

# CITIES&REGIONS

FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION  
Local and regional partnerships for sustainable  
urban development

BRUSSELS, 4-5 FEBRUARY 2019

## Forum Concept Note



## Background

Cities take up less than 3% of the earth's land surface, but they generate more than 70% of the global emissions and host more than 50% of the world's population. This new situation, generated by a rapid urbanisation, creates and will create drastic challenges in terms of food security, housing, infrastructure, health, education, livelihoods, safety and natural resources. But cities are also powerhouses of economic growth, catalysts for inclusion and innovation, as well as hubs for ideas, commerce, culture, science, productivity and social development. In other terms, cities have a key role to play to address the social, economic and environmental facets of development; therefore, several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have clear urban dimensions, while SDG11 of the 2030 Agenda specifically focuses on "Making cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable".

The New European Consensus places Local and Regional Authorities at the very heart of any policy that falls under the 5 Ps, namely People, Peace, Partnership, Planet and Prosperity and acknowledges the achievement of most of the SDGs as strongly dependent on the active involvement of Local and Regional Authorities. It also commits the EU and Member States to strengthen their cooperation through decentralised cooperation and twinning.

## Objective

The overall aim of the Forum "Cities and Regions for Development Cooperation" is to **strengthen the policy dialogue** between the EU institutions and Local and Regional Authorities from both Europe and Partner countries and among them.

## Expected results

1. **Strategic policy recommendations** in the field of sustainable urban development and concrete inputs to contribute to the 2019-2020 Call for proposal for Local Authorities (budget foreseen

The key role played by decentralised cooperation, twinning and peer-to-peer exchanges between Local and Regional Authorities in localising the SDGs is also strongly underlined by a recent study carried out by the European Commission and the OECD.

It is in this context that the EU is organising a Forum on "Cities and Regions for Development Cooperation – Local and regional partnerships for sustainable urban development" which will bring together EU institutions and Local and Regional Authorities from the EU and from Partner countries.

Co-organised by the European Commission's Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (DEVCO) and the European Committee of the Regions (CoR), this Forum represents the continuation of *Les Assises de la Coopération Décentralisée* organised for the first time in 2009. Subsequent editions took place every other year, always conceived as unique space for policy dialogue on development cooperation carried out by European and Partner countries Local and Regional Authorities.

The specific objective of the 2019 Forum is to **discuss local and regional partnerships for sustainable urban development** and to improve the way the Commission and the European Committee of the Regions are working on sustainable integrated urban development in the context of decentralised cooperation.

around EUR 100 million within the Civil Society Organisations/Local Authorities programme) are formulated by the participants and conveyed to the EU institutions.

## 2. Good practices, initiatives and projects

with scale-up potential in the areas of twinning and matchmaking between Local and Regional Authorities in the EU and partner countries, are showcased.

## 3. New Local and Regional Authorities from the North and the South

are engaged in matchmaking, partnership and twinning initiatives to localise the Sustainable Development Goals, notably SDG 11 “Making cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”.

## Participants

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The Forum will bring together up to 600 participants, representing European institutions, Local and Regional

Authorities and their associations, as well as city networks and practitioners from both the EU and partner countries.

## Topics for discussion

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The Forum will address sustainable urban development through twinning, pairing and matchmaking of Local and Regional Authorities from EU and Partner countries.

To introduce the debate, discussions will first frame the cooperation among Local and Regional Authorities at global level and look at successful partnership initiatives, before focusing on the call for proposals on “Local authorities: Partnerships for sustainable cities”.

In the spirit of the New European Consensus on Development, the second part of the Forum will focus on the five themes People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership:

- Good urban governance (‘Partnerships’) at various levels of administration (local, regional, national) and between different actors (elected officials, civil servants, citizens’ groups etc.) including fostering civic engagement and ensuring inclusive participation in integrated planning and public finance management.

- The social dimension of urban development (‘People’) through inclusive and safe cities (‘Peace’), in order to better address challenges such as urban poverty, inequalities, food insecurity, malnutrition, forced displacement, migration, social exclusion, as well as cooperation in contexts of state fragility.
- Green and resilient cities (‘Planet’) through the sustainable use of natural resources and protection and enhancement of natural capital (energy efficiency and biodiversity in cities) and the transition towards a low-carbon, climate resilient and circular economy.
- Prosperous and innovative cities (‘Prosperity’) with a focus on sustainable growth and job creation, fostering a responsible business environment where businesses can thrive and encourage private investment in sustainable development.

## Methodology

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The first part of the Forum will be organised around panel discussions, while the second part is built on an interactive “Open Space” methodology “, clustered around the 5Ps of the New European Consensus.

In this session, participants will be able to discuss topics of their interest, interact and generate insights and recommendations directed to the European institutions,

through cross-fertilization of ideas. This participatory approach will ensure the ownership of all stakeholders and allow them to actively shape the event, conveying policy recommendations to the European Institutions.

We really look forward to meeting you in Brussels on 4-5 February 2019!