

Annual Report 2021



Annual Report 2021

Welcome from Jakub Mazur	3
President of METREX	

- Mission Statement 4
- The METREX Conference 6
 - Activities 10
 - METREX in Action 15
 - Focus on Members 18



It is with great pleasure that I present on behalf of the Managing Committee this summary of METREX's achievements in 2021.

Despite the Covid-19 Pandemic continuing to dominate agendas, 2021 saw restrictions begin to lift and it was towards the end of the year in October, coinciding with World Metropolitan Day, that the Managing Committee was able to meet for the first time in person.

This occasion was not only an opportunity to experience the personalities of those alongside me on the Committee, but it was also an important reminder of why the network will continue to meet in person. While hybrid working has become an efficient way to conduct our cross-European meetings, in-person meetings cannot be matched when building towards a common goal – as we, the Managing Committee, are doing.

That said, we saw two excellent and highly engaging online Conferences, both focused on contemporary European challenges. In Spring, Nuremberg Metropolitan Region brought Farm-to-Fork initiatives to our attention, and in Autumn, Riga Metropolitan Area explored the implementation of regional strategies. Both conferences were a huge success in bringing forth ideas, best practice and analysis on these two important topics. Indeed, they have inspired follow-on activities for METREX, through an emerging Expert Group on Farm to Fork and Network Group of Central European Members.

The other big highlight of the year was of course our new Mission Statement. The culmination of several months of meetings with Members and trusted stakeholders, the Mission Statement organises the activities of METREX into an integrated chain of five approaches, which links the work of our Members at one end, to an aspiration for greater policy influence at the other.

The Mission Statement crystallises the role of METREX as a place to accelerate innovation across Europe. To ensure that all areas are keeping pace. It has helped to articulate areas of development that the Managing Committee has been working on, such as putting in place the structures for influencing policy at the European level.

We are incredibly grateful for the continued support of you, our Members. Indeed, I am pleased to see that our network continues to grow. Not only does this growth bring further insight to the network, but it also gives greater weight to our belief that Metropolitan Regions and Areas are best in place to address the significant challenges we face.

Thank you again for your contribution to the METREX network. I hope to see you at an activity soon, online or in person.

WE ARE METREX!

Jakub Mazur

President of METREX
First Deputy Mayor of Wrocław

Mission Statement

In the Spring of 2021 and with a new Managing Committee in place, METREX set about reframing its purpose. This process was initiated as a way to take stock during a period of growth in membership, to continue to offer more meaningful and valuable activities to Members.

Over the course of several months and numerous meetings with Members, the Mission Statement was born. It provides an overview of how METREX operates but also the aspiration of the new Managing Committee to have greater impact on the European stage.

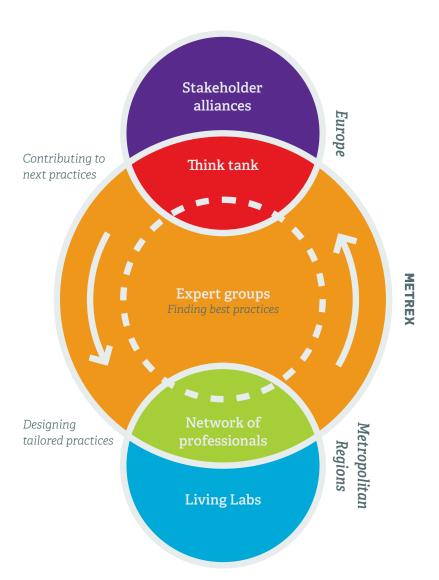
Five 'Metropolitan Approaches' are defined to cover the stages at which METREX contributes the metropolitan dimension, from learning about its Members – or 'Metropolitan Labs' – to enabling integrated thinking and influencing policy.

The Mission Statement is the first step in enhancing METREX's role as a network that can raise the influence and agency of metropolitan regions and areas. The Mission Statement has been shared with Members as well as externally and the reaction has been positive.

It is anticipated that the next step will be to generate discussion on how best METREX can enhance each of the five approaches, particularly the final strand that advocates metropolitan regions to the European Commission.

"This Mission Statement is a call to all European Metropolitan Regions and Areas to join METREX and demonstrate the pivotal role we play in solving the challenges ahead. It calls upon all Regions and Areas to set the necessary pace and demonstrate the pow- er of local execution, to meet societal and ecological deadlines that we believe will otherwise not be met."

Jakub Mazur, President



Five Metropolitan Approaches

METREX supports Metropolitan Regions and Areas in solving urgent challenges. These five approaches explain just how this is done, from acting as a network to share best practice peer-topeer, through to providing feedback on European policies.

5)

Metrex contributes to effective policies.

Metropolitan Regions and Areas formulate constructive feedback on abstract EU policies and regulations they are working with across their territories.

4)

Metrex contributes to a common policy framework.

Metropolitan Regions and Areas translate their approaches into principles that are available for all European regional and local authorities.

3)

Metrex accelerates urgent transitions.

Metropolitan Regions and Areas demonstrate situational leadership on pressing issues which enables excellent followership for others. This accelerates the journey to finding tailored solutions.

2)

Metrex enables integrated thinking.

Metropolitan Regions and Areas come together on specific issues to build the capacities required to cope with the complexity of current challenges.

1)

Metrex shares knowledge and experience on urban and rural themes.

To continuously improve the performance of our Metropolitan Regions and Areas, METREX actively links experts to learn from each other's best experiences and practices on current and emerging topics.

Point of departure:

We are 'Living Labs'.

Metropolitan Regions and Areas invest in pilots and research across their territories that focus on workable solutions with maximum impact.

Much like in 2020, the METREX
Conferences in 2021 took place online.
Nuremberg Metropolitan Region and Riga
Metropolitan Area both provided
interesting live case studies of
contemporary issues facing regions: food
strategies and the implementation of new
spatial strategies.



Nürnberg 2021 17-19 February 2021, Online

Farm to fork and food strategy of the EU - What do they mean for municipalities and regions?



View the conference recording at eurometrex.org

Before the time of global crisis in production and movement of goods caused by Covid-19, the ability to feed a population was in Europe largely taken for granted. However, with this view now exposed, it felt very timely that the first conference of 2021 examined the food strategies of metropolitan regions and areas. We gathered online to learn from Nuremberg Metropolitan Region and others about aspects such as the sovereignty of food production right through to how urban and rural areas, which both play an active yet different role in food strategies, can become more balanced and in-tune with each other.

The METREX Nürnberg Conference was hosted by Nuremberg Metropolitan Region and was linked to the STADTLANDBIO 2021 Congress, part of the Biofach annual trade fair for the production of organic food.

With the Farm-to-Fork strategy, the EU wants to create a sustainable EU agricultural system for "greener and healthier" food. The use of chemical pesticides, fertilizers and antibiotics is to be drastically reduced. The share of organic farming in the EU is to increase to 30% by 2050.

The EU sees cities as key players in the restructuring of the agricultural and food industry. Quite rightly, we have been experiencing a boom for years in the promotion of organic and regional food "from below" from the organic cities, fair trade towns and eco-model regions as well as the many regional initiatives that promote high-quality food and regional added value. Research and practical projects in recent years have shown that there is great potential for a sustainable food industry, especially in the urbanrural network within metropolitan regions. The Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, which was adopted in 2015, should also be seen as an important basis.

As was outlined by Dr. Christa Standecker, Managing Director of Nuremberg Metropolitan Region, regions face three key aspects that accompany the topic of food: identity, which covers individual products through to a region's reputation and association with gastronomy; landscape, in terms of diversity and ability to grow produce; fruitful cohesion, between urban and rural areas to ensure that they are working together. But there are also challenges that come from industralisation of food production, which favours large-scale producers, and also the loss of land to construction that is compatible with growing produce.

Other Members that contributed included Jérémy Camus, Vice President of La Métropole de Lyon, who spoke about his region's new delegation designed to increase food autonomy and fight against food insecurity, highlighting that one-third of Lyon's population cannot feed itself properly. Lyon's approach to this is to boost local production by bringing back urban farming and to promote the farm-to-fork principles.

The conference included a number of excellent "digital excursions", which explained some of the innovative projects from around the region that are addressing aspects such as digitalisation in healthcare, a climate protection fund, leading expertise in hydrogen technologies, and Innovationskunst – an group of organisations that aims to promote regional innovation.

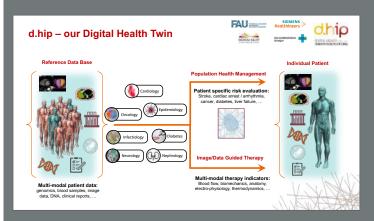
The conference was a big success and our thanks goes to Nuremberg Metropolitan Region.

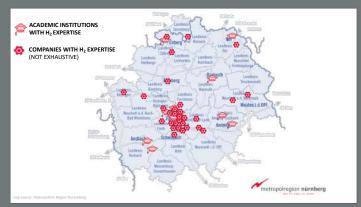
For more information visit: https://www.eurometrex.org/events/metrex-spring-2021-conference-nurnberg/

A snapshot of the Nürnberg Conference





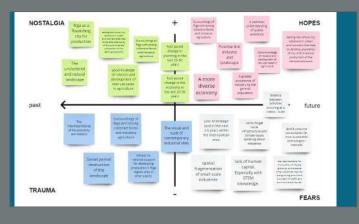


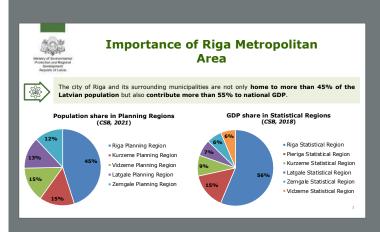


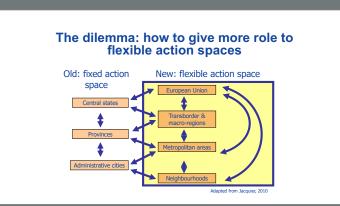
A snapshot of the Riga Conference

"Central Europe is not a state: it is a culture or a fate. Its borders are imaginary and must be drawn and redrawn with each new historical situation."

Milan Kundera







Riga 2021

29 September - 1 October 2021

Towards implementing spatial strategies in continuously changing metropolitan areas



View the conference recording at eurometrex.org

Members together online to learn from the new Riga Regional Plan and the action plan for the Development of Riga Metropolitan Area. We also took a step back to explore the concept of a Central European approach to planning. For this we invited participation from several Central and Eastern European METREX Members. We also reflected on it from the perspective of the New Planning approach from the Netherlands.

The metropolitan landscape in former Central-Eastern European states has changed radically in the past thirty years. The overall increase of metropolitan land consumption has changed the settlement structure, with new mobility patterns and the need for public services as a result, leading the transformation of metropolitan space. Nevertheless in some cases metropolitan areas are still in the process of being recognised by the governing structures and given some kind of governance status.

In the case of Riga Metropolitan Area (RMA), the planning has been widely discussed in the past decade and the municipalities have come up with a mutual agreement to work together in developing a more efficient and competitive city region as well as to contribute to the macro-regional metropolitan networks strengthening the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) in Europe and beyond.

The process and results so far were explained in the METREX Riga Conference, with a focus on the new jointly achieved RMA development plan in a context of BSR and overall development tendencies of metropolitan regions.

The conference also sought to provide an answer to the question of whether there was a particular Central European approach to planning. This turned out not to be the case, but the question kickstarted a number of important further

questions on culture and shared identity, and even prompted the beginnings of a new Central European sub-network of Members.

Author Charles Landry, who moderated the final session of the conference, took the theme of a Central European approach one step further with an article examining shared traits, comparing view with Western European Members. This will soon be available for Members.

Our thanks goes to the City of Riga and Riga Metropolitan Area.



Activities

METREX sub-networks and expert groups continue to thrive, led by Members for Members. The Bernd Steinacher Fellowship and METREXmonthly events broaden our understanding of the latest solutions from Europe's metropolitan regions and areas.



Expert Groups

The emergence of the new Mission Statement for METREX reinforced the important role of Expert Groups within the network. They are the arenas within which we find the best practise that will influence better and more integrated outcomes across Europe.

Health as a Driver for Metropolitan Development

As well as meetings for our more established Expert Groups, 2021 saw the introduction of a new Group on health. In this unprecedented era of a worldwide Pandemic and in the context of initiatives like the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Urban Agenda, and the Leipzig charter, we have reached a critical point in understanding that metropolitan areas can be the source of solutions in health.

The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted (again) that social and financial inequalities in our Western societies are still quite significant. It highlights that health and wellbeing are not defined by the absence of disease or suffering, nor by the quality of healthcare-systems or social-care organisations.

Following our kick-off meeting on Health as Driver for Metropolitan Development, and in recognition of its huge and omnipresence importance, the aim now is to integrate health as a theme in all our activities.

From Roads to Streets

Three European networks are currently collaborating on this platform to understand how transforming highways can help cities and regions reach their climate-friendly, sustainable urban development and mobility goals, while working to become more liveable, socially inclusive and economically attractive. In addition to meetings at the METREX Conferences, the group's work

led to a significant workshop event in Lyon (see page 17).

Metropolitan Governance

This group has a focus on institutional cooperation, public-private cooperation, innovation and European Funds. Their objective is to analyse metropolitan governance in the European context and conclude policy recommendations based on the experiences and the contributions of METREX members.

In 2021, the group met at the Nürnberg and Riga Conferences to share findings so far. With a successful METREXmonthly event on Metropolitan Strategies, the group will expand its focus to look at how regions and areas are using foresight and translating this into strategies.

Metropolitan Landscapes: balancing urban and rural

The two-year programme of this group launched in 2021, with meetings at the METREX Conferences. In the workshop at the Nürnberg Conference, they looked at strengthening the position of rural areas by developing tailored economic activities, like growing food for the region.

There are various EU initiatives that help setting up regional programmes to better access the overarching policies and their funds, like the 'EU Leader programme'. But there is also work done in understanding better the way to change perceptions that people in both urban and rural areas have of the 'in between areas'.

For more information of any of the METREX Expert Groups, please contact stephen.gallagher@eurometrex.org.

Network Groups

Nordic-Baltic Network

The Nordic-Baltic Network continued to thrive in 2021 under Stockholm Region, who assumed the rotating chair-ship. This long-standing network continued to meet virtually, with METREX conferences providing an anchor around which to join together and share learning from projects and research on climate to urban planning. The Network also expanded in 2021, to include Harju County Municipalities, including cities and areas such as Talinn.

Inspired by the discussions that have taken place within meetings, the Group started work on an emerging new Expert Group that would address the climate challenge and the effects that metropolitan regions and areas will need to deal with in the short and long term.

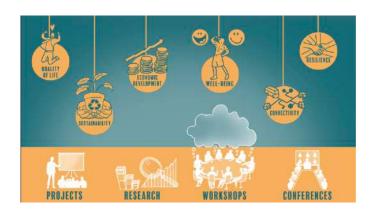
SURE

The SURE Network –which stands for Strategic Urban Region Eurodelta– met many times over the year, acting as a magnet for authorities and other stakeholders in the area that falls between Lille, Koln and den Haag.

A website was launched by METREX (<u>sure-eurodelta.eurometrex.org</u>) to bring together the activities and resources generated by the network and its partners. This includes forthcoming meetings, reports of past meetings, and reports from various relevant European research projects such as STISE, which is looking at sustainable cross-border mobility.

METREX also supported an initiative of the SURE Network called the Next Generation Platform. The Platform attracted students and young professionals to help create a vision for the future of the Eurodelta, culminating in a week-long programme of events at which the 'next generation' presented their ideas.

The secretariat for the SURE Network passed from den Haag to Amsterdam. METREX would like to thank both organisations for the time and expertise they have added.





Research

The Bernd Steinacher Fellowship

The Bernd Steinacher Fellowship was established in 2010 to sustain the values and interests brought to METREX by the late Bernd Steinacher, former Director of Verband Region Stuttgart. It is funded jointly by METREX and Verband Region Stuttgart.

2019-2021

David Dooghe is finishing his studies within the current Fellowship but is delayed due to the Covid pandemic. He will present his conclusions at the METREX Autumn Conference in the Metropolitan Region of Amsterdam, 2022.

2021-2023

The 2021-23 Fellowship is conducted by Dr. Kamil Glinka, doctor of political science and assistant professor at the Institute of Political Sciences of the University of Wrocław in Poland.

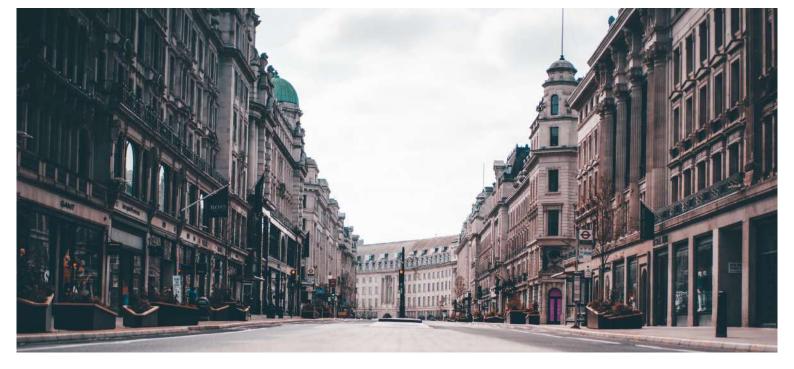
The objective of the research is to diagnose and analyse the activity of metropolitan self-governments in counteracting the destructive Covid-19 (post)pandemic crisis.

The measurable results of the research include:

- Developing a model of response to the Covid-19 (post)pandemic crisis implemented by European metropolises, with particular emphasis on the functioning of those sectoral areas that are key for the functioning of metropolises;
- Developing a scenario matrix that presents possible variants of cooperation between metropolitan self-governments in Europe (bilateral and multilateral) in the face of the COVID-19 (post)pandemic crisis.

The research will be of an application nature and therefore serve the activity of metropolitan authorities in areas of urban policy that are losing out as a result of the (post)pandemic crisis (eg. health care, social care, public transport, education, culture, sport and recreation, housing). We look forward to sharing the findings from Dr. Glinka.

London's Regent Street empty due to Covid Photo by Dan Senior on Unsplash



METREXmonthly

A spotlight on some of the METREXmonthly meetings held in 2021.

January 2021 Where are we with Covid?

After living reactively for almost a year, what does the next 5-10 years look like of life with Covid-19 and the consequences for society and the economy? We heard from three METREX Members about possible scenarios on tackling the most pressing issues for their region. Thierry Petit from L'Institut Paris Region provided an economic-focused analysis, Sandeep Shingadia from Transport for West Midlands demonstrated their approach to keeping the West Midlands moving safely, and Jakob Richter from Hamburg Metropolitan Region gave an overview of the effects on budgets.

March 2021 Looking back at the Nürnberg Conference

The METREX Conference, hosted by Nuremberg Metropolitan Region and integrated with the BIOFACH eSpecial, sought to ask questions about opportunities associated with the EU's farm-to-fork and food strategy for cities, municipalities and rural districts. How can the EU level and the municipal/regional level be interlinked?

Contributions came from a number of those who spoke at the Conference. Cooperation was a key theme that threaded through all the contributions, with urban-rural cohesion seen as a defining factor in the ability to close gaps in the chain of farm-to-fork.

METREX President Jakub Mazur spoke of the positive impact that the conference had on sustainable food production in Wrocław, which took inspiration from the case studies presented at the conference.

April and June 2021 Towards a METREX Statement – Green Deal Going Local 2021

The UN habitat had just launched its report, Cities and Pandemics: Towards a more just, green and healthy future. Together with reports from the OECD and online events from METREX and others, it was clear that METREX needed to look ahead to help Members anticipate and pool knowledge on a green recovery. We needed to exchange on scenarios, instruments and solutions for coming out of the pandemic, in respect to the Green Deal policies, using its funding opportunities as well as those of the EU Recovery plan.

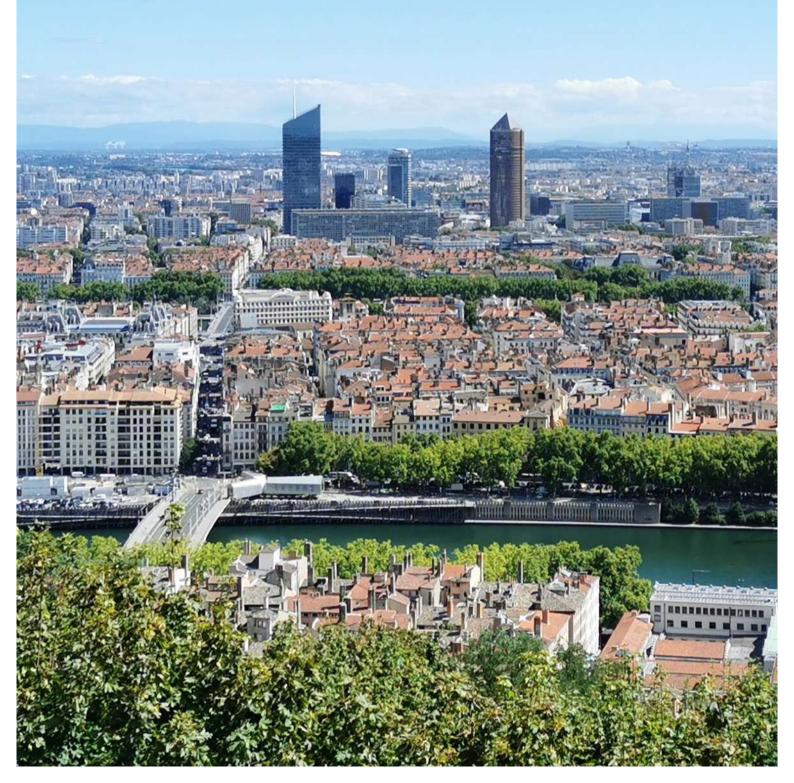
Two meetings were convened at which we aimed to develop a narrative on the role of Metropolitan Regions and Areas in the green recovery. From the political landscape, we heard from the Mayor of Vantaa, Ritva Viljanen, Vice Mayor of Città Metropolitana di Milano, Adrianna Censi, and the First Deputy Mayor of Wrocław, Jakub Mazur.

Backing up with examples were practitioners from our Membership including: Dr. Christa Standecker, Managing Director of Nuremberg Metropolitan Region; Hester Keesmaat from Municipality of Amsterdam, on their Green Recovery Programme; Dario Parravicini from Città Metropolitana di Milano, on using the EU Recovery and Resilience Fund; and Łukasz Medeksza, Deputy, Director of the Strategy and City Development Department, Wrocław.

The discussion and presentations in both sessions provided material and direction for our emerging Mission Statement.

METREX in Action

As the METREX network continues to grow, our presence externally at events and activities across Europe grows too. Here is a selection of our highlights from 2021.



METREX in action

European Week of Regions and Cities: Metropolitan scenarios for a green postpandemic recovery

Online, October 2021

METREX hosted a special event at the EU Week of Regions and Cities that brought together a number of Members to examine the most effective green projects and initiatives and discuss solutions that look beyond the pandemic to achieve a green recovery.

METREX Members Helsinki, Gdańsk, Wrocław, Stuttgart Region, Torino and Nürnberg presented how they are redefining their responsibilities to support citizens, civil society and businesses to translate green policies into action.

"When we think about the big issues – from climate to mobility – these are not just the problems of the big cities", Jan Olbrycht MEP said as he advocated the metropolitan dimension as the level at which urban and rural issues can be solved.

The event had a number of take-away messages:

- Metropolitan regions and areas are the optimum level at which urban and rural challenges can be met.
- A green recovery will require changing behaviours as much as physical interventions.
- The ideas to meet green goals are out there, but the willingness to adopt, and indeed share them must come next.
- Health should be the driver behind green recovery projects.
- Inviting other stakeholders to invest in climate-related projects is a concrete way to bring action and inspire further change.

We look forward to holding events in 2022 as part of the European Week of Regions and Cities, which will be the 20th edition of the annual programme of activities.

EMA Forum

Porto, November 2021

The sixth edition of the EMA (European Metropolitan Authorities) annual forum took place in Porto during November. The forum focussed on the metropolitan financial recovery after the Covid-19 pandemic and the transition towards more sustainable and smart cities, with a special mention to transport and mobility.

The forum included participation from many Members of METREX. We are pleased to share many of our aims with EMA, not least promotion of the important role played by Metropolitan Regions and Areas in a sustainable, equitable and prosperous future for Europe. We look forward to greater and closer collaboration with EMA in the coming years.

Speaking at the forum Ms. Elisa Ferreira acknowledge the role of metropolitan areas in integrating key service sectors between cities and wider areas – such as energy, mobility, education, healthcare, the circular economy and more – to achieve the green transition. Ms. Ferreira emphasised this role and encouraged metropolitan areas to come forward with proposals for investment, such as in smart mobility and energy networks, and play a greater role in national planning policy. METREX looks forward to bringing this call-to-action to our emerging Metropolitan Vision.

From Roads to Streets Workshop

Lyon, August and October 2021

All over the world, cities and regions are confronted with the ambiguous heritage of extensive networks of highways and their fragmented urban landscapes. Expressways still play an important role in moving people and goods within metropolitan areas, but they may not be the most efficient and sustainable way to do the job. Moreover, they can act as barriers that not only sever communities, but also create places that are unloved and unpleasant.

Over 20 European cities and regions are now taking part in the From Roads to Streets or expressway-to-boulevard learning platform, with the support of international experts, through online workshops, digital seminars, and physical meetings.

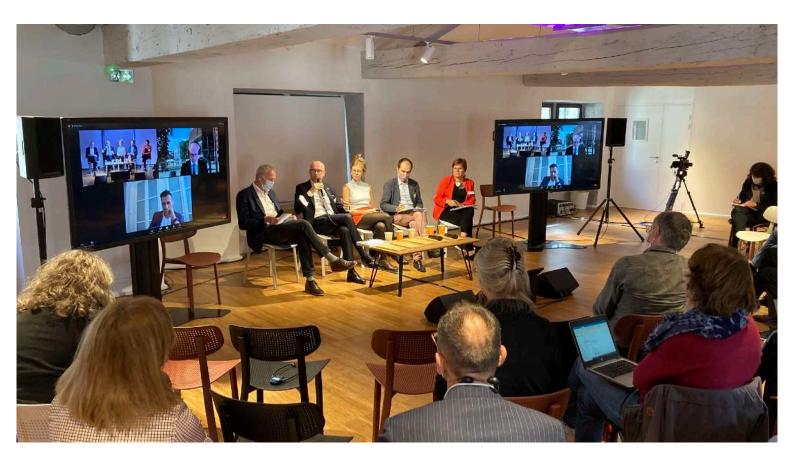
An international workshop about the future of the Rhône River banks highway

in Lyon was held in August 2021, followed by a joint UrbaLyon-METREX-EUROCITIES-URBACT workshop with elected officials in October. This event drew experts from across Europe to Lyon to explore a range of solutions for Lyon's M6/M7 Highway Corridor Transformation based on examples from other European cities.

The workshop was a demonstration of the power of collective expertise as the findings were presented to local politicians including the Mayor of Lyon, Grégory Doucet.

METREX plans to package this workshop model and offer it to all Members – on the theme of highway transformation and many others depending on local challenges – to make use of the expertise and knowledge that is embedded within the network. More information on this workshop approach will be made available soon.

President Jakub Mazur speaks at the Lyon workshop on From Roads to Streets



Focus on Members

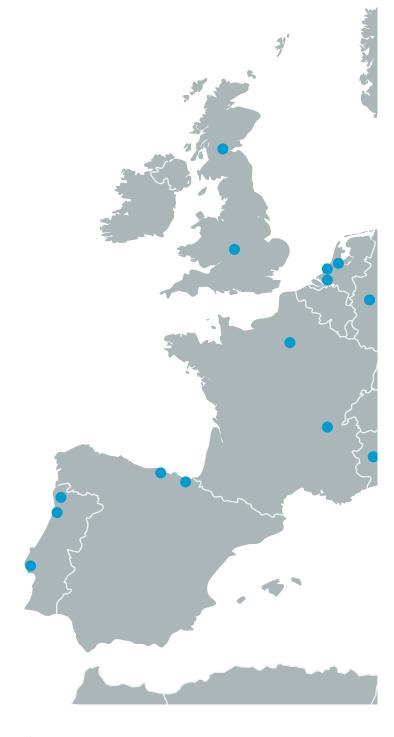
Membership and Financial Update

METREX is very happy to have seen a continuation of the growth of interest in membership and actual new members. As an example were are regularly approached by new metropolitan organisations from Central Europe, as result of an ongoing 'metropolisation' in Europe.

METREX produced a Mission Statement in 2021, that will be followed by a Metropolitan Vision for Europe 2050 in the next year.

We continue to meet with Members oneto-one to keep informed on their priorities and how METREX can assist with their work.

Members are welcome to contact the Secretariat to receive the financial report from 2021.



Managing Committee 2021

Jakub Mazur

President of METREX First Deputy Mayor, City of Wrocław

Adriana May

Vice President of METREX

Christina Suomi

Vice President of METREX Head of Unit, Strategic Urban Planning, City of Helsinki

Miguel Ángel Crespo Rico

General Director of Spatial Planning, Gipuzkoa County Council

Ignacio De La Puerta Rueda

Director for Territorial Planning, Urbanism and Urban Regeneration, Basque Government

Thomas Kiwitt

Director Planning, Verband Region Stuttgart

Łukasz Medeksza

Deputy Director of the Strategy and City Development Department, Municipality of Wrocław

Erik Pasveer

Head of Strategy of Urban Planning and Sustainability, City of Amsterdam

Sébastien Rolland

Head of International Activities, Urbalyo

Sandeep Shingadia

Director of Development & Delivery, Transport for West Midlands



Members

The City of Brno
West Midlands and Birmingham
Stockholm Region
Gothenburg Region
Gipuzkoa - San Sebastián
Pais Vasco - Basque Country
Clydeplan - Glasgow City Region
Porto Metropolitan Area
Lisbon Metropolitan Area
Wrocław

Lower Silesia

West Pomerania

Szczecin

Mazovia Region

Viken County and City of Oslo

South-Holland Province

Metropolitan Region Rotterdam & The Hague

Amsterdam Region and City

Riga

Veneto Region

Metropolitan Capital City of Rome

Metropolitan City of Genoa

Metropolitan City of Turin

Metropolitan City of Naples

Lombardy Region and

Metropolitan City of Milan

Emilia-Romagna Region

Athens

Stuttgart Region

Rhein-Neckar Region

Nuremberg Metropolitan Region

Mitteldeutschland Region

Hamburg Region

Frankfurt-Rhein-Main Region

Berlin - Brandenburg Capital Region

Métropole de Lyon

Paris Region Institute

Helsinki City and Uusimaa Region

City of Zagreb

City of Sofia

City of Vienna

ANCI Liguria

INU Torino

Metropolis GZM - Katowice

Gdansk (tbc)

Harju County - Tallinn (tbc)

Observers

Budapest

Granada

INU Piemonte e Valle d'Aosta

Krakow

München

Northern Virginia

Shanghai

USA metropolitan regions



METREX

The Network of European Metropolitan Authorities

Tour Part-Dieu rue Servient, 129 69326 Lyon Cedex 3 France

info@eurometrex.org www.eurometrex.org @METREXnow

METREX is registered as an Association Internationale Sans But Lucratif (AISBL) with the Ministry of Justice Belgium.

Identification Number: 6477/2001

Registry: Dekeyser & Associés Rue Henri Wafelaerts, 36 B-1060 Bruxelles Belgium

For more information please contact:

Henk Bouwman

Secretary General henk.bouwman@eurometrex.org 00 31 654 295377

Stephen Gallagher

Head of Secretariat stephen.gallagher@eurometrex.org 00 44 7840 436844

METREX Annual Report 2021 Cover image of Nürnberg by Markus Spiske on Unsplash