



# METREX

The Network of  
European Metropolitan  
Regions and Areas

## Annual Report 2022

#WeAreMETREX



# Annual Report 2022

## METREX Managing Committee 2022

**Jakub Mazur**  
President of METREX  
First Deputy Mayor of Wrocław

**Adriana May**  
Vice-President of METREX

**Christina Suomi**  
Vice-President of METREX  
Head of Unit, Strategic Urban Planning, City of Helsinki  
Urban Environment Division

**Miguel Ángel Crespo Rico**  
General Director of Spatial Planning Diputación Foral de Gipuzkoa / Gipuzkoa County Council

**Ignacio De La Puerta Rueda**  
Director for Territorial Planning, Urbanism and Urban Regeneration, Basque Government

**Thomas Kiwitt**  
Director Planning (Leitender Technischer Direktor), 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**  
Town planner and urban designer at the Lyon Town Planning Agency (Urbalyon)

**Sandeep Shingadia**  
Director of Strategic Partnerships and Delivery Integration, Transport for West Midlands

## Contents

<b>Foreword from our President</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Towards a Metropolitan Vision for Europe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The Spring Conference</b> Città Metropolitana di Torino	<b>4</b>
<b>The Autumn Conference</b> Metropolitan Region of Amsterdam	<b>6</b>
<b>Expert Groups</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Network Groups</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Research</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>METREX in action</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Network events</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>The network and finances</b>	<b>16</b>



Developing the Metropolitan Vision for Europe 2050 has provided an illuminating insight into how Europe's institutions are viewed across scientific, business, and political communities. It has reinforced what METREX has known for over 25 years: that the metropolitan level has a crucial role to play in Europe, yet it is under-valued.

2022 has been an especially important year for METREX. It has been a year of building towards our vision for Europe. Gathering views, testing ideas and scenarios for the future, and putting form to an outcome that we will use to generate momentum behind our idea for greater metropolitan support.

We are incredibly grateful to all of those who have put time to helping this vision develop – whether through attending events or submitting written feedback. We will need to rely on the network further still in 2023, and we hope you will be able to give your time and support.

In spring and autumn, we were warmly welcomed in the Metropolitan City of Turin and Metropolitan Region of Amsterdam for our bi-annual conferences. In Turin, we learned about advances in urban regeneration in a post-industrial setting using European RRF funds, while in Amsterdam and Almere we learned about what it takes to create places of real quality and human scale.

Our activities led to some important new partnerships such as with NARC (the National Association of Regional Councils) in the United States, with whom we plan to hold further activities to share challenges and solutions. Existing partnerships have also been strengthened; we continue to work closely with EMA, as well as Metropolis and EURA (European Urban Research Association).

We have had the opportunity to share METREX on the global scale at the World Urban Forum, where we promoted 'greening the metropolitan city', and Urban Economy Forum, where we contributed expertise on financing sustainable development.

We also took considerable steps towards a new communication strategy. This has created new goals for us in 2023 and beyond. The strategy starts from four main objectives, which are designed to raise awareness of the excellent work of members whilst developing the scope and breadth of METREX.

I am enormously proud of the Managing Committee and Secretariat in developing METREX, expanding the network with new members as well as new strategic partners.

Unfortunately, 2022 has brought us also a new, extremely impactful crisis with the war in Ukraine. It adds to the other crises we already face and gives even more reason to collaborate and support each other where possible.

I look forward to working with you in taking forward our Metropolitan Vision for Europe in 2023.

WE ARE METREX!

Jakub Mazur  
President of METREX  
First Deputy Mayor of Wrocław

# Towards a Metropolitan Vision for Europe

If 2021 was the year of our Mission Statement, 2022 was shaped by our quest to bring to life a Metropolitan Vision for Europe.

*“Every time I meet the leaders and experts in our network, I see brilliant people with innovative ideas, ambitions, dreams, but also a strong sense of realism and the need to deliver. This is also part of the metropolitan reality. Working at the Metropolitan Level, improving peoples’ lives, is Top Sport.”*

Henk Bouwman

Secretary General of METREX

*Metropolitan  
Vision Scientific  
roundtable at  
the Barcelona  
Metro Solutions  
Conference*



Prompted by an invitation from EU Commissioner for Cohesion and Reform Elisa Ferreira to rethink our approaches to the big challenges facing Europe, METREX set about articulating a uniquely metropolitan solution to a prosperous, safe and sustainable Europe.

However, despite already playing a significant role in determining positive economic, social and physical outcomes, national governments and the European Commission do not yet view the metropolitan level as a serious partner and enabler.

METREX believes it is high time for the metropolitan level to show how it can deliver on the EU's commitments to create a better, healthier, just and agile Europe for all. Therefore, together with representatives from EMA, as well as our respective communities, we sought to develop a vision on our position and role that will enable us to come with concrete solutions addressing the current and future common challenges.

Our goal is to secure an appropriate say in decision-making and funding at EU and national levels for the metropolitan and local level relevant topics.

We held a series of roundtable discussions both online and in person at the Metro Solutions conference in Barcelona. These were focused on the scientific, business, and political communities, and sought to explore what a metropolitan Europe might look like, including the obstacles, opportunities and alternatives. The sessions set the tone and the appetite for the emerging vision. Further opportunities were used to test ideas and principles, such as a session at the European Week of Regions and numerous Members' meetings.

By the end of 2022, a "white paper" was drafted and ready for development into the final Metropolitan Vision. Our thanks to all partners and individual contributors who gave their time in 2022 to share views on the role of the metropolitan level.

# The Spring Conference

Urban Regeneration: examples from Turin in a European context

18-20 May 2022, **Citta Metropolitana di Torino**

*The Spring Conference covered a three-day discussion hosted by the Metropolitan City of Turin (CMTo) at its headquarters in the central area of the province capital city. Here, CMTo explains the conference from their viewpoint.*

The Metropolitan City of Turin is a peculiar reality in the Italian and European panorama: established by law in 2015, it includes 312 municipalities spread over an area of over 6,800 sq km, half of which is mountain territory.

Among its main characterising elements there is on the one hand the question of the transition in recent decades from a “One Town Company” city (automotive) to a city of knowledge and innovation. This transformation has left a multitude of large, medium and small abandoned industrial areas, and a problematic relationship between urban city centres oriented towards new advanced services, widespread urban industrial peripheries and rural and natural areas to be revalued and protected.

The agenda focused on the theme of urban regeneration, as a proper hallmark of the Metropolitan City of Turin experience in more recent years. Regeneration of urban areas and sites (in particular of the suburbs of large and medium-sized cities) is a common and inspiring topic among European cities that offers food for thought. As emerged from intensive workshops, Turin provides several examples of requalification and reuse of abandoned areas; such spaces have been the subject of afternoon study visits.

Among them was the OGR Torino ‘Officine grandi riparazioni’, a late 19th century industrial complex that until the early 1990s represented excellence in the field of locomotive and railcar maintenance. Following its closure, abandonment and

decay led to plans for the demolition of the historic H-shaped building, which was then averted by an urban planning variant that converted the site into a cultural area.

The visits also included the Torino Porta Susa station, a multimodal hub that directly connects local, national and international trains with the underground line and the city. Then, Nuvola Lavazza, an abandoned site recently converted into a business hub that brings together the various company offices of the worldwide known coffee brand. Lastly, the Turin Metro Station worksite, which represents an extension project that will connect the city with the municipalities of the first belt, contributing to the reduction of traffic and air pollution.

Like all Italian metropolitan cities, Turin has the institutional mission, attributed by Law, to ‘ensure the strategic development of the metropolitan territory’, which corresponds to the fundamental role of adopting and annually updating the three-year strategic plan (PSM) of the metropolitan territory. The new strategic plan proposes a substantial paradigm shift, presenting a vision of Turin as an ‘augmented metropolis’, that is, a territory capable of embracing its differences, providing equal opportunities according to the different forms of territories and local communities, with the aim of reducing inequalities.

On the other hand, metropolitan cities are also assigned the task of defining the rules for the development of the whole territory; the Metropolitan general territorial plan (PTGM) defines the guidelines, directives and constraints to which the 312 municipal urban plans must comply to achieve the main metropolitan objectives including sustainable development, citizens well-being, safeguarding of natural capital, overcoming the dichotomy between urban and rural areas. In this framework, the reflection and testimony of the Italian

*Visit to the repurposed OGR cultural area*



1. [www.espon.eu/metro](http://www.espon.eu/metro)

approaches to the European Recovery and Resilience Fund have been included, this has led to an enriching exchange of experiences and visions between metropolitan realities.

Even in the case of CMTo the strategic plan axes have been adapted to the missions of the Italian Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP), which involves metropolitan cities both as implementing body and market regulatory authority and supporter for third parts. Among NRRP investments, the Urban Integrated Plans and PINQuA are among the main instruments, managed by metropolitan cities, committed to the redevelopment of urban suburbs.

As generally emerged from plenary sessions, throughout Europe we are witnessing a process of “metropolisation”. However, this process, if left ungoverned, is a harbinger of imbalances. Such considerations led the discussion to some questions: Are metropolitan authorities the actors to govern? What tools do they have at their disposal, and how can and should the European Agenda take them into account?

Some potential answers came from the results of METRO<sup>1</sup> research, a project developed within the framework of the

Espon programme, which investigated the potential of metropolitan institutions – with specific regard to Turin case study – as drivers of development at the territorial level, having the right dimension and the potential to strengthen the impact and inclusion capacity of the EU cohesion policy.

The conference was a great success and brought us closer to analysing the impact of urban regeneration as a driver of sustainable territorial development and as a concrete means of implementing the Urban European Agenda. The event took advantage of the numerous opportunities for debate that have facilitated a fruitful exchange of experiences under the banner of local and regional cooperation.

Just as in the past, the conference represented an opportunity to strengthen networks with other metropolitan realities and to develop synergies to be used on the EU Agenda to define the role of cohesion policy in the planning of metropolitan areas and to build and strengthen partnerships to access the new programming of European funds.

# The Autumn Conference

Metropolis of Outstanding Quality with Human Scale  
5-7 October 2022, **Metropolitan Region of Amsterdam**

*Representatives from as many as 50 European metropolises exchanged knowledge and experiences at the METREX conference in the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area (MRA) from 5 to 7 October 2022. The MRA recaps on what the conference sought to achieve.*



The title of the conference was 'Metropolis of High Quality with a Human Dimension', and this was elaborated in a three-day programme.

The programme included plenty of room for meeting, inspiration and knowledge exchange. Paralympic athlete Bo Kramer opened the conference Wednesday with an inspiring talk on the importance of 'fun', cooperation and complementing each other to achieve success.



On Thursday, keynote Floris Alkemade kicked off the thematic day with a contribution on the relevance of metropolises, and the position of the MRA. The MRA urban development strategy was then presented in content, immediately followed by working visits based on three challenges being worked on in the MRA:

- Multi-core development with a human scale
- Green-blue network in and around the city
- Systems for the future in mobility and energy

We visited 'new town' Almere on Friday. They told us about the development from the start, the shared culture and the challenges of the present. Challenges are the connectivity, more presence of jobs and a university in the city, getting more density and keeping the green-blue character of the city. In the afternoon, we visited the Floriade, where a number of inspiring

examples of sustainable building and development were explained.

## Outlay of the Urban Development Strategy

One of the main ambitions of the MRA Urban Development Strategy is polycentric, balanced development. The underlying idea is multiple.

The first is that Amsterdam is the regional magnet, with international appeal. But not everyone and everything can find a place in Amsterdam. The pressure on the city is enormous. This is noticeable in housing prices, but also in the pressure on the regional traffic network and the congestion in the city.

By focusing on polycentric development, we want to achieve a metropolitan leap of scale, as it were. We want to stimulate economic activity, recreation and tourism in places outside Amsterdam. And we want to unlock the potential of the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area as a whole.



*Visit to the  
Floriade Expo in  
Almere during the  
conference*



The second underlying idea is that there are areas in the region that are not quite in balance. Within the region, there are large differences in the composition of the population in terms of education levels, income and labour participation. These differences have become more pronounced in recent years: the successful areas are becoming more successful, while the areas with many vulnerabilities are becoming more vulnerable. With the objective of polycentric balanced development, we want to strengthen the areas around Amsterdam. By creating more employment, more jobs matching the local labour market, and by contributing to the quality of life.

The last motive for pursuing polycentric balanced development is a unique selling point of the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area. The built-up areas in the MRA are relatively small in scale and there is an incredible diversity and proximity of the landscape. We are a metropolis on a human scale. This human scale largely determines the high

quality of life in this region. We want to cherish and strengthen it.

Although the ambition is clear, there are several dilemmas that we see in working towards this ambition of polycentric development:

How to work on spreading economic dynamics? What role can we, as government, play in this? How to achieve polycentric development when it is common practice that the private sector invests where the largest profits are to be made. And when concentration of people and jobs is regarded by many as the most efficient way of urban development?

# Expert Groups

In our Mission Statement of 2021, Expert Groups and Network Groups were placed at the very core of our commitment to sharing knowledge and bringing new ideas to regions and areas across Europe.

In 2022, our well-established groups all met online and during the METREX Conferences. All are looking to the future to assist with the latest challenges in Europe, with a focus on approaching project and research funding. METREX Members are welcome to join these groups – please get in touch to find out more!

From Roads to Streets, through member L'Institut Paris Region, has compiled an excellent set of reports that benchmark projects across Europe that have made significant positive changes to the urban realm. Metropolitan Landscapes has held several meetings to align focus with EU funding opportunities, while the Metropolitan Governance & Strategies Group has continued to share exemplar models between members.

The new Productive Cities Group got going with a series of online meetings and a live study visit whilst in Amsterdam for the Autumn conference.

## Metropolitan Climate Challenge

*Led by City of Helsinki, Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council, Helsinki Region Environmental Services HSY, Region Stockholm and Gothenburg. Co-ordinated by Liisa Perjo from Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council*

## From Roads to Streets

*Led by Paul Lecroart, L'Institut Paris Region*

## Productive Cities

*Led by Dr. Adrian Hill, Osmos Network*

## Metropolitan Governance & Strategies

*Led by Adriana May, Łukasz Medeksza from Wrocław, Laura Papaleo from Città Metropolitana di Genova*

## Metropolitan Landscapes: balancing urban and rural

*Led by Dr. Uwe Ferber, Stadtland Plus*

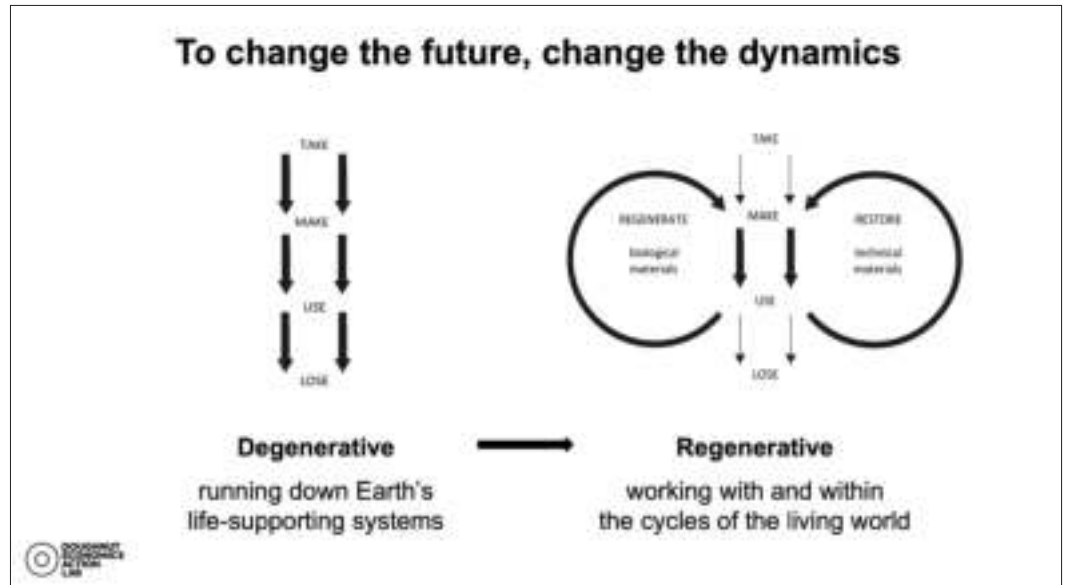
For more information on starting a new Expert Group within METREX, please contact Stephen Gallagher on

[stephen.gallagher@eurometrex.org](mailto:stephen.gallagher@eurometrex.org).

*In Focus: [METREX Metropolitan Climate](#)*



*The Productive Cities Expert Group visits Hamerkwartierin Amsterdam*



### Challenge Expert Group

To find the best ways to use metropolitan land use planning as a tool to respond to the accelerating climate crisis, five METREX members joined forces to launch a new expert group on climate during the METREX Spring Conference 2022.

The City of Helsinki, Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council, Helsinki Region Environmental Services HSY, Region Stockholm and Gothenburg region invited all interested METREX members to join the new group that aims to strengthen metropolitan regions and cities' ability to reduce their emissions and improve their resilience.

During 2022, the new METREX Metropolitan Climate Challenge expert group organised two live workshops during the METREX conferences, as well as three webinars. The topics included how to reduce private car use in metropolitan areas, how the doughnut economics model can be applied for more integrative planning for socially and environmentally sustainable development, how to plan for circular economy in metropolitan areas, as well as discussions on the challenges

and possibilities of renewable energy production in metropolitan areas.

All the expert group meetings had active and fruitful discussions with up to 30 participants sharing their experiences and developing new ideas and solutions together. The expert group also developed and tested a workshop model called Climate Challenge Clinic where participants join to help one METREX member with a current local or regional planning challenge.

In 2023, the group will continue to meet online approximately every other month and organise live meetings during the METREX Spring and Autumn Conferences. Plans include meetings to discuss and co-create on metropolitan perspectives for sustainable buildings and infrastructure, mobility, climate change adaptation and resilience, and EU policy. The group will also focus on identifying areas for in-depth cooperation and to enable deepened cooperation on specific topics the group will also look at developing joint EU project proposals.

# Network Groups

## Nordic-Baltic Network

Nordic-Baltic Network group meetings take place regularly on the day before the bi-annual METREX conference, with additional meetings inbetween. Every meeting is aimed at a specific topic related to the conference main theme. In addition, the members share updates about the current development process in their city-region. The network group on the first half of the 2022 was coordinated by the Stockholm Region. After the Turin conference the coordination of the network was passed to Riga.

The network group in 2022 had three meetings:

### March 2022, online

The main theme of the meeting was Spatial and other effects of the pandemic. Stockholm Region presented their observations regarding the pandemic and the future challenges followed by a discussion. On the second part members presented updates of the current development process in their metropolitan area. A brief review and discussion about the VASAB (Vision and Strategies Around the Baltic Sea) draft Vision of the Territorial Development of the Baltic Sea Region in 2040 took place. This was the first network group meeting that Region Skåne participated.

### October 2022, Amsterdam (hybrid)

In connection to the overall theme of the conference 'Metropolis of Outstanding Quality with Human Scale', the network meeting focused on community building. Riga presented its tools that are fostering participation of civil society and community interactions. Region Skåne presented their involvement strategy of citizens and municipalities in the regional plan development process. Oslo and Viken presented an introduction of the "human scale" in their urban development work, reflecting both the planning process and the results of urban development in a more inclusive form.

### Plans for the network group in 2023

#### February 2023, online

The meeting is planned in two parts – the theme for the first part will be communication and stakeholder management strategies for Low Emission Zone implementation. On the second part network members will share updates about current development processes in their metropolitan areas.

#### April 2023, Wrocław (hybrid)

The main topic of the meeting will be related to the overall theme for the conference – "a metropolitan answer to current crises in Europe".

#### October 2023, METREX conference (hybrid)

The topic of the meeting will be related to the overall theme for the conference.

The network remains an important forum for practitioners to share insights and trends with their counterparts across the Nordic-Baltic region.

*Nordic-Baltic Network was led in 2022 by Stockholm Region and then City of Riga*

*SURE Secretariat was hosted in 2022 by City of the Hague and then City of Amsterdam*



### Strategic Urban Region Eurodelta (SURE) Network

Part of the METREX Network, the SURE Network is a collaboration between cities, metropolitan areas, universities and NGOs in the river delta from the Rhine, Scheldt and Meuse. SURE provides a platform for the exchange of knowledge and expertise, and builds on joint projects and research among practitioners in the field of economics, sustainability and spatial planning. Ideally, the combined actions of the different stakeholders on this scale will result in the restoration of the balance of the Eurodelta by realising an ecological, economical, and social transition.

The Secretariat of the SURE network was hosted by the City of the Hague until mid 2022, followed by the City of Amsterdam. SURE network members joined several working group meetings in hybrid sessions on different locations, part of them also integrated in the bi-annual METREX conferences. The network's mission statement was sharpened, the network extended, and meetings regularly focussed on the dissemination of the results of a study on sustainable transport conducted by the EU research programme ESPON together with local and regional authorities from the SURE region. The results of the research on Sustainable transport infrastructure in the Eurodelta region

(STISE) were also presented at a stakeholder meeting in Brussels on 13 October 2022, hosted by the Benelux Union.

SURE members have also been exploring the potential of a smart specialisation in the Eurodelta, resulting in the development of a joint project proposal on promoting the circular economy, to be submitted for EU funding in 2023. In 2022, interested partners gathered almost bi-monthly under the working title 'ASSET' to explore the thematic direction and partnership of the project.

Furthermore, the second edition of Next Generation Podium took place from 2-6 May 2022. The programme consisted of a week long symposium for students, young researchers and professionals working in the field of architecture, design, urban studies, economic geography and spatial planning, with the aim of exploring future developments of the Eurodelta.

Finally, SURE network started organising online lunch lectures with Q&A opportunities on circular economy, called "Meet & Learn". In November 2022 Meet & Learn, Ton Venhoeven presented his research on multi-modal infrastructure nodes, while Federico Savini spoke about the state of the circular economy in terms of construction waste.

# Research

## 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.

**2019-21 Fellowship:**  
**The influence of crises on housing policies**

Fellow: David Dooghe

Owing to the Covid pandemic, the 2019-21 Fellowship concluded in 2022. This report aims to broaden the understanding of policymakers in regard to the influence global crises can have on housing and housing markets. This report looked into the effects of a trio of global pressures – 2008 financial and economic crises, climate change and COVID-19 – on existing houses or the construction of housing and how housing policies dealt with these effects.

The starting point of this report has been that, via a broader understanding of the influences global crises can have on housing and housing markets, policy makers can create more resilient policies. Firstly, these are that on several occasions in the research, the different global crises showed interlinks. Therefore, when dealing with a crisis one must be aware that previous or parallel running global crises can also positively or negatively influence the proposed policy measures. Secondly, global crises create new connections between the actors in the housing market. Thus, when setting new housing policies following a crisis, a broad stakeholder analysis of the regime, also taking into account fast growing niche innovations actors, can have a large added value.



Finally, due to crises, the tenure status of the existing housing stock can become flexible. As some of the cases showed, several post-2008 policies have actively supported households to change their tenure status, while other policies changed the tenure status of dwellings. For instance, to solve immediate temporary needs, policymakers can use tenure status flexibility as a first measure before more long-term options become possible. The full report will be available on the METREX website soon.

**2022-2023 Fellowship**  
**European Metropolises in Response to COVID-19 (Post)Pandemic Crisis – Recovery, Renewal and Resilience**

Fellow: Dr. Kamil Glinka

The main objective of the project is to carry out a multifactorial diagnosis and analysis of the activity of metropolitan self-governments in Europe aimed at counteracting the destructive COVID-19 (post)pandemic crisis. Dr. Glinka has so far conducted research across the membership towards the project. The research is comparative and based on a case study embedded in a network approach. The research of Dr. Glinka will continue in 2023.

## METREX in action

*Visit to the Birmingham Centre for Railway Research and Education (BCRRE) to see the impressive work on modelling a variety of scenarios*



METREX had a busy year hosting its own events and contributing to external events such as a European Week of Regions and Cities, Urban Economy Forum, and World Urban Forum.

### [Accelerating on Greening the Metropolitan City: METREX at WUF11 – Katowice](#)

World Urban Forum is the world's largest annual event on urban development. METREX hosted a session on Accelerating on Greening the Metropolitan City with help from the City of Amsterdam, Wrocław and L'Institut Paris Region. Each demonstrated the benefits of the metropolitan approach through concrete policy instruments, accessible public spaces, applied circular economics and hands-on tools for urban regeneration. It was an opportunity to share these case studies and start a discussion about the strengths of, and challenges facing, the metropolitan level.

### [Financing Sustainable Urban Development: METREX at Urban Economy Forum 4](#)

Over the years many funding programmes have been deployed in Europe but often they have mirrored urban development silos. This session looked at ways of financing sustainable urban development and opportunities to integrate processes for better and quicker results. We learnt how

the West Midlands leverages finance from national sources, how Italy has successfully approached the European Recovery and Resilience Funds, and what the European Investment Bank looks for in potential projects. Finally, we learnt from the huge challenges that the Ukrainian war and its consequent stream of refugees in Poland adds to the complexity of finding funds.

### [The Route to Net-Zero in Mobility and Freight Transport 2022 – Birmingham](#)

Ambitious legal targets to reach net-zero by 2050 require an increase of pace and scale in delivery. Mobility represent one of the best collective chances to meet targets, focusing not only on infrastructure and behaviour, but the associated supply economy. We heard case studies from West Midlands Combined Authority, the Rhine-Alpine Corridor EGTC and Airport Regions Council. The Città Metropolitana di Milano presented the outline of a Metropolitan Sustainable Freight Transport Plan. METREX will follow the development of this plan in 2023, bringing expertise from across the network to help guide its development.

## Network events

Our monthly series of events gave us time and space to explore new themes and preview upcoming events, exemplified by two that explored collaboration and foresight.

### Scotland's First National Development Plan – National Planning Framework 4

In February we threw the spotlight on Scotland's first National Development Plan and its National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), which was at the time going through public consultation.

Stuart Tait, manager of Clydeplan, a founding member of METREX, explained how this new plan was designed to guide spatial development and establish planning policies. It follows a review of planning in Scotland in 2014 which reduced the status of regional planning. The new national plan has six overarching principles: compact growth, local living, balanced development, conserving and recycling assets, urban and rural synergy, and just transition. Though laudable, was unclear how the plan would relate to established and emerging regional plans, given the shift in responsibilities.

Ignacio de la Puerta, Director for Territorial Planning, Urbanism and Urban Regeneration at the Basque Government, spoke about a bespoke programme the government has put together to integrate the principles of the Urban Agenda and its subsidiaries in the regional planning and policy. It covers environmental, social, economic and technological challenges and demonstrates how national goals can be given a human dimension at the local level.

Pasi Raja, Head of Strategic Urban Planning in Helsinki, explained the city's land use planning system, which is directed by national land use guidelines, and associated development issues. They



*Clyde River running through Glasgow*

are working on a new law and reviewing the land use system. Climate change and sustainability are playing a greater role, and in practice the way that mitigation methods are included in development. City region level planning is being enhanced and will play a bigger role in the new system, especially to promote cooperation between municipalities.

Emiel Reiding, Director of Metropoolregio Amsterdam (MRA), spoke about the national strategy on spatial planning and the environment (NOVI) and how framing from a national perspective can bring improvements at the local level. The Netherlands is a small yet densely populated country, with some unique challenges linked to climate change and its industries. The NOVI approach includes four priorities: focused on climate change, sustainable economic growth, strong and healthy regions, future-proof development of rural areas. A strong focus when applying national priorities has been to check local characteristics and where possible combine functions.



*Prospect'Us game developed by UrbaLyon*



### Scenarios of an unpredictable future and today's development strategies 2022

Łukasz Medeksza introduced a project initiated by the City of Wrocław to generate scenarios for the future and therefore more informed planning. In light of the Ukraine war, the future looks ever more unpredictable. Kacper Nosarzewski, from 4CF Company who also worked on the project, spoke about the key uncertainties that form the basis of the scenarios. These uncertainties are critical to understanding what can be controlled or more easily influenced.

Four scenarios of Wrocław in 2050 were created, which can act as a map of the future for the city. Short stories describing a day in the life of a resident in 2050 were included. The 'Strong State' was a basis of one story, which presented a shift to soft authoritarian rule and problems connected with the climate crisis and pandemics; the other stories painted pictures of slow-life high-trust communities, low growth economies, and tech-led life. These story-led scenarios were designed to challenge

and broaden the horizon about what can be achieved with the right social policy.

Sébastien Rolland from UrbaLyon spoke about the 2040 foresight work done for the Lyon Metropolitan Area. This region suffers challenges such as rising house-prices, as well as being very susceptible to climate-related issues. The project took 18 months and involved more than 250 people. It also looked at uncertainties from health to rebellion to technology, using illustrations to create an emotive experience for those contributing.

To ensure that they captured a wide and diverse set of voices, they turned the foresight process into a card game called Prospect'Us. Nine clear scenarios were produced for the game, each of which with positive and negative aspects and trade-offs that must be made to achieve the dream scenario. The vision, therefore, encouraged players to consider balance within their visions. The game is being adapted for middle schools in Lyon to make young people aware of imagining and creating a path to the future.

This sort of foresight work can help create shared long-term goals and therefore educate people about the role they must play. This is particularly true for politicians, whose role it is to arrange pieces of the city to create balance, order and prosperity.

These types of initiatives can create a common layer to support regions, upon which local context can be applied.

# The network and finances

The METREX network is growing, in membership as well as in relevance.

Although, sadly, the Veneto region has announced that it will end its membership in 2023, we have welcomed two Romanian regions – the Bucharest Metropolitan Area and Iasi Metropolitan Area – and from Northern Portugal the CIM Cávado, an intermunicipal collaboration around the city of Braga.

We clearly see an ongoing metropolisation in Europe, maybe as an answer to an increasing complexity in the challenges we all face, and the need to learn from others and to join forces.

METREX welcomes areas where there is a will to collaborate – the *Metropolitan Attitude* – including both urban and rural aspects, and with that comes a variety of governance structures as part of the European culture.

Financially, METREX is in a healthy

condition. Our turn-over is growing due to membership growth (although the first year reduction in membership fees agreed at the 2022 General Assembly creates a delay).

For the development of the METREX Mission Statement and the Metropolitan Vision for Europe 2050, and for work on the Communication Strategy, METREX hired support, which gave a rise in staffing costs.

At the time of finishing the Annual Report, the financial report is not yet ready, but it is clear METREX is still able to add to its reserves.

METREX is more and more asked to participate and contribute to external events, to studies and project consortia, to policy debates (e.g. EU opinion papers, EU policy development). We make more noise: our network and the individual members are present in many events, where often METREX is mentioned. With the upcoming Communication Strategy and implementation plan we hope to further stimulate and support this.

Finally, with the growth of our network and its activities, the Managing Committee has agreed to look for a part-time assistant to add to our staff. The financial situation allows such extra costs. We aim to find someone for this position in 2023.

## METREX Members 2022

Aire Métropolitaine de Lyon  
Área Metropolitana de Lisboa  
Área Metropolitana do Porto  
Athens  
Bucharest Metropolitan Area  
Capital Region Berlin-Brandenburg  
CIM Cávado  
Città Metropolitana di Genova  
Città Metropolitana di Napoli  
Città Metropolitana di Roma Capitale  
Città Metropolitana di Torino  
City of Brno  
Viken County and City of Oslo  
Gipúzkoa – San Sebastián  
Clydeplan – Glasgow City Region  
Gothenburg Region  
Greater Helsinki City-Region-Usimaa  
Iasi Metropolitan Area  
L'Institut Paris Region – Ile-de-France  
Lower Silesia  
Mazovian Office for Regional Planning in Warsaw  
Metropolis GZM  
Metropolregion FrankfurtRheinMain  
Metropolregion Hamburg  
Metropolregion Rhein-Neckar  
Metropolregion Mitteldeutschland  
Metropolregion Nürnberg  
Metropolregion Rheinland  
Metropoolregio Amsterdam  
Metropoolregio Rotterdam / Den Haag  
Oradea Metropolitan Area  
Pais-Vasco – Basque Country  
Provincie Zuid-Holland  
Region Stockholm  
Regione Emilia-Romagna  
Regione Lombardia  
and Città Metropolitana di Milano  
Regione del Veneto  
Riga  
Sofia  
Szczecin  
Thessaloniki  
Verband Region Stuttgart  
West Pomerania  
West Midlands and Birmingham  
Wien  
Wrocław  
Zagreb

## Observers

Budapest  
Granada  
INU Piemonte e Valle d'Aosta  
Krakow  
München  
Northern Virginia  
Shanghai  
USA metropolitan regions





# METREX

The Network of  
European Metropolitan  
Regions and Areas

## **METREX**

The Network of European  
Metropolitan Regions and Areas

Tour Part-Dieu  
129, rue Servient  
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 2022  
Template design: [www.wolfstrome.com](http://www.wolfstrome.com)

Cover image: METREX Autumn Conference in  
Metropolitan Region of Amsterdam

