

# METREX — The Network of European Metropolitan Regions and Areas

## **SECOND METREX GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

The Palazzo Cisterna, Provincia di Torino, 4.00 pm, Friday 12 May 2000

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### **CONSTITUTIONAL BACKGROUND TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

The Constitutional background to the General Assembly is set out in the Agenda Notes published on the METREX web site and emailed or faxed to Members. The Agenda Notes were also circulated by hand to those attending the Assembly (in Italian, English, French, Spanish and Portuguese) as required.

### **AGENDA ITEMS**

The draft Agenda for the Assembly was published and circulated one month in advance, as required by Article 12 of the Statutes, and no additional items were notified to the Secretary General.

For clarification, it should be noted that President Bresso was elected at the Bologna Meeting in March 1999, on the early retirement from office of former President Bailie Dr Gerald McGrath, to serve for the balance of period to the Torino 2000 General Assembly and the normal term to the General Assembly in 2002. The election of the President was therefore not an item on the Agenda.

Similarly there were no motions to change the existing arrangements whereby all Members of the Network are members of the Managing Committee and all political representatives are Vice Presidents.

### **1 ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES**

All 27 Member metropolitan regions or areas were represented at the Assembly with the exception of Lisboa, Genova and München. Apologies were received from all three. Apologies were also received from the Prefectures in Athens and Thessaloniki where recent elections have resulted in changes in their representatives.

During the Torino Conference other participating metropolitan areas were invited to attend the Assembly. Representatives attended from Berlin, Nantes and San Sebastian/Bayonne in the EU and Wroclaw, Szczecin, Katowice, Bucharest, Minsk, Tallinn and Vilnius from the CEEC. During the Torino Conference Wroclaw and Szczecin indicated their intention to join the Network and others indicated their intention to consider doing so.

The Sederunt is attached as Appendix 1.

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### **2 MINUTES OF THE IX MEETING OF THE NETWORK AND THE MANAGING COMMITTEE. Helsinki 9-11 September 1999.**

The Minutes were published on the METREX and faxed to Members without email addresses.

The Minutes were approved at the Assembly.

### **3 EUROPEAN CONTEXT**

#### **A Porto Convocation. Signatories and outcome**

The President reported that a meeting has been arranged for Thursday 18 May with the President of the EU, the Portuguese Prime Minister, António Guterres to progress the Porto Convocation Resolution.

During the Torino Conference those Members that had not signed the Porto Declaration of Intent did so. The number of metropolitan area having signed is now 42, and there are now 72 individual signatories.

The overall position, following the Assembly, will be formally listed and published as an addendum to the Porto Metropolitan Magna Carta.

#### **B Berlin Urban 21 Conference. 4-6 July 2000**

METREX will be represented by a delegation comprising Athens, Porto and Veneto supported by the METREX Secretariat.

The Secretary General will write to the organisers to explore ways in which METREX can contribute to the proceedings.

#### **C Hannover Expo 2000 CEMAT Conference. 7-8 September 2000**

The spatial planning framework being prepared by the Council of Europe for the development of the wider Europe of the EU, the 13 accession countries and other CEEC countries through its European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning (CEMAT) will be presented to a special meeting in Hannover during Expo 2000.

The Council of Europe will be invited to present this framework to the METREX Sevilla Meeting in Autumn 2000.

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### 4 EUROPEAN PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

#### A InterMETREX Interreg IIc pilot project progress report

Jim Parke, Project Co ordinator, reported that the project to pilot the Porto Metropolitan Magna Carta/Practice Benchmark in the North Western Metropolitan Area (NWMA) had begun successfully with Workshop Meetings in Glasgow from 15-17 December 1999 and Bradford from 1-3 March 2000. Further Workshops will take place in Brussels in June, Dublin in September, Rotterdam in November and Lille in January 2001. There had been difficulties in confirming the participation of some partners.

The need for early confirmation of partner commitment to an EU project was emphasised and this will be relevant to projects submitted under Interreg III.

#### B Interreg III programme 2000-2006

The METREX Secretariat circulated summaries of two possible project submissions under the Interreg III programme. Inter METREX could extend the current North Western Metropolitan Area (NWMA) pilot project, referred to above, to the wider Europe of the EU and the CEEC (through Strand C of the Interreg III programme) over the period 2001-2006. Poly METREX could investigate polycentric metropolitan relationships within the recognised EU transnational areas (Strand B of the Interreg III programme) or across these (Strand C).

These possibilities were discussed further at a separate meeting between interested parties after the Assembly. It became clear from consideration of the guidelines published by the Commission on the Inforegio web site (on 28 April 2000) that the administrative arrangements for submissions under Strand C would require further clarification.

However, it was concluded that the Inter METREX project was a clear continuation of the NWMA pilot project, takes forward the objectives of the Porto Convocation Resolution and should be supported.

The Secretariat will progress this with the current Lead Partner (the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Structure Plan Joint Committee) and the NWMA Secretariat and report again to the forthcoming Sevilla Meeting on progress. The key actions until then will be to agree hosts for Workshop meetings and the additional partners in the project and to draft an outline submission for informal consideration by DGXVI.

The purpose of the PolyMETREX project is also to take forward the Porto Convocation Resolution which supports the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) in seeking a better urban balance across the EU. In particular it seeks to develop polycentric relationships between metropolitan areas and a counter balance to Europe's "Global Integration Zone" (the London/Paris/Brussels/Rhine-Ruhr area).

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This issue was also discussed in the Presidential Commission which preceded the Assembly. The Review of the Trans European Transportation Networks (TEN's) being carried out by DG TREN, and described by M. Rémi Mayet in his Torino Conference presentation, will also be relevant. The Review should be published in June 2000 and can be discussed again at the Sevilla Meeting.

President Bresso suggested that Europe could be thought of as comprising a number of broad zones within which polycentric metropolitan relationships could be investigated with a view to achieving the better urban balance sought by the ESDP. These could be:

1. A Northern Parallel running from London and Paris to Berlin and including the Rhine-Ruhr area.
2. A Rhine corridor running south west from the Randstad to Zurich and München.
3. A Southern Parallel stretching from Lisbon through Barcelona, Marseille and Milano to Budapest.
4. An Elbe-Danube Corridor running south west from Berlin to Budapest.
5. A Northern Isles area covering the UK and Ireland.
6. The Baltic Palette covering the metropolitan areas of the Baltic sea.
7. The Archimed area covering the metropolitan areas of the southern Adriatic, Ionian, Tyrrhenian and Aegean seas.

This concept is illustrated in Appendix 2. Members views on this will be welcomed through the ongoing Presidential Commission on the METREX website. The concept will also be discussed informally with DGXVI before any submission is considered under Interreg III (Strand C) and the Secretariat will keep Members informed as the situation develops.

## 5 METREX Central and Eastern European Countries (CEEC) initiative

It was agreed that with the prospect of the enlargement of the EU to include CEEC members it would be appropriate to develop a METREX programme to assist CEEC metropolitan areas to participate in METREX activities.

It was agreed that the 50% subscription rate should continue to apply to the CEEC generally with a 30% rate for the Baltic States and Poland having regard to the EU's Purchasing Power Standard (PPS) indicators. These rates will be kept under review as circumstances change but the objective will be to enable increasing CEEC participation.

In addition, it was agreed that the cost of participating in future Conferences will be reduced to levels that can be met by CEEC metropolitan areas.

The Secretariat will continue to explore ways of putting together a specific programme of assistance to CEEC metropolitan areas through the Interreg III and PHARE programmes. The intention will continue to be to launch this at the Rotterdam Meeting in Spring 2001.

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### 6 METREX NETWORKING

#### A Form and content of future Meetings

It was agreed that Meetings might continue to take the following form.

##### Wednesday evening

- Members arrive and meet

##### Thursday morning

- Orientation tour of the metropolitan area with a commentary on significant planning issues or areas

##### Thursday afternoon

- Presentation of the planning situation in the metropolitan area including such matters as the administrative context, planning processes and procedures, key planning issues, strategy, key policies, programmes and projects (these are many of the matters included in the METREX Atlas)
- “Expert Group” discussion and consideration of key issues or areas chosen by the host Member.

##### Friday morning

- Keynote speaker on a METREX Commission issue\* of common interest followed by discussion
- European update session on planning affairs in the wider Europe of the EU and the CEEC (including also Norway and Switzerland)

##### Friday afternoon

- Possible session on CEEC issues
- Continuation of Expert Group working to identify Findings and Conclusions of relevance and use to the host Member

##### Saturday morning

- METREX Managing Committee Meeting and possible guided tour of the City Centre.

\* The present METREX Commissions on topics selected by the host Member might be continued in future through contributions and exchanges on the METREX website.

#### B Location and date of future Meetings in 2000, 2001 and 2002

It was agreed that the programme of Meetings to the next biennial Conference and 2002 will be as follows:

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### **Autumn 2000. Sevilla, 25-28 October**

Themes to include inner historic areas, access and transportation. Colleagues from Torino also asked for comparative studies to be discussed of the implications of holding World or European events such as World Fairs, the Olympics, European Games or Fairs (Sevilla, Lisbon, Barcelona, Athens, München, Hannover etc).

### **Spring 2001. Rotterdam 9-12 May**

Themes to include urban renewal (social, economic and environmental aspects), the Delta Metropolis (Amsterdam, den Haag, Rotterdam, Utrecht) and harbour development.

### **Autumn 2001. Øresund (Copenhagen/Mälmo)**

Themes to include the impact and consequences of the opening of the Øresund bridge (after one year), the Baltic countries and the CEEC and environmental benchmarking (current project finishes in July 2000).

### **Spring 2002. Biennial Conference. Thessaloniki (in association with Athens).**

Theme will be “The social face of sustainability”.

### **Autumn 2002. Berlin being considered.**

## **C 2002 biennial Conference. Location, date, theme and financing**

Vice President Professor Constantinos Katsambalos, on behalf of the Organisation for the Master Plan and Environmental Protection of Thessaloniki (in association with colleagues from the Organisation of Athens), kindly offered to host the METREX 2002 Conference in Thessaloniki where the theme will be “The social face of sustainability”.

This offer was accepted by the Assembly with gratitude and enthusiasm and the President thanked Vice President Katsambalos for his kind offer.

Discussion continued on the funding of future Conferences and, following a suggestion from Emilia-Romagna, it was agreed that the Secretariat would investigate ways in which the delegate fee could be reduced or eliminated through co funding and sponsorship. One approach might be to investigate spatial planning and development issues of common interest and value to METREX and potential sponsors.

The Secretary General reported that the Torino Conference would probably cost around 100000 EURO's with 39000 EURO's being provided by the three host Members, 40-45000 EURO's from delegate fees and a balancing sum from METREX (see Appendix 3 for details). Ways of reducing costs could include a single multi-lingual Conference Brochure, a single Conference Hotel/venue, and language services tailored more closely to Member and delegate needs.

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Fixed costs might be covered by assured income from cofunding or sponsors but there will always be a need for a fee to cover variable non Member participation costs such as catering. Keynote and Workshop speaker costs have always proved to be considerable if the necessary range of knowledge and experience is to be included in the programme. There were some 50 speakers at Torino.

The Secretariat will produce a short Guidance Note, to assist future Conference hosts in holding a METREX Conference, for consideration at the Sevilla Meeting.

### 7 METREX management

#### A AISBL Statutes and registration

The Secretary General reported that although all Members had not yet signed and returned their AISBL documents to the Network's legal representative, Dekeyser Cabinet d'Avocat in Brussels, an application for AISBL registration with the Belgian Government had been made.

Additional copies of the letters of delegation and the Statutes, in appropriate languages, were given to those members who have not yet completed the signing process. The President urged Members to return these to Dekeyser Cabinet d'Avocat as soon as possible so that all Members are properly enrolled in the Network.

#### B Membership and prospects

The membership now stands at 30 metropolitan areas and 45 individual authorities and organisations. The Secretary General reported that a target of 40 Members by the Thessaloniki 2002 Conference was attainable having regard to the interest that had been expressed at the Torino Conference. The President was pleased to announce that Wroclaw and Szczecin had joined the Network during the Torino Conference and their representatives were warmly welcomed by the Assembly.

The President and the Secretary General will follow up contacts with the metropolitan areas now considering membership and report back to the Sevilla Meeting.

#### C Treasurer

The Secretary General reported that there had been legal difficulties for the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Member in taking on the responsibility of Treasurer but that these are now in the process of being resolved. The Secretary General will report on the Treasurership again at the Sevilla Meeting.

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Meanwhile the Secretary General and the Auditor and Accountant, John Brown of David Law Ltd, will continue to ensure that the financial affairs of METREX are managed in a responsible way having regard to the purposes of the Network set out in the Statutes.

### **D Financial report and audit 1999**

The Auditor and Accountant distributed the audited accounts for the period 1 January to 31 December 1999. These showed that income and expenditure had been balanced over the period but that substantial unbudgeted expenditure had been incurred to realise the Porto Convocation and to prepare for the Torino Conference and that this had resulted in the carry over of a deficit to the financial year 2000. This deficit would not have arisen if all subscriptions had been paid. In particular, there are subscriptions outstanding from the Prefectures in Athens and Thessaloniki where the recent elections have changed the METREX representatives.

The President will write to the colleagues concerned to clarify and resolve this issue. The Assembly received the Accounts for 1999 and as no points were raised they were signed on behalf of the Members by the President.

### **E Budget for 2000 and 2001**

The Secretary General circulated the METREX budget for 2000, provisionally approved by the President after the Helsinki Meeting, and the statement of expenditure to 31 March 2000 when all subscriptions were due. The carried over deficit from 1999 was met by subscriptions for 2000 and expenditure balanced with income. However, only 70000 EURO's of the 170000 EURO's of subscription income was received by the due date of 31 March. Some Members have also not yet paid the refundable deposit of 1000 EURO's agreed at the Zaragoza Meeting in Autumn 1998 for payment in 1999.

Those Members that have not yet paid their deposits for 1999 or their subscriptions for 2000 are asked to do so in order to allow the Network to fund its activities for the remainder of the year without further difficulty.

As there were no observations from the Assembly the budget for 2000 was taken as approved.

### **F METREX working languages**

The Agendas, Agenda Notes and Minutes for Meetings of the Managing Committee, or a General Assembly, can be produced at a cost of about 1000 EURO's per language. At the moment METREX produces these in the host language and four other languages (from English, French, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese) at a total cost of about 4000 EURO's per Meeting or General Assembly.



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In addition, interpretation services cost about 1000 EURO's for equipment and 1300 EURO's per language, making about 6200 EURO's in total. In broad terms language services cost a total of 10000 EURO's per Meeting plus travel and accommodation for the Interpretariat of four people. This could add another 4000 EURO's. Over a year language services (translations and interpretation) probably cost about 30000 EURO's.

When there are more than 40 people at a Meeting the Sennheiser headsets and microphone system becomes inadequate. A venue with language equipment (desk microphones and interpreters booths) becomes necessary and relief interpreters may be needed unless the Meeting is managed to include relief breaks.

The General Assembly concluded that there was clearly a need to contain language costs but the service enables the Network to function. As the Network grows it will clearly be necessary provide suitable venues for larger gatherings (there were over 60 at Bologna and Helsinki). Growth of the Network will enable the language service costs to be reduced as a proportion of overall expenditure.

The biennial Conference brochure is particularly expensive when produced in five languages. In future a multi-lingual brochure would be more economic and this will be investigated for the Thessaloniki Conference.

Members are asked to give their views on the continuing provision of language services to the Secretary General for further discussion at the Sevilla Meeting.

## 8 Any other business

The Secretary General paid tribute to colleagues in the Provincia di Torino who had made the Torino Conference possible.

## APPENDICES

### 1 Sederunt

### 2 Diagram — Transnational polycentric balance (ARL, 1995)

Roger Read  
Secretary General.

Glasgow, 28 May 2000.

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Name	Title	Organisation	Email
mr. Jan PIET	Manager	Provincie Noord-Holland	elm.eu@Noord-Holland.nl
Mr. Joost F. SMIT	Senior Staff Member	Stad Amsterdam	stj@dro.amsterdam.nl
Mr. Fotis CHATZIMIKES	City and Regional Planner	Organisation for Planning & Environmental Protection of Athens	orplana@ath.forthnet.gr
Ms. Avgi MARKOPOULOU	President	Organisation for Planning & Environmental Protection of Athens	orlana1@ath.forthnet.gr
Ms. Catherine SYKIANAKI	Director General	Organisation for Planning & Environmental Protection of Athens	orlana1@ath.forthnet.gr
Hon. Dr. Pere MACIAS I ARAU	Minister for Regional Policies	Generalitat de Catalunya	ptmb@fcr.es
Sr. D. Albert SERRATOSA I PALET	Adviser to the Minister for Regional Policies	Generalitat de Catalunya	ptmb@fcr.es
Herr Wilhelm SCHULTE	Referatsleiter, Grundsatzfragen Landesplanung	Gemeinsame Landesplanungsabteilung Berlin-Brandenburg	
Sr. D. Ander ARZELUS	Miembro proyecto transfronterizo	Eurociudad Vasca Bayonne-San Sebastián	obser1@eurocity.gipuzkoa.net
Sr. D. Jon BASTERRA	Co-Director proyecto transfronterizo	Eurociudad Vasca Bayonne-San Sebastián	obser1@eurocity.gipuzkoa.net

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Name	Title	Organisation	Email
Sr. D. Juan Ignacio IZETA BERAETXE	Director de Ordenación del Territorio	Servicio de Gobierno del Pais Vasco	ml-garagalza@ej- gv.es
Mr. Mike Taylor	Team Leader, Local Planning	Birmingham City Council	julia.mccafferty@bir- mingham.gov.uk
Sig.ra Silvia GRASSI	Responsabile Monitoraggio Piano Territoriale Regionale	Regione Emilia- Romagna	pro_ptr1@regione.e- milia-romagna.it
Dott. Claudio TOLOMELLI	Responsabile Ufficio Programma Territoriale Regionale	Regione Emilia- Romagna	ctolomelli@regione. emilia-romagna.it
M. Michel STEENS	Attaché	Région Bruxelles- Capitale	
Madame Marie DEMANET	Département d'Urbanisme	Ville de Bruxelles	
M. Henri SIMONS	Echevin de l'Urbanisme	Ville de Bruxelles	
Arch. Victoria- Marinela BERZA	Director of Urban Planning	Bucharest City Council	archberza@pcnet.ro
berzavima@yahoo.c om			
Mr. Aurel IACOB	Director of International Relations	Bucharest Municipality	
Dr. Pál PATAKI	Senior Adviser to the Mayor	Municipality of Budapest	patakip@budapest. hu
Mr. Anders TINGVAR	Project Manager	Öresundskomiteen	anders.tingvar@lun- d.se
Mr. Jarl Christian ZINN	Programme Coordinator	Öresundskomiteen	jarlzinn@oerekom.d k
Monsieur Roger DUHALDE	1-er Vice-Président Délégué aux Finances	Conseil Général des Alpes-Maritimes	

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Name	Title	Organisation	Email
Monsieur Jean-Pierre MASCARELLI	Vice-Président pour l'Aménagement, le Développement Economique et les Transports	Conseil Général des Alpes-Maritimes	
drs Axel F. HARTMAN	Stafcoördinator	Provincie Zuid-Holland	
mr. B. MOSTERT	Beelddtaaldeskundige	Provincie Zuid-Holland	most-b@pzh.nl
Mr. Rodger McCONNELL	Director of Development and Regeneration Services	Glasgow City Council	rodger.mcconnell@estates.glasgow.gov.uk
Cllr Steven PURCELL	Convener of Development & Regeneration Services	Glasgow City Council	
Cllr . James COYLE	Chair	Glasgow & Clyde Valley Structure Plan Joint Committee	
Mr. Phil GAUNT	Town Planner	G&CVSPJC	
Mr. John BROWN	Finance	Scottish Greenbelt Company Ltd.	
Mr. Jussi VUORINEN	Architect & Head of Master Plan Unit	City of Helsinki	jussi.vuorinen@hel.fi
Ms. Suvi RIHTNIEMI	Member of the Board	Uusimaa Regional Council	suvi.rihtniemi@nls.fi
Mr. Pentti TUOVINEN	Assistant Director	Uusimaa Regional Council	pentti.tuovinen@uudenmaanliitto.fi
Mr Antti VIREN	Director of Development Planning	YTV Helsinki Metropolitan Area Council	antti.viren@ytv.fi

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Name	Title	Organisation	Email
Dr Justyna GORGON	Urban Environmental Management & Sustainable Development Project Manager	Katowice Agglomeration	sustain@silesia.top.pl
Mrs. Alicia DE BENITO HARLAND	Spanish Interpreter	METREX Interpretariat	alicia.harland@eurometrex.com
Monsieur Marc FERMIN	French Interpreter	METREX Interpretariat	marc.fermin@eurometrex.com
Sr. Adriano MURATORI	Italian Interpreter	METREX Interpretariat	adriano_muratori@hotmail.com
Mr. Richard ARKELL	Project Management	METREX Secretariat	integer@arkell.sol.co.uk
Mr. Jim PARKE	Project Management	METREX Secretariat	jim.parke@eurometrex.org
Mr. Roger READ	Secretary General	METREX Secretariat	roger.read@eurometrex.org
Mr. Alastair WYLLIE	Management & Communications	METREX Secretariat	secretariat@eurometrex.org
Sig.ra Luisa PEDRAZZINI	Resp. U.O. Pianificazione Sovracomunale	Regione Lombardia	Luisa_Pedrazzini@regione.lombardia.it
Sig.ra Marisa ZUZZARO		Regione Lombardia	
Dr. Alexander N. KOLONTAY	Director of urban Planning	Municipality of Minsk	
Monsieur Laurent MORENO	Chargé du Mission	Agence d'Urbanism de l'Agglomération Nantaise	Auran@wanadoo.fr
Madame Suzy DEVOIZE	Chargée du Ministre	Institut d'Amministration et d'Urbanisme d'Ile-de-France	

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Name	Title	Organisation	Email
Madame Jocelyne RIOU	Vice-Présidente	Région Ile-de-France	
Dr. Manuel DE LEMOS	Chief Officer	Área Metropolitana do Porto	
Dr António TAVARES	Assessor	Área Metropolitana do Porto	amp@amp.pt
Dr Milan TURBA	Director for Strategic Planning	City Development Authority of Prague	turba@urm.mepnet.cz
Ing. Zdenek KOVARIK	Councillor & Chairman of City Development & Housing	City of Prague Council	z.kovarik@mag.mepnet.cz
Ing. Jaroslav FOLPRECHT	Director	Czech Ministry of Regional Development	foljar@mmr.cz
Mr. Andris ROZE	Director of Strategic Planning	Riga City Council	Roze@atdep.rcc.lv
Sig. Salvatore BONADONNA	Assessore Regionale Urbanistica e Casa	Regione Lazio	bonadonna@sirio.regione.lazio.it
ir. Richard A.R. KOUPRIE	Chief Urban and Regional Planner	Rotterdam City Council	RAR.Kouprie@dsv.rotterdam.nl
Mr. Vincent J.M. ROOZEN	Urban and Regional Planner	Rotterdam City Council	VJM.Roozen@dsv.rotterdam.nl
Sr. D. José GARCIA-TAPIAL Y LEON	Jefe Servicio de Planeamiento	Ayuntamiento de Sevilla	gerente@urbanismo-sevilla.org
Sr. D. José Manuel SUÁREZ CANTALEJO	Jefe de Gabinete del Delegado de Urbanismo	Ayuntamiento de Sevilla	gerente@urbanismo-sevilla.org
Sra. Dña Auxiliadora CALVO EGIDO	Jefa del Departamento de Suelo	Junta de Andalucía, Consejería de Obras Publicas y Transportes	auxiliadora.calvo@copt.junta-andalucia.es

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Name	Title	Organisation	Email
Sra. Dña. Gloria VEGA GONZÁLEZ	Jefa del Servicio de Planificación Subregional	Junta de Andalucía, Consejería de Obras Publicas y Trasportes	gloria.vega@copt.ju nta-andalucia.es
Mr. Phil BIRD	Executive Director	Southampton City Council	p.bird@southampto n.gov.uk
Ms. Connie ANDERSSON	Board Member	Stockholm County Council	
Mr. Hans HEDE	Senior Regional Planner	Stockholm County Council	hans.hede@rtk.sll.s e
Mr. Elwe NILSSON	County Commissioner & Chairman, Regional Planning and Urban Transportation	Stockholm County Council	elwe.nilsson@moder at.se
Mr. Jan DUZYNSKI	Deputy Mayor	Municipality of Szczecin	
Mr. Marek KOCMIEL	Mayor	Municipality of Szczecin	
Dr. Eng. Piotr ZAREMBA	Manager, Muncipal Urban Office	Municipality of Szczecin	pzaremba@um.szcz ecin.pl
Mr. Peeter LEPP	Mayor	Tallinn City Government	mayor@online.ee
Mr. Urmas PAET		Tallinn City Government	mayor@online.ee
Sig. Domenico CARPANINI	Vicesindaco	Città di Torino	
Prof. Roberto GAMBINO	Facoltà di Architettura	Politecnico di Torino	
Prof.ssa Mercedes BRESSO	Presidente	Provincia di Torino	palmi@provincia.tori no.it
Dott. Gianfranco FIORA	Funzionario del Servizio Urbanistica	Provincia di Torino	fiorag@provincia.to. it
Dott.ssa Giulia MARCON	Responsabile Infopoint Europe	Provincia di Torino	marcon@provincia.t orino.it

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Name	Title	Organisation	Email
Arch. Luigi RIVALTA	Assessore di Pianificazione Territoriale	Provincia di Torino	
Sig. Ermanno DE BIAGGI	Settore Parchi	Regione Piemonte	
Arch. Mariella OLIVIER	Dirigente, Pianificazione Territoriale	Regione Piemonte	direzione19@regione.piemonte.it
Sig. Paolo LOMBROSO	Direttore, Dipartimento Urbanistica	Regione del Veneto	
Arch. Romeo TOFFANO	Dirigente	Regione del Veneto	almiotto@libero.it
Sigra. Ing. Elisabetta PELLEGRINI	Dirigente di Settore Lavori Pubblici e Pianificazione Territoriale	Provincia di Verona	
Mr. Edmundas PETKUS	Director of Vilnius Planas	Vilnius City Council	cuiipo@auste.elnet.lt
Ms. Jurate RAUGALIENE	Planning Coordinator	Vilnius City Council	cuiipo@auste.elnet.lt
Dr. Eng. Arch. Maciej DOBROWOLSKI	Director of Architecture & City Planning	Municipality of Wroclaw	vipal@um.wroc.pl
Dr. Eng. Arch. Katarzyna IWASZKONIZIALKOWSKA	Depute Director of Spatial Planning	Municipality of Wroclaw	vipal@um.wroc.pl
Sr. D. Pablo CALVO Y RUATA	Director del Area de Cooperación	Diputación Provincial de Zaragoza	cooper@dpz.es
Sr. D. Carlos PÉREZ ANADÓN	Vicepresidente Comisión Cooperación	Diputación Provincial de Zaragoza	par@dpz.es

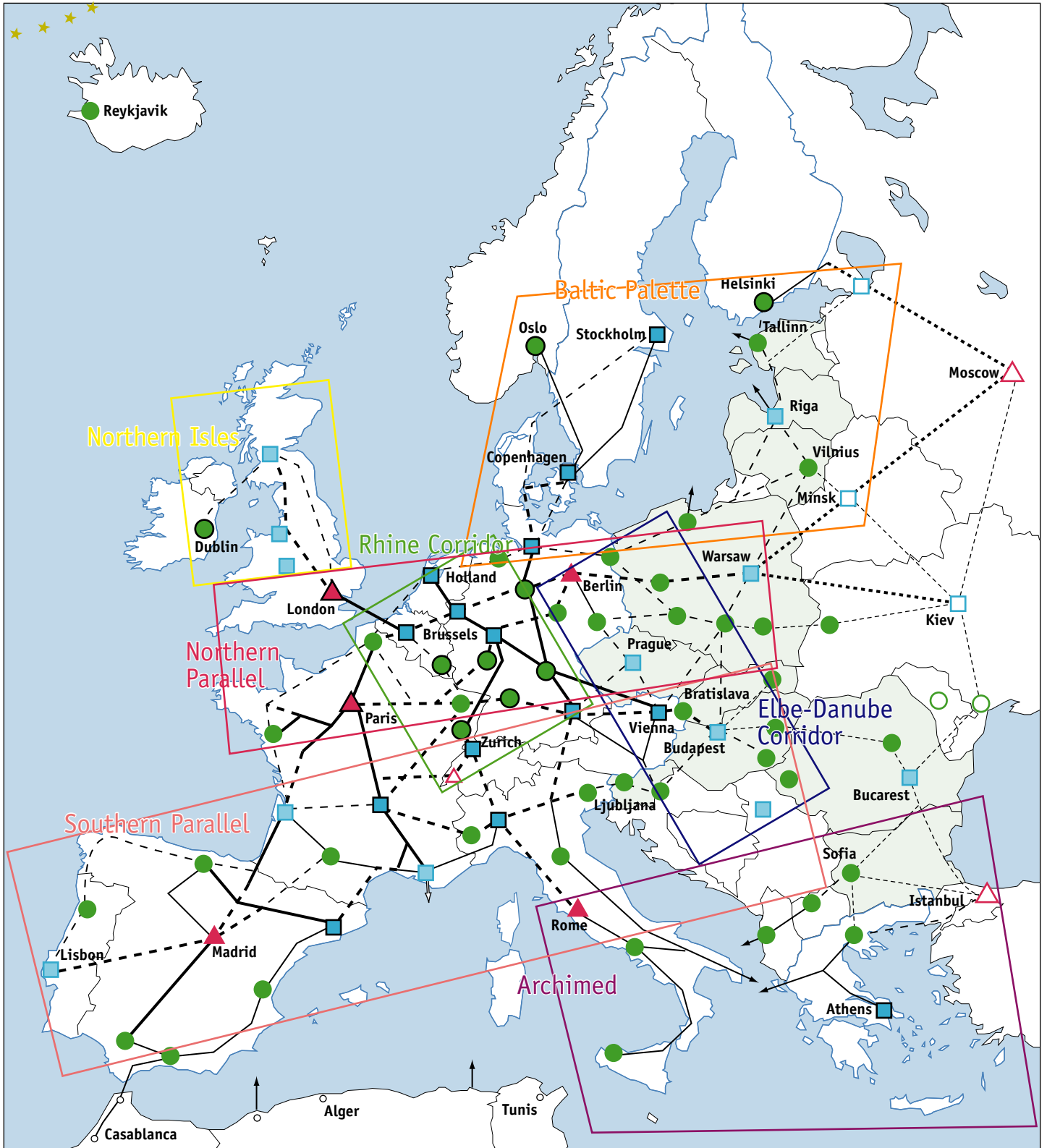




# METREX PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION

## Metropolitan polycentric relationships

### Transnational Polycentric Balance - Application



- |   |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| ▲ International urban centre                                    | ■ European urban centre                                    | ● National urban centre                                    | — Main transportation link   |
| ▲ International urban centre to be developed with priority      | ■ European urban centre to be developed with priority      | ● National urban centre to be developed with priority      | - - - Main transportation link to be developed with priority       |
| ▲ International urban centre to be developed in the longer term | ■ European urban centre to be developed in the longer term | ○ National urban centre to be developed in the longer term | ⋯ Main transportation link to be developed in the longer term      |
| ▲ Urban centre with specific international function (Zurich)    |  |  | — Secondary transportation link                                    |
|   |  |  | - - - Secondary transportation link to be developed with priority  |
|   |  |  | ⋯ Secondary transportation link to be developed in the longer term |
|   |  |  | ↔ European/intercontinental sea services to be developed           |