

**METREX President and Secretariat - Glasgow office - Monday 22 June 2009**

---

Hannu Penttilä - President  
Roger Read - Secretary General  
Tim Page - Head of Communications  
Janis Clarke - METREX Graphic Design

**1 Membership**

There is national under representation in France and the UK. The following would be welcome additions to the membership and complete the representation of European metropolitan areas.

- 1 Denmark - Oslo. Has been invited to join and is currently considering membership.
- 2 Sweden - Göteborg
- 3 Baltic States - Tallinn
- 4 Poland - Mazovia/Warzawa. Has been invited to join and is currently considering membership
- 5 Austria - Wien
- 6 Slovakia - Bratislava (Brno was a Member)
- 7 Slovenia - Ljubljana. In the EU CO2 80/50 project
- 8 Croatia - Zagreb
- 9/10 France - Lyon and Nord pas de Calais/Lille (Marseille is joining)
- 11/12 UK - Birmingham and Manchester or Liverpool
- 13 Ireland - Dublin
- 14 Spain - Valencia
- 15 Turkey - Istanbul. Has been invited to join and is currently considering membership

A New Member session/dinner could be included in the Berlin 2010 Conference Programme. A New Member pack could be produced for the purpose. Specific personal initiatives could be discussed at the forthcoming Brussels Steering Group (SG) meeting in October

There are Members who are becoming detached or are inactive. They either need a period of grace from membership, for financial or administrative/functional change reasons, or to become involved in Network activities again.

- 1 Øresund Committee - Now more a promotional and marketing organisation rather than a joint administration with planning powers, as was the original concept. Copenhagen has been invited to take up the Øresund membership and to come to Wroclaw.
- 2 Prague. Has written to ask for Observer status for a while. Has been invited to Wroclaw
- 3 Genova. Has formally withdrawn from 2010 pending the possible formation of new metropolitan authority
- 4 Roma. Has "de facto" withdrawn following, firstly, a change of Assessore in Lazio and, secondly, a change of Assessore in the Provincia di Roma.

Specific personal initiatives could be discussed at the forthcoming Brussels SG meeting in October

## 2 Finance

New Members are the best way to improve the Network financial position. 15 new Members would add about €100k. In particular, a financial reserve is highly desirable. As a minimum this should be sufficient to cover, basically, the first 3 months of the financial year (January to March). This would be €20-25k. At best it would be half the annual income, or €100-150k, to enable the spring Meeting and METREX initiatives/commitments to be progressed with confidence.

Subscriptions have stayed at €7/9k, with 30/50% reductions for central and eastern European countries (CEEC), since 1996. Reductions were based on 1996 PPP (purchasing power parities). The METREX selling point has been "increasing benefits (through a growing membership) at ever reducing cost (relatively)".

Subscriptions are due in 1 January for payment not later than 31 March. METREX now sends out quarterly Statements of Account. The April Statements did bring results. As of the end of June 73% of subscriptions have been received. A second round of Statements will go out in early July.

The London Conference and Paris Meetings were expensive. There is just enough in the 2009 budget to cover the remaining commitments for the year. These are the Wroclaw Meeting, Chile visit, Inter metropolitan polycentric Expert Group contribution, EU CO2 80/50 project expenditure (including the proposed November Hamburg Conference and the December Copenhagen IPCC conference) and Secretariat/Interpretariat costs.

PPP rates could be revisited\*. The Brussels SG meeting could consider a period of grace for Members experiencing difficulties. This might be 2 years, after which withdrawal procedures would apply

*\* See Appendix. These 2005 US\$ GDP per capita World Bank figures seem to justify a 30% METREX Subscription rate for Turkey, Bulgaria and Romania and a 50% rate for all other CEEC countries, except for the Czech Republic and Slovenia, which are comparable to Portugal.*

## 3 Meetings, Conferences and Study Visits

The Vilnius/Riga spring 2010 Meeting will be 15-19 May 2010. A full week/two centre Meeting could be difficult for Members and attendance might reduce in consequence. Other logistical options could include evening travelling or a two hosts/one centre Meeting in Riga with a pre Meeting study visit to Vilnius.

### Option 1

Wednesday - METREX networking afternoon and Vilnius Reception  
Thursday - Vilnius day - evening travel to Riga  
Friday - Riga day - evening dinner and moderated discussion  
Saturday - MC meeting

### Option 2

Monday - Riga to Vilnius for Study Visit  
Tuesday - Vilnius Study Visit  
Wednesday - Vilnius to Riga, METREX networking afternoon and Riga Reception  
Thursday - Vilnius day  
Friday - Riga day, dinner and moderated discussion  
Saturday - MC meeting

These options will be explored with Vilnius and Riga for further discussion at Wroclaw. Members might be asked for their preference

Prospective Study Visits are Istanbul 2010 (European City of Culture) and St. Petersburg 2011.

#### **4 European and international relations**

The key issue of common international concern is climate change. We have built up working US/China relationships and will develop South America links through Chile.

DG RELEX has not fulfilled its offer to arrange a EU/neighbouring metropolitan areas meeting in Brussels. Alexandria came to the Veneto Meeting. St Petersburg could be a Study Visit in 2011.

We may have to proceed on a one to one basis

St. Petersburg - Helsinki  
Minsk - Vilnius  
Lviv - Wroclaw  
Chisinau - Bucharest  
Odessa - Sofia/Thessaloniki  
Alexandria - Athens

It was anticipated that METREX Ambassadors would be able to help with making these connections. Klito Gerardi made the link with Alexandria for the Veneto Meeting. Jussi Vuorinen might help with links to St. Petersburg. Fred de Ruiter has personal contact with Victor Polischuk, Director of Planning for St. Petersburg. Viktor came to the Stockholm Meeting. Albert Serratos will travel to Chile with the METREX delegation.

The Ambassadors could play a bigger role at Meetings and Conferences and be identified more positively through the web site. This approach will be developed by the Secretariat

The Brussels SG meeting could consider issues of common interest to METREX and other networks such as Metropolis, Eurocities, CPMR, Purple, EMTA and EU bodies such as EESC (strong past cooperation on the metropolitan dimension), CoR, EU DG's (Regio, Transport, Environment), the Parliament and ESPON.

Ongoing targets for lobbying in Europe might include.

- 1 Promoting the recognition of a metropolitan dimension to European affairs and advocating metropolitan governance structures. The METREX Benchmark offers some options.
- 2 Advocating the production of some sort of Territorial Perspective or Framework for Europe now that Territorial Cohesion is recognised as a function of the EU within the Lisbon Treaty (together with economic and social cohesion). The METREX Framework (from the PolyMETREXplus project) offers one approach.
- 3 Advocating the production of Metropolitan Mitigation Strategies and Action Plans in response to climate change. The EUCO2 80/50 project will offer a way forward and guidance on effective practice. The Mitigation Manual describes the GRIP approach.

Web site links to other networks, for example PURPLE, could be developed on matters of common interest. This will be progressed by the Secretariat

## **5 METREX initiatives**

Governance remains a key issue as countries such as the UK, France and Italy move slowly to the recognition of metropolitan areas (functional urban areas). METREX has produced discussion notes of on this in the past.

The Secretariat will produce an updated summary of metropolitan governance options and current practice for consideration at the Brussels SG meeting

Such a summary could cover.

- FUA definition
- FUA civil administration, strategic functions and responsibilities, powers and finance

Strategic functions could include, spatial planning and development, economic development, social functions including health, education and housing, transportation, other infrastructure (water and drainage) and environment (including waste).

Affordable housing is now a key issue, particularly in metropolitan areas that have switched to mortgage funded home ownership and private rental during the recent period of low interest rates. Housing needs assessments and their matching with prospective housing stock and affordability are issues for possible Expert Group working. GCVSPDA is currently letting a consultancy contract on these issues.

The Secretariat will consult with GCVSPDA and produce a Discussion Note for consideration at the Wroclaw MC meeting

## **6 METREX Statutes and Internal Regulations**

These will be reviewed by the President and the Secretary General to assess their continued relevance, based past experience and having regard to current circumstances

## **7 Communications**

METREX has presented itself as a network offering access to the full body of European metropolitan spatial planning and development experience and practice. It was expected that inter Member networking could be a major activity but this has not proved to be the case.

The Head of Communications (HC) will consider the possibility of introducing more user friendly one to one communications options, for example, on the Facebook model

Language services are a major METREX cost. Their use at Meetings and Conferences is uncertain.

The HC will include a language requirement tick box on the Wroclaw registration page. The outcome can be considered at the MC and SG meetings

## **8 METREX offices**

METREX currently has a registered office at Scotland Europa, Brussels, for AISBL purposes and use of accommodation at the GCVSPDA offices, in Glasgow. The Glasgow office is the METREX postal address. METREX rents storage from Safestore, in Glasgow, for all files, documents and equipment.

Stuttgart and Helsinki are able to offer Brussels accommodation for SG and related METREX meetings. Stuttgart, through Sylvia Schreiber, is able to offer informed advice and guidance on EU affairs to the SG.

In due course the President would like to review the Glasgow office/GCVSPDA relationship

## **9 METREX future directions**

The President has in mind to circulate a Statement to Members in the summer, before the Wroclaw Meeting, and to include a Questionnaire.

The Secretariat will send him copies of the 2004 Questionnaire from Bernd Steinacher and the report of the outcome, for reference. The outcome can be considered at the Brussels SG meeting

### **Circulation**

These notes will be circulated to the METREX Secretariat/Interpretariat, GCVSPDA and the Steering Group (SG) for information. The SG currently consists of,

Hannu Penttilä - President - Helsinki  
Francesco Moccia - Vice President - Napoli

François Dugeny - Directeur Général, IAU-Ile de France  
Heiko Kasseckert - Deputy Director - Frankfurt R-M

Sylvia Schreiber - Head, Stuttgart, Brussels  
Roger Read - SG, METREX

## Appendix

<b>METREX PPP comparisons</b>		
World Bank	2005	% of OECD
Turkey	7,786	29
Bulgaria	9,353	35
Romania	9,374	35
Russia	11,861	45
Latvia	13,218	50
Croatia	13,232	50
Poland	13,573	51
Lithuania	14,085	60
Slovak Republic	15,881	63
Estonia	16,654	63
Hungary	17,014	64
Czech Republic	20,281	76
Slovenia	23,004	87
Portugal	20,006	75
Greece	25,520	96
Spain	27,270	
Italy	27,750	
France	29,644	
Finland	30,469	
Germany	30,496	
UK	31,580	
Sweden	31,995	
Belgium	32,077	
Denmark	33,626	
Netherlands	34,724	
Switzerland	35,520	
OECD	26,566	

These 2005 US\$ GDP per capita World Bank figures seem to justify a 30% METREX Subscription rate for Turkey, Bulgaria and Romania and a 50% rate for all other CEEC countries, except for the Czech Republic and Slovenia, which are comparable to Portugal.