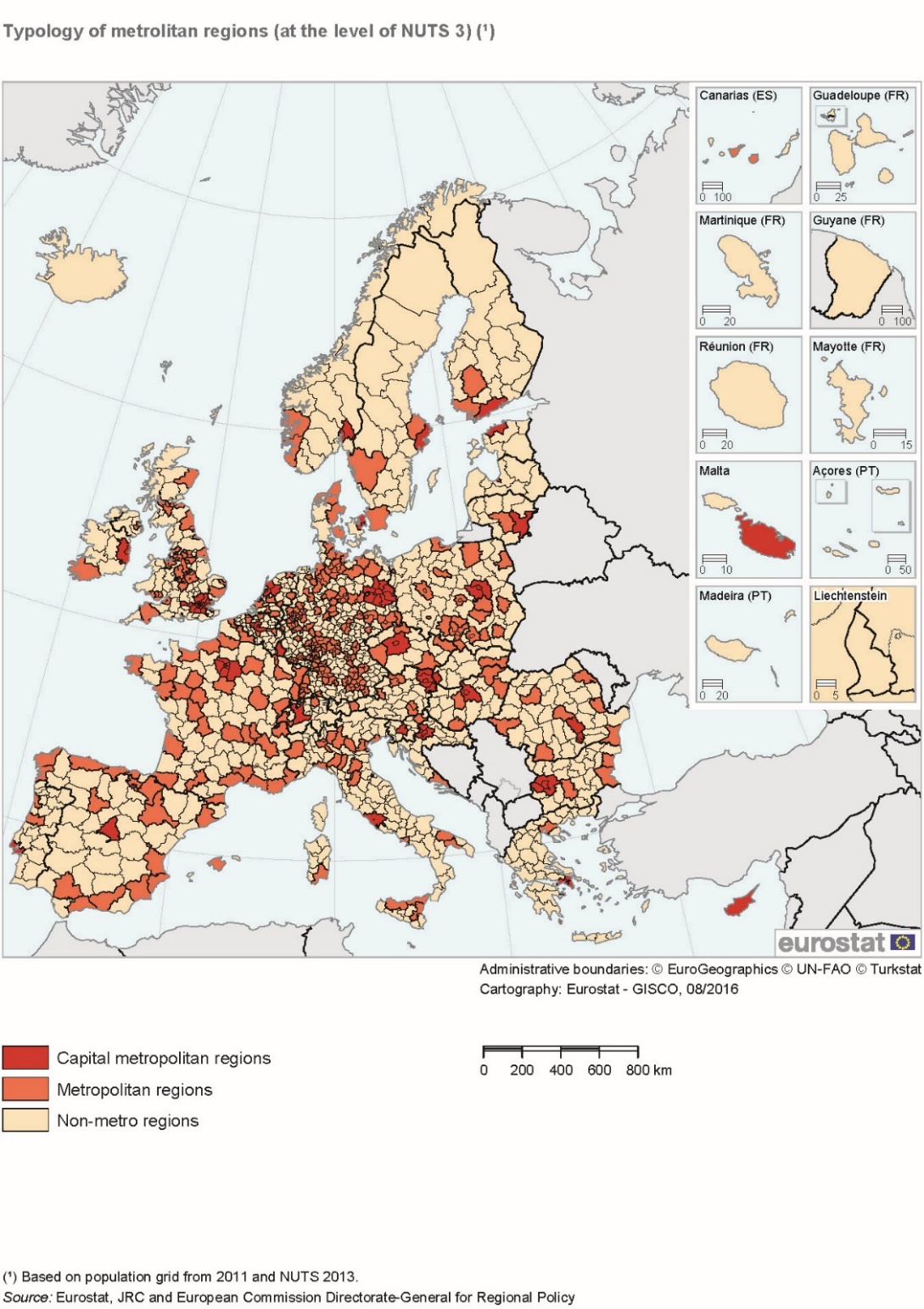


Figure 2 Metropolitan Regions of the European Union

Following the combined OECD/EU/Eurostat method following cities of the Danube region are classified as metropolitan regions:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Aschaffenburg | Ausgburg | Bayreuth | Brasov | Bratislava | Brno |
| Budapest | Burgas | Bucuresti | Cluj-Napoca | Constanta | Craiova |
| Debrecen | Freiburg im Breisgau | Galati | Graz | Heidelberg | Iasi |
| Ingolstadt | Innsbruck | Karlsruhe | Konstanz | Kosice | Liberec |
| Linz | Ljubljana | Mannheim-Ludwigshafen | Maribor | Miskolc | München |
| Nürnberg | Offenburg | Ostrava | Pécs | Ploieşti | Plovdiv |
| Plzen | Praha | Regensburg | Reutlingen | Rosenheim | Salzburg |
| Sofia | Split | Stuttgart | Székesfehérvár | Timisoara | Ulm |
| Varna | Vienna | Würzburg | Zagreb |  |  |

# Guidance for Integrated Planning – The Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020

The Territorial Agenda of the EU was created in May 2007 during the German EU Council Presidency at an Informal Ministerial meeting in Leipzig. On that occasion, Ministers responsible for Spatial Development in the Member States agreed on the so-called "Territorial Agenda of the European Union".

The recommendations are based on the expert report "Territorial situation and perspectives of the European Union". The Agenda builds on the European Spatial Development Perspective. Coinciding with the Territorial Agenda, the Leipzig Charter was adopted, which emphasizes the idea of an integrated urban development policy as a task with a European dimension. The Agenda and the Charter are intended to make a complementary contribution to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goal.

The EU Territorial Agenda as a concise political paper seeks to mobilize the potentials of Europe's regions and cities for sustainable economic growth and employment through recommendations for an integrated territorial development policy. As an "action-oriented political framework", polycentric spatial development and living conditions are in favor of equal opportunities and oriented to the respective regional and urban potential. Better and innovative use of spatial diversity is intended to strengthen Europe's competitiveness in the world.

The Territorial Agenda identifies six challenges:

* climate change,
* energy supply,
* global competition,
* eastward enlargement of the EU,
* overuse of natural and cultural resources,
* demographic change.

In this context, territorial cohesion is a prerequisite to meet these challenges divided into six policy areas:

1. Promote polycentric and balanced territorial development
2. Encouraging integrated development in cities, rural and specific regions
3. Territorial integration in cross‐border and transnational functional regions
4. Ensuring global competitiveness of the regions based on strong local economies
5. Improving territorial connectivity for individuals, communities and enterprises
6. Managing and connecting ecological, landscape and cultural values of regions

Furthermore, the Agenda formulates key actions:

* Strengthen the territorial dimension of cohesion policy
* Deepen the dialogue between Member States and the EU Commission on territorial issues
* Implementation of the agenda in national, regional and local development policies; support greater involvement of stakeholders
* Development of informal cooperation structures between the ministries of the Member States

#### **Status quo**

Discussions related to the Territorial Agenda 2020+ shows that the challenges as well as the aims and priorities set out in the Territorial Agenda 2020 are still applicable and relevant. There is less need for a fundamental revision than a slight adaptation. The assumption is that the development of the governance mechanism of the Territorial Agenda 2020+ is a key for more effective implementation. Important is the “how” rather than the “what”.

The challenge for an European territorial policy system is that it does not include legal power for spatial and urban policy making, however spatial and urban policies are made at the European level through three main tools:

* sectoral European policies with an important and strong impact on territorial development,
* “hard policy” instruments represented by funds that trigger diverse spatial and territorial developments,
* “soft policy” instruments in the form of cooperation and coordination of national and regional policies to support common goals.

This system of European territorial policy is very complex. Describing it shows, that the soft policy elements like the Urban Agenda, the Territorial Agenda, the Macro-regional strategies have a twofold function. They are:

* links between sectoral policies and different funds with explicit or implicit territorial impacts (European Structural and Investment funds),
* links between the European, national and regional level of decision making and administration

The soft policy layer acts as a catalyst between policies and instruments and helps translating sectoral policies from different levels into territorial impacts, by means of the “hard” implementation tools. Other territorial instruments at EU-level, like the ESPON-programmes, Territorial Impact Assessment activities, etc. provide additional access points for enhancing territorial policies. If the role of EU territorial policy systems is to link between territorial and sectoral policies and integrating the different vertical institutional levels of decision making, this requires complex multi-level governance systems, which are able to address the challenges to efficient coordination and cooperation. The handling of multi-level governance is not part of the routines of current administrative systems. Multi-level governance at the European level still is a learning process.

The European territorial policy systems (Territorial Agenda, Urban Agenda, Macro-regional strategies) have different characteristics and levels of intensity. A promising element seems to be the so-called “Implementation Partnerships” which are meant to trigger a more inclusive and faster implementation of objectives and actions of the agendas and strategies. Such implementation partnerships have inter alia been developed in the Urban Agenda (temporarily) and for the Macro-regional strategies (permanently).

#### **Conclusions**

In general, it seems that the Territorial Agenda has a weaker performance compared to other examples of Territorial Implementation Partnerships. This is due to a lack of multilevel governance mechanism of the Territorial Agenda:

* insufficient ownership and leadership,
* insufficient implementation in sectoral and territorial policies,
* little awareness of the Territorial Agenda at sectoral and subnational governance level,
* the abstract character and missing activities to facilitate concrete implementation actions,
* insufficient organisational capacities, missing continuity and weak cooperation intensity.

Innovative governance mechanisms, such as the implementation partnerships seem to influence the governance systems capacity to act. In the on-going debate related to governance of territorial policies different development options are discussed:

* Business as usual but better

This would mean to put into practise the Luxembourg proposals, which has not been done yet.

* Leadership by the Commission – white book of territorial cohesion

This would be a paradigmatic change because leadership would shift from Member States to the Commission.

* Elaborate a remake of the European Spatial Development Perspective

A new concept would focus on the debate around the content rather than on governance.

* Strengthening territorial policies through innovative governance mechanisms

This proposal refers to the positive experiences with the implementation partnerships of the Urban Agenda and the Macro-regional strategies. In addition, the Urban Agenda process is facing the challenge to keep momentum and to establish a sustained governance system building on the experiences and results of the first stage of implementation partnerships.

# Elements of Multi-Level Governance in Metropolitan Areas in Europe

Metropolitan governance deals with the capacity to scope with the challenges of agglomerations. The concept intents to distinguish between the classical notion of “government” and the role of the public and private sector in metropolitan governance. Metropolitan governance has various forms.

One approach is to define metropolitan governance based on the interrelation of different elements: territorial fragmentation, competencies and the financing and representation.

* The **fragmentation** depends on the number of administrations and institutions in a metropolitan area - high level of fragmentation versus institutional simplicity. For example, in countries in which municipal reforms have taken place (e.g. Nordic countries) there are fewer municipalities whilst in countries in South Europe there are a high number of municipalities. Apart from the number of municipalities with a monocentric character (Rome, Paris) or with a polycentric one (Randstad in The Netherlands), there are other administrations which carry out, which have also functions at metropolitan level.
* The **competencies** can be framed both in the area of hard policies (territorial planning, urbanism, transport, environment etc.) and in the area of soft policies (education, health, social services etc.). However, competencies almost exclusively focus on the field of hard policies and especially on those related to territorial planning, transport and environment. Other areas in which metropolitan institutions often intervene is economic development, in employment promotion strategies and wealth generation. Nevertheless, it is important to differentiate between exclusive competencies and shared competencies with other administrations in the same area. One way to identify the policy capacity at metropolitan level is by analyzing the binding or non-binding character of decisions to be taken.
* **Financing** determines largely the level of autonomy. Not only with regard to material resources but also to source of financing. With regard to metropolitan structures, financing comes from two sources - municipal transfers (from the bottom to the top) and from a higher level of government. One of the problems of the existing metropolitan institutions is the lack of financial autonomy, as their resources are very much conditioned by the transfers coming from other levels of government.
* Metropolitan governance models are also differentiated by the citizens’ capacity to **elect** their **political representatives** and by the **type** **of** **representation**. In the various models, both direct election of the mayor/president and councilors and indirect election can be found. In addition, understanding that governance is a concept wider than government governance models include representation of members from civil society are in place.

Another approach to strengthen metropolitan governance in urban areas is through recognizing and adapting to functional regions, which can be grouped into broad categories that are based on quite different understandings of the causes of problems in the functioning of urban areas.

#### **Level of Institutionalisation / Governance Models**

Apart from the above described approaches for multi-level governance different types of cooperation can be observed:

* Structured, pre-defined, fixed boundary metropolitan area organization

This approach assumes that a complex system of voluntary agreements will never achieve real or sufficient results at the metropolitan area level. It suggests that metropolitan areas need competencies, capabilities, and processes for effective integrated economic, social, environmental and spatial planning to take place.

* Flexible and/or bottom-up models of territorial governance

This approach is usually based on informal and voluntary cooperation in varying spatial structures.

* Innovation in metropolitan areas through strategic planning

The starting point for this approach is that the current challenges in society and cities are structural and cannot be tackled by traditional means, especially not within the existing institutional frameworks. A major challenge for this approach is that, to be effective, strategic planning has to have political support, especially when the planning seeks to work beyond - and across - traditional boundaries of territory and themes.

Having in mind the different elements, four big metropolitan governance models can be observed according to the level of institutionalization. These models are idealized. Some of them are mixed and models which in theory are the same are in practice different.

### Metropolitan governments

Metropolitan governments are the most institutionalization level of metropolitan areas including the creation of metropolitan institutions with strong competencies (legal and tax autonomy) and democratic legitimacy (direct election of their representatives). This model implies the passing of laws. However, in practice, current structures in Europe do not meet these criteria. In fact, their autonomy has been limited by sharing competences with other levels of government, by the lack of own financing or by the legitimate democracy weakness. But still, they are co-ordination bodies of metropolitan policies that usually have an integral vision of the agglomeration, as they do not have only one competence such as the sectorial metropolitan authorities. Some examples of current metropolitan structures are Stuttgart, London, Lisbon, Lyon or Barcelona.

### Metropolitan Agencies

In this case, there is a medium-level of institutionalization with a sectorial agency with a main function rather than a metropolitan authority with various competencies. For example, in Frankfurt it is the regional planning. In the case of Birmingham, there are several sectorial agencies with functions such as transport, police, fires and emergencies. In fact, transport planning is often carried out by a metropolitan agency, such as it is in the case of the Barcelona metropolitan region - which covers a territory much larger than the metropolitan area -, in which there is the Metropolitan Transport Authority.

The creation of a sectorial agency involves less institutional changes than metropolitan governments. Therefore, it is politically easier to perform and cause less political "resistance". This does not imply that there will not be any type of conflict. Furthermore, these types of agencies have indirect representation, and are presented rather as a technical than a political body. Unlike metropolitan governments, however, the metropolitan perspective is fragmented, since they only deal with one area (waste, transport, housing), and lack of a global vision.

### Vertical Co-ordination

This governance model includes those cases where an administration and not specifically a metropolitan institution develops de facto a role of metropolitan co-ordination. In other words, it has not been created for this function but in practice exercises this function - in the absence of a specifically created metropolitan government. The problem with the vertical co-ordination model is the difficulty of building a metropolitan vision, without explicit recognition of the metropolitan fact; this depends on the capacity to create metropolitan projects and policies for each of the institutions.

### Voluntary Co-operation between municipalities

Less institutionalized models are characterized by the lack of reforms in existing political structures as they are based on local initiative and willingness on the part of the municipalities, by using flexible formulas of co-operation. The traditional model is that of voluntary co-operation between municipalities of the same metropolitan area. In the majority of countries, there are associations of municipalities to provide some service. In the case of urban agglomerations, the co-operation can take place on a more political basis, becoming an element of transition towards more institutionalized metropolitan governance. The effectiveness of voluntary co-operation structures depends largely on the legal framework under which the municipals act (competencies, funding etc.) and the political willingness of municipal representatives. Without a clear leadership and willingness to co-operate, these models of governance are ephemeral.

#### **Pros and Cons of Metropolitan Governance Models**

**Metropolitan governance** in Europe has adopted various forms. There is no ideal model. At one extreme, the way of dealing with metropolitan problems involves institutional changes and the recognition by law. This leads to a number of advantages and disadvantages.

* If the structure has real competencies and adequate financing, this is the option that will allow tackling metropolitan challenges in a global way and deal with social and fiscal inequality - issues whose responsibility is usually of a higher level of government. However, the autonomy of metropolitan governments is limited by the distribution of competencies with other areas, the lack of self-financing or weakness of democratic legitimacy.
* The creation of metropolitan governments help to reduce institutional fragmentation but there are still several institutions and companies (planning, management, economic development) operating at metropolitan level.
* The creation of metropolitan governments is less flexible to the inherent changes in the metropolitan dynamics. Once an institution with competencies is created, financing and political representation are very difficult to change.
* The main reason why powerful metropolitan governments are not created is political resistance, both by municipalities and by other existing government institutions.

In contrast, the **less institutionalized metropolitan governments** are more flexible and adapt better to a changing environment. In effect, the adherence of new municipalities to the association is easier since it depends on the willingness of municipality members. Similarly, depending on the type of local government it is possible to extend or reduce the competencies of the association by changing its statutes. The second advantage is that the less institutionalized mechanisms arise from a local initiative. In fact, the municipalities are the ones who decide to associate and therefore the process is controlled by local actors. Taking decisions during and after the process is kept at local level and without interference from another level of government. The decentralization of the decisions allows working in a more flexible way and a better appropriation of goals.

**Voluntary cooperation** models have three major disadvantages. First, such mechanisms may have more difficulty to last because they depend on internal dynamics (political alliances) and the association’s leadership. Another negative aspect of the voluntary cooperation is the possibility to work with the status quo. In other words, the fact that decisions are taken in a consensual way may lead to the failure to reach agreements and lack of action. Depending on the balance of power at the time of voting, it is possible to block decisions and not stepping forward. The risk of paralysis may also occur if members fail to fund the association as a large part of funding comes from municipal transfers. Finally, associations of cooperation between municipalities have limited competencies (service management, assistance to municipal members) and therefore their impact on large political metropolitans is less than strategic planning.

#### **Comparison of Metropolitan Governance Models in the Development of SUMPs**

Based on the above classification of metropolitan governance models, this chapter explores the strengths, weaknesses, roles played by authorities and needs for improvement of the different types of governance in relation to Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning (SUMP) development following the Topic Guide: Sustainable urban mobility planning in metropolitan regions.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Informal and soft coordination (voluntary co-operation between municipalities)** | |
| **Advantages** | Encourages communication and exchange on common challenges. It provides a platform for mutual exchange of information, accessible to smaller municipalities as well that can benefit from higher expertise and know-how. It is a useful instrument to coordinate initiatives coming from the local level. There are low barriers to implementation, because it involves no binding commitments, no transfer of responsibilities, competencies or budget. |
| **Institutional weaknesses and barriers for SUMP development** | Fragmentation of responsibilities among the bodies responsible for the planning and the implementation of the policies: responsibilities are scattered across the departments of the various administrative levels (local, regional and national). The lack of a single planning authority implies a lack of mandatory influence and binding decisions. Reaching an agreement requires time as it might entail competition among different municipalities. |
| **Role in SUMP development** | The leading authority offers primarily coordination and a platform for cooperation and technical assistance to the local (municipal) SUMPs, to ensure complementarity between them and their consistency with the metropolitan or regional strategy. The formal authority for SUMP development is retained by the municipalities, the leading authority uses the local outputs to develop a metropolitan SUMP. |
| **Needs for enhancing SUMP development** | 1. Building trust among concerned actors; 2. Funding mechanisms to further encourage cooperative projects; 3. Methodologies/tools for achieving effective stakeholder engagement; 4. Knowledge on how to integrate local planning in a metropolitan SUMP; 5. Common set of indicators for monitoring urban mobility at metropolitan level; 6. Creation of an internal body, responsible for the metropolitan SUMP. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Inter-municipal structures (vertical coordination)** | |
| **Advantages** | It functions as a common committee for cooperation and communication, which translates the interests of different municipalities into one single external voice. The strong cooperation and the common voice help the municipalities have a better connection with the higher levels of government. Because different departments from different organisations are involved, integrated approaches are easier. |
| **Institutional weaknesses and barriers for SUMP development** | Responsibilities for the planning and the implementation of the policies are more clearly allocated, but continuous consensus is required to ensure cooperation. There are no legal instruments to force municipalities to align. The planning process is more likely to be subject to external influence. |
| **Role in SUMP development** | The SUMP process is steered by a delegated entity, which has competence for SUMP development. There is a clear structure for discussion and planning and a clear mandate for decision-making. Inputs come from the municipalities first and are then integrated into a common metropolitan strategy. The inter-municipal structure does not have powers to force the implementation of the planned measures in the participating municipalities. |
| **Needs for enhancing SUMP development** | 1. Ensuring cooperation and open dialogue among the participating members; 2. High degree of negotiation among the different parties involved to get to common, shared positions; 3. Tools to force/encourage implementation of the agreed measures; 4. Cooperation for the collection, harmonisation and analysis of data coming from different sources. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Supra-municipal authorities (metropolitan agencies)** | |
| **Advantages** | There is one single planning authority. The legal framework and transparent mandate allow for clear goals, closer control over implementation and compliance with the overall objectives. This approach ensures a close integration of land-use, transport and development strategies across the area in the long term and easier financial leverage. |
| **Institutional weaknesses and barriers for SUMP development** | Fostering the joint development (by the metropolitan authority and all the municipalities/districts) of the SUMP in order to ensure that it will meet the local needs might be a challenge. This top-down approach might result in a low identification with the metropolitan region and thus additional attention should be paid to communicating and involving the lower levels of government, especially the smaller settlements. |
| **Role in SUMP development** | The metropolitan planning authority is responsible for developing the SUMP in close cooperation with the municipalities or districts of the region. It sets the rules and targets for all the concerned municipalities and districts. |
| **Needs for enhancing SUMP development** | 1. Close cooperation and consultation with the local stakeholders at all stages of the process; 2. Continuous communication and exchange with the concerned municipalities/districts. |

# Examples on Territorial Cooperation and Integrated Planning in the Danube Region (Factsheets)

#### **Centrope (Vienna/Brno/Bratislava)**

**Factsheet - Vienna**

**Statistics[[1]](#footnote-1)**

Area of the metropolitan area: 8.522 km2 (2016)

NUTS 3 regions: AT112

AT125

AT126

AT127

AT130

Population: 2.775.368 (2016)

2.838.558 (2018) 

Population density: 328 population per km2(2016)

GDP: 123.270,35 Million Euro (2016)

Unemployment rate: 9.3 % (2016)[[2]](#footnote-2)

7.9 % (2018) 

**Current situation overview**

The metropolitan area of Vienna has no formal status. There is no consolidated body for metropolitan planning. Nevertheless, the following organizations are dealing with spatial planning in the area:

* Planungsgemeinschaft Ost (PGO)  
  <http://www.planungsgemeinschaft-ost.at/>
* Stadt-Umland Management (SUM)  
  <http://www.stadt-umland.at/>
* Verkehrsverbund Ost-Region (VOR)  
  <https://www.vor.at/>

The urban development plan of the City of Vienna (Stadtentwicklungsplan - STEP 2025) includes concepts for interconnecting Vienna with its hinterland. The current development plan has entered into force in 2014 and will be in place until 2025.

**Challenges**

The population will continue to grow in the coming years. The demand for housing will continue as well. The already tense situation regarding the availability of affordable living space will also accelerate in the future. The transportation needs can be fulfilled sufficiently within the center of the metropolitan area. When it comes to the outer areas, the situation is different. Commuters are using the available public transport offerings but for those areas not well connected to the railways alternatives to the private car are missing. The issue of land sealing is another topic, which communities need to be much more aware. A large city traditionally shows a high level of already sealed land. Especially in the hinterland regions of Vienna the trend towards sealing the available land is constantly rising.

#### **Budapest**

**Factsheet - Budapest**

**Statistics**

Area of the metropolitan area: 6.791 km2 (2016)[[3]](#footnote-3)

NUTS 3 regions: HU110 (Budapest)

HU120 (Pest)

Population: 2.993.948 (2016)[[4]](#footnote-4)

3.011.598 (2018)4 

Population density: 441 population per km2(2016) [[5]](#footnote-5)

GDP: 53.044,79 Million Euro (2016)[[6]](#footnote-6)

Unemployment rate: 3,8 % (2016)[[7]](#footnote-7)

2,7 % (2018)7

**Current situation overview****[[8]](#footnote-8)**

Budapest is the symbolic heart of Hungary as far as its political, economic, administrative and cultural functions are concerned. More than one-third of the national GDP is produced in the city, and nearly half of the foreign direct investment arriving into the country after 1989 was realized here. All global companies settling in Hungary have their headquarters in Budapest, all the main national institutions have their seat in the city which serves as the main economic pole and transport hub for Hungary, and beyond. The relative geographical position of Budapest and its metropolitan region has altered significantly since the dismantling of Iron Curtain.

After the 1980s, the lopsided functional relationship between the suburban communities and the city began to change, gradually becoming more balanced. During this period, the demand for labor in the capital started to decrease and this continued after 1989. The population total in the Budapest Metropolitan Area showed no significant increase throughout the 1980s and only started to rise in the 1990s. However, the recent population growth is increasingly due to suburbanization. This decade witnessed the transformation of the urban growth pattern into one that resembled most post-industrial societies.

**Challenges8**

The framework for current urban policies and strategies is set by the National Spatial Development Concept (NSDC) that was approved by the Parliament in 1998 and was subsequently reviewed in 2005. The concept summarized the general objectives of urban development in Hungary, focusing on the issues of spatial competitiveness and sustainable development, territorial cohesion and the integration of Hungarian urban system into the European network. Regarding the role of Budapest, the concept set the medium-term goal of a ‘competitive metropolitan region of Budapest’ to be achieved by:

* strengthening the international business functions and European relations of Budapest as a gateway
* city to South Eastern Europe and the Balkan;
* utilizing the advantages of high-tech industries, knowledge-based economic activities and highly
* qualified labor of the city;
* strengthening the international tourist hub function of the city;
* developing a livable city through comprehensive environmental management and the revitalization of brownfield sites;
* rehabilitating the crisis areas and extending the green spaces;
* developing a balanced and well-functioning agglomeration around Budapest, through the prevention of urban sprawl, improvement of transport links and strengthening the role of sub-centers and
* strengthening the inter-municipal cooperation among Budapest, towns and villages within its agglomeration through joint institutions.

#### **Ljubljana**

**Factsheet - Ljubljana**

**Statistics**

Area of the metropolitan area: 2.328 km2 (2016)[[9]](#footnote-9)

NUTS 3 regions: Ljubljana Urban Region (LUR)

encompassing 26 municipalities

Population: 537.023 (2016)[[10]](#footnote-10)

542.306 (2018)4 

Population density: 231 population per km2(2016) [[11]](#footnote-11)

GDP: 14.835,75 Million Euro (2016)[[12]](#footnote-12)

Unemployment rate: 11,2 % (2016)[[13]](#footnote-13)

7,6 % (2018)7

**Current situation overview[[14]](#footnote-14)**

In 1993, the five municipalities of Ljubljana which, except for the Centre municipality, encompassed, in addition to the city territory, also the extensive urbanized city periphery, jointed in the Urban Municipality of Ljubljana. The city faced a significant expansion towards east, while in the southern and western part it maintained the traditional extent, and in the northern and north-western part only a small expansion occurred (Vrišer, 2000, 22). In 2000 Ljubljana was divided into 13 functional quarter communities (Vrišer, 2002, 22), units of local self-government concluded in terms of their functional and gravitational character, which have a direct influence on the quality of living of the inhabitants and enable them to participate in spatial planning.

Urban Municipality of Ljubljana is the center of Ljubljana urban region which encompasses 24 municipalities with one quarter of Slovene inhabitants, which provides workplaces for one quarter of the Slovenian active population, and to which about 30.000 persons commute to work every day, while economic concentration being even essentially higher. The settlement of the Ljubljana urban region has been lately under the influence of the processes of urbanization, suburbanization and formation of conurbation.

**Challenges8**

In year 1991 Ljubljana became the capital city of independent Slovenia and in 2004 one of the EU capital cities. Since the end of 1990s Ljubljana has been one of the most competitive cities in Central and Eastern Europe, without entering the process of more intensive city internationalization, until the accession to the EU in year 2004. As a result of successful macro-economic policies and comprehensive and relatively well coordinated sectoral policies by the Government of Republic of Slovenia (1992 - 2004) - the Urban Municipality of Ljubljana (NUTS 5) and Ljubljana urban region (NUTS 3) became the most important location of economic activities in Slovenia, with relatively high economic and social cohesion, and quality of life of local citizens. But urban planning and strategic urban development was neglected since 1991 because of the priorities of macro-economic reforms, and the connotation of such planning with the former socialist regime. Market forces, not planning prevailed until the end of 1990s, when the need for planning regulation was recognized to control and direct the spatial development of the Urban Municipality of Ljubljana and Ljubljana urban region.

Ljubljana may never become the Central European metropolis - as might be the result of global city formation and city competition between Vienna, Berlin, Prague, Budapest or Warsaw. Yet, as a result of cultural heritage, stable political and economic conditions, improved social cohesion, quality of life, city identity and geo-strategic location in Europe – the city Ljubljana has the opportunity to become an attractive meeting place and tourist destination between two global cities in Europe - Venice and Vienna. Strengthening the political, cultural and transport links to support well established economic relations with cross-border cities and regions in Austria, Italy, Croatia and other cities in Central and South-Eastern European countries, are of critical importance for the future role of Ljubljana in Europe. At the same time Ljubljana needs to preserve the quality of life for local citizens to avoid the problems of homelessness, urban decline, social and spatial polarization, crime and vandalism, or overcongestion, known to many other European cities.

#### **Beograd**

**Factsheet - Beograd**

**Statistics**

Area of the metropolitan area: 3.222 km2 (2019)[[15]](#footnote-15)

NUTS 3 regions

(not existing / correspond to districts): Belgrade

Population: 1.687.132 (2011)3

Population density: 514 population per km2(2011)

GDP: 16,21 Million Euro (2016)[[16]](#footnote-16)

Unemployment rate: 10 % (2018)[[17]](#footnote-17)

**Current situation overview[[18]](#footnote-18)**

The area of the City of Belgrade includes 17 municipalities, whereof 10 are the urban ones. The status of Belgrade, as the center of the metropolitan area, is not defined. Functional spatial organization of Belgrade is closely connected with the spatial organization of the surrounding areas - the Velika Morava and Kolubara valleys, Srem and south Banat. The administrative area is certainly smaller than the area which could be considered as the metropolitan, especially concerning the Vojvodina part (Tošic B. et al. 2004). The obstacle in the functional expansion of the administrative area of Belgrade was the administrative border of Vojvodina and it became as greater as the legal constitution of the provinces was firmer (Bojovic B., Borovnica N. 1998).

The strategic planning of the Belgrade metropolitan area, after almost twenty years of break, started with the democratic changes in 2000. The mentioned break corresponds temporally with the period of decline and fall of former Yugoslavia. One cannot understand the planning actions in the 21st century, which were taken in the period of transition, without the description of the period of degradation. The period from the end of 1988 to 2000 describes the deregulation, decline, devastation, the lack of the strategic vision of the development of Belgrade. The recovery is divided in two parts which influenced the strategic decisions in regard of the spatial development of Belgrade and, the plans which resulted from the influences.

**Challenges8**

The new elements that have to be solved in the future refer to: unsolved land and building property relations, unfinished process of restitution and the ambition that Belgrade takes more significant place in the net of cities of Southeast and Middle Europe. The unsolved relationship between Belgrade and inner Serbia is for the future plans: the strategic documents on the country level continually stress the need for demetropolisation, bearing in mind the size and concentration of the functions and population in Belgrade in relation to the relatively unequipped and demographically endangered parts of Serbia.

To ensure a more prosperous development especially in respect to metropolitan development and governance some policy recommendations are suggested. General policies aiming at:

* building/reforming institutions;
* reinforcing the civil society;
* systematic harmonization of the legal system as to European requirements;
* constitution of the regional governance tier.

# Recommendations for Multi-Level Governance in Metropolitan Areas of the Danube Region

Based on the expert workshop to identify and discuss drivers and barriers on (cross-border) collaboration on Functional Urban Area level and recommendations elaborated within the Horizon 2020 project VitalNodes ([www.vitalnodes.eu](http://www.vitalnodes.eu)) following recommendations are derived:

* **Stimulate a more active collaboration between stakeholders vertically across governance and horizontally across sectors and disciplines. Expend the geographical scope of the urban nodes and focus on regional cooperation on the FUA level. Regarding this, also provide incentives for public-public and public-private cooperation and for the involvement of civic society.**

The urban area should be seen as a FUA but defined at a level of a (central) city/ municipality. However, challenging issues in the field of freight and logistics, infrastructure network development, sustainability, livability, etc., require an integrated policy answer, which often goes beyond the city level (i.e. the administrative boundaries of the central municipality). Therefore, it is recommended to apply an urban- regional approach and focus on the FUA level. In this process, that requires intensive collaboration, incentives to create win-win situation could be used for public-public and public-private cooperation schemes at urban node and FUA (transit regions) level. Stimulation of the cooperation between disciplines (e.g. between spatial planners and mobility and infrastructure experts) and responsible actors/bodies on different relevant (governmental) levels, could result in more integrated solutions, since many challenges are interrelated and silo thinking persists.

* **Support collaborative planning at different policy levels (urban, Functional Urban Area (FUA), national, transnational).**

To support collaborative planning at different policy levels, the interaction between transport (passenger and freight) and spatial planning at different levels has to be supported. At urban level; at Functional Urban Area (FUA) level in coordination with regional stakeholders; at national level, where planning- programming-budgeting for main infrastructure is done and national policies and regulations for spatial planning are in place; and at transnational level (especially in cross-border regions).

* **Develop a value oriented comprehensive policy (fact based, using indicators, monitoring for assessment of value and focused on capturing values).**

Stimulate further development on fact-based policy making and planning, including the creation of a data collection framework and applying the relevant datasets. To this end, it is important to have a clear insight into the mechanisms that enable measuring developments related to infrastructure development, traffic management, spatial planning, multimodal hub development and economic and environmental impacts. The data framework should be tailor-made to the urban node, at city or FUA level, and comply with cross-border requirements. The specific characteristics of the urban nodes should be carefully considered as some urban nodes have a strong link with other (nearby) urban nodes, while other urban nodes have a cross-border focus, e.g. Vienna. For that reason, the data framework should be tailor-made and comply with cross-border requirements.

* **Support the common understanding of the responsible actors at different policy levels (urban, Functional Urban Area (FUA), national, transnational).**

Cities are a functional urban area when it comes to logistics, which is wider and differs from a person mobility perspective - Daily Urban System (commuter- oriented). Solutions for challenges in urban nodes/cities can also be found elsewhere on a long-distance corridor in this functional urban area (FUA). Solutions elsewhere in the FUA result in added value for the urban nodes, in terms of spatial quality, less freight transport movements, traffic safety and livability. To carry out this support it’s important to define and operationalize local and FUA objectives such as: spatial quality and livability. In addition, it’s also important to support the awareness and common understanding of the Functional Urban Area from freight perspective by defining functional indicators, because the collection of basic and advanced data on urbanized areas is a challenge. It is difficult to gain insight into the local service networks and intensity of transport of regional and urban logistics. When data is available, it is often only proxy data and comparability between urbanized regions is uncertain. Both the Daily Urban System (DUS) and Functional Urban Area (FUA) do not reflect data on NUTS levels, as they do not match the exact same area and therefore it’s important to have a common understanding on the FUA based on data from three levels (urban, national and European).

* **Stimulate further development on fact-based policymaking and planning, including the creation of a data collection framework and applying the relevant datasets.**

It is important to have a clear insight into the mechanisms that enable to measure developments related to infrastructure development, traffic management, spatial planning, multimodal hub development and economic and environmental impacts. The indicator and data framework should be tailor-made to the urban node and comply with cross-border requirements. Functional dimensions, impact indicators, criteria and a harmonized data collection are required to be able to develop smart objectives in integrated development strategies and project proposals, and thus, help to (ex ante) assess whether a project will have enough impact in its specific context. The relevant dimensions, indicators, criteria and data sets need to be further developed. Such a value driven approach (objective and data-based) of assessing infrastructure needs can also be used for analyzing hinterland accessibility in a FUA, accessibility of the comprehensive network or peripheral regions to the core network, and connectivity. As well, it could be applied for planning modal shift, energy transition, resilience and climate adaptation.

* **Support the development of FUAs for small and medium-sized cities**

Due to the smaller size of the cities in the Danube Region and due to the different needs of these cities it may be useful to define and organize FUAs for small and medium-sized cities (e.g. as defined in the Leipzig Charta). Integrated spatial development plans are seen as the driving force and therefore crucial for the functioning of FUAs. However, technical implementations within a FUA are much easier to define if national borders are not crossed. Thus, it might be useful to define processes and best practice examples of cross border FUAs.

* **Initiate the development of a narrative for the FUA**

Driving forces for the development of a FUA are the regions. Thus, it is important to create a narrative for cooperation of the functional urban area to translate the purpose/activities of the FUA for the people. This might be supported by ethnological studies focusing on specific topics and special attention on the drivers for cooperation, such as education, tourism and culture.

* **Facilitate the collaboration at FUA level**

One way to start cross border collaboration of FUAs could be the establishment of EGTCs. On the project level, collaboration can be initiated and carried out much easier. Concrete challenges can be addressed by these projects. In order to convince politicians and the population of the advantages of FUA collaboration a certain focus should be laid on quick wins. It may be useful to intensify PR activities for a wider dissemination as well. Currently different strategies and concepts for cross border collaboration do exist. A more detailed analysis could prove worthwhile to provide interested stakeholders with extensive information. In addition, existing networks and programs should be approached (e.g. D-LAP, ESIF, ITI) and their services should be used as well. On site study visits could help disseminating information and improve knowledge exchange. Another way forward could be to improve the FUA planning and implementation by creating partnerships with the private sector (e.g. capacity building).

* **Ensure proper funding schemes for FUAs**

In some countries of the Danube Region, national funding for FUA related activities is available from national sources and on a national level. Especially the smaller cities are often not involved in the discussions for a new funding programming period. Other cities (e.g. Bratislava) are already considered "too rich" and are therefore not eligible any more to receive funding from some programs. In Serbia the FUA related cross border cooperation is working well especially on the project level. For these FUA related projects implementation calls do exist (e.g. Subotica & Szeged).

* **Encourage politicians to cooperate beyond their administrative borders and beyond sectors**

In many of the metropolitan regions of the Danube Region there is the political will to initiate and implement FUAs. However, the local politicians often have to focus their activities on day to day business rather than long-term planning. A knowledge exchange (e.g. information channels) between the EU institutions (e.g. EC) and the representatives of the municipalities is seen as promising to improve the situation. Existing initiatives such as EUROCITIES and the Council of European Municipalities and Regions could serve as a starting point for such activities. For most municipalities a "formal pressure" to work towards the implementation of FUAs is missing. The involvement of the political level should be mandatory.

* **Stimulate the capacity building within local and regional administrative units**

In general, a wide lack of knowledge and capacity to initiate FUAs is existing within the municipalities. This lack of capacity concerns smaller and larger cities and municipalities. The activities to plan and manage FUAs do require sufficient capacities and of course a high level of knowledge. Finally, a certain mind-set is needed within the municipalities. All related activities have to be initiated top down rather than bottom up.

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