



EDITORIAL

During the presentation of the priorities of the Greek Presidency of the EU Council at the Plenary Session of the Committee of the Regions, the Ministry of Interior of the Hellenic Republic, Mr. Giannis Michelakis, on the occasion of the earthquake at Kefalonia, underlined the efforts made by the Hellenic Government to resort to the EU Solidarity Fund (EUSF), in order to secure the necessary funds for the relief of the earthquake-stricken island's residents. The Fund was created in the summer of 2002 and since then, it has been used for 56 disasters covering a range of different catastrophic events in 23 different European countries which have been supported so far for an amount of more than 3.5 billion €. The EUSF can provide financial aid in the event of a major natural disaster if total direct damage caused by the disaster exceeds €3 billion or 0.6% of the country's gross national income. Exceptionally and if specific conditions are met, the Fund can also be mobilised in the event of an extraordinary regional disaster that affects the majority of the population of a region. To date, less than one third of applications in this exceptional category have been successful. However, considering the widespread natural disasters the recent years at the European level and on the eve of the revision of the Regulation no 2012/2002, it is necessary for the European Commission to review seriously the effectiveness of this funding too

The Greek Presidency of the EU Council at the Committee of the Regions



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European and International Funding Programmes

Call for Proposals–Deadlines

1. Europe for Citizens, 2014–2020

The aim of this programme is

- To contribute to citizens' understanding of the EU, its history and diversity
- To foster European citizenship and to improve conditions for civic and democratic participation at EU level.
- To raise awareness of remembrance, common history and values.
- To encourage democratic participation of citizens at EU level, by developing citizens' understanding of the EU policy making–process and, by promoting opportunities for societal and intercultural engagement and volunteering at EU level.

The Programme supports the following strands:

- *European remembrance*– raising awareness of remembrance, common history, values and the aim of the EU.

This strand supports activities inviting reflection on European cultural diversity and on common values. It aims to finance projects reflecting on causes of totalitarian regimes in Europe's modern history (especially, but not exclusively, Nazism that led to the Holocaust, Fascism, Stalinism and totalitarian communist regimes) and to commemorate the victims of their crimes.



This strand also concerns other defining moments and reference points in recent European history. Preference will be given to projects encouraging tolerance, mutual understanding, intercultural dialogue and reconciliation.

Projects under this strand should

- include different types of organisations (local authorities, NGOs, research institutes etc.)
- develop different types of activities (research, exhibitions, public debates, non–formal education etc.)
- involve citizens from different target groups
- be implemented on a transnational level, or with a clear European dimension
- *Democratic engagement and civic participation* – encouraging democratic and civic participation of citizens at Union level

This strand supports

- Activities covering civic participation, focusing in particular on European Union policies.
- Initiatives developing opportunities for mutual understanding, intercultural learning, solidarity, societal engagement and volunteering at EU level.

The strand includes three specific measures:

- ❖ *Town twinning* – supporting projects bringing together citizens from twinned towns. By mobilising citizens at local and EU levels to debate on concrete issues from the European political agenda, this measure will seek to promote civic participation in the EU policy making process and develop opportunities for societal engagement and volunteering at EU level.



The maximum eligible grant for a project is 25.000 EUR. The maximum project duration is 21 days.

- ❖ Networks of towns – providing funding to municipalities and associations working together on a common theme in a long term perspective, and wishing to develop networks of towns to make their cooperation more sustainable. The maximum eligible grant for a project is 150.000 EUR. The maximum project duration is 24 months.
- ❖ Civil society projects – supporting projects gathering citizens in activities directly linked to EU policies, providing an opportunity for direct participation in the policy making process. Funded activities may include: promotion of societal engagement and solidarity, gathering of opinions, volunteering. The maximum eligible grant for a project is 150.000 EUR. The maximum project duration is 18 months.

Deadline: 1 March (to be extended)

Additional Information:

National Contact Point (Greece)

Hellenic Republic

Ministry of Interior

Directorate of Economic and Development Policy of Local Government

(Attn: Dr. A. Karvounis & Ms. A. Faroupou)

Tel: (0030) 2103744710, 2103744721

E-mail: efc@ypes.gr

Website: http://efc.ypes.gr/?page_id=30

2. Creative Europe

The Creative Europe programme aims to support the European audiovisual, cultural and creative sector. The different funding schemes encourage the audiovisual, cultural and creative players to operate across Europe, to reach new audiences and to develop the skills needed in the digital age. By helping European cultural and audiovisual works to reach audiences in other countries, the programme will also contribute to safeguarding cultural and linguistic diversity. The programme will build on and bring together the former Culture, MEDIA and MEDIA Mundus Programmes (2007–2013).

The Culture sub-programme helps cultural and creative organisations to operate transnationally and promotes the cross-border circulation of works of culture and the mobility of cultural players. It provides financial support to projects with a European dimension aiming to share cultural content across borders. Funding opportunities cover a diverse range of schemes: Cooperation projects, Literary Translation, Networks or Platforms. The supported activities aim to enable cultural and creative players to work internationally.

➤ *European Networks*

This measure supports the activities of networks aiming to reinforce the cultural and creative sectors' capacity to operate transnationally and internationally, and to adapt to change. Initiatives that strengthen the competitiveness of the sectors are supported as well. This scheme is intended to support a limited number of networks with a broad coverage across a balanced range of sectors.



Activities of networks aim to:

- foster the development of skills, competences and know-how, including adaptation to digital technologies;
- test innovative approaches to audience development;
- test new business and management models;
- enable international cooperation and career development in the EU and beyond;
- facilitate access to professional opportunities.

The maximum grant per specific agreement awarded under the framework partnership agreement is EUR 250.000 per year. Financial contributions from the EU cannot exceed 80% of the total eligible costs of the project.

➤ *Cooperation Projects*

Cooperation projects support the capacity of the European cultural and creative sectors to operate transnationally and internationally and promote the circulation of cultural and creative works and the mobility of cultural and creative players, in particular of artists, transnationally. It also aims to improve access to European cultural and creative works and extend their reach to new and larger audiences. In addition, it contributes to innovation and creativity in the field of culture.

Projects aim to:

- develop skills, competences and know-how, including how to adapt to digital technologies;
- test innovative approaches to audience development;
- test new business and management models;



- enable international cooperation and career development in the EU and beyond;
- facilitate access to professional opportunities;
- organise international cultural activities, such as touring events, exhibitions, exchanges and festivals;
- support the circulation of European literature;
- stimulate interest in, and improve access to, European cultural and creative works.

For smaller scale cooperation projects, the maximum EU grant available is EUR 200.000 representing a maximum of 60% of the total eligible budget. For larger scale cooperation projects, the maximum EU grant available is EUR 2.000.000 representing a maximum of 50% of the total eligible budget.

➤ *European Platforms*

This measure offers action grants to organisations showcasing and promoting European creators and artists, especially emerging talent, through a genuine Europe-wide programming. They shall join together within a platform with a view to bringing to the fore their common artistic vision and to helping its members to improve their audience development techniques. The maximum grant per specific agreement awarded under the framework partnership agreement is EUR 500 000 per year. Financial contributions from the EU cannot exceed 80% of the total eligible costs of the project.

Deadlines:

Cooperation Projects: **5 March**

European Networks: **19 March**

European Platforms: **19 March**

Additional Information:

Website: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe_en

3. Fundamental Rights and Citizenship (2007–2013)

On 19 April 2007, the Council adopted Decision No 2007/252/EC1 establishing the Specific Programme "Fundamental Rights and Citizenship" (FRC) for the period 2007–2013 as part of the General Programme 'Fundamental Rights and Justice', promoting the development of a European society based upon respect for fundamental rights, fighting against racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism and promoting better interfaith and intercultural understanding and improved tolerance in the EU. This call for proposals for action grants is based on the FRC Annual Work Programme for 2013². It aims to co-fund transnational projects that fall under the objectives of the FRC Programme³ and the priorities of this call. The indicative available budget for this call for proposals is EUR 10.900.000.

Proposals shall complement the efforts of the EU in the area of fundamental rights; Duplications of already existing actions or of activities of EU bodies, in particular of the Fundamental Rights Agency, or of international organisations competent in the field of fundamental rights, such as the Council of Europe, will not be funded. The proposals under this call shall focus on the annual priorities described below:

- Rights of the child.
- Information on where the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights applies and where to turn to if fundamental rights are violated.
- Combating different forms and manifestations of racism and xenophobia.



- Fighting homophobia: Enhanced/improved understanding and tolerance.
- Training and networking between legal professions and legal practitioners.
- Awareness-raising about Union citizenship and the rights attached to it and identification of obstacles to their effective exercise.
- Awareness-raising and information about the EU rules on free movement, in particular Directive 2004/38/EC.
- Facilitation of the sharing of knowledge and exchange of best practices on acquisition and loss of Union citizenship.
- Address the gender imbalance in participation in the European Parliament elections.
- Data protection and privacy rights .

The proposal may include activities belonging to other categories.

- ❖ Analytical activities (studies, surveys and data collection activities).
- ❖ Training activities.
- ❖ Mutual learning, exchange of good practices, cooperation.
- ❖ Awareness-raising, information and dissemination.

The project must be transnational and must be submitted by a partnership of at least two eligible organisations (an applicant plus minimum one partner) from two different eligible countries. The grant applied for cannot be less than EUR 75.000.

Deadline: 12 March

Additional Information:

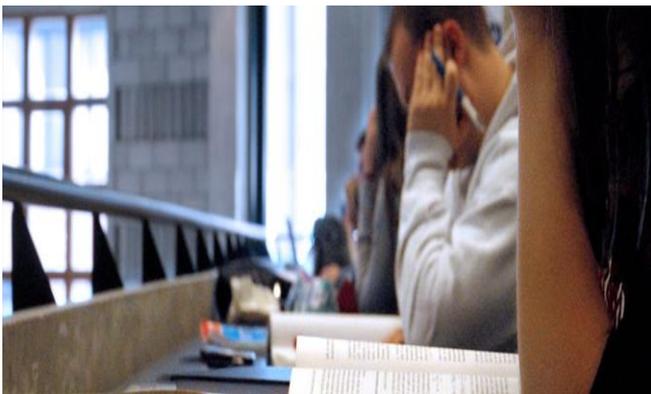
http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/grants/just_2013_frc_ag_en.htm

4. Erasmus+, 2014–2020

The Erasmus+ programme aims to boost skills and employability, as well as modernising Education, Training, and Youth work. The seven year programme will have a budget of €14.7 billion; a 40% increase compared to current spending levels, reflecting the EU's commitment to investing in these areas. Erasmus+ will provide opportunities for over 4 million Europeans to study, train, gain work experience and volunteer abroad. Erasmus+ will support transnational partnerships among Education, Training, and Youth institutions and organisations to foster cooperation and bridge the worlds of Education and work in order to tackle the skills gaps we are facing in Europe. It will also support national efforts to modernise Education, Training, and Youth systems. In the field of Sport, there will be support for grassroots projects and cross-border challenges such as combating match-fixing, doping, violence and racism.

The Erasmus+ Programme shall contribute to the achievement of:

- ❖ the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy, including the headline education target;
- ❖ the objectives of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020), including the corresponding benchmarks;
- ❖ the sustainable development of Partner Countries in the field of higher education;
- ❖ the overall objectives of the renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010–2018);



- ❖ the objective of developing the European dimension in sport, in particular grassroots sport, in line with the EU work plan for sport;
- ❖ the promotion of European values in accordance with Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union.

This call for proposals covers the following actions of the Erasmus+ programme of highly relevance and interest for local/regional authorities:

- ❖ Key Action 1 (KA1) — Learning mobility of individuals.
 - Mobility of individuals in the field of education, training and youth.
 - Large-scale European voluntary service events.
- ❖ Key Action 2 (KA2) — Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices.
 - Strategic partnerships in the field of education, training and youth.
 - Knowledge alliances.
 - Sector skills alliances.
 - Capacity building in the field of youth.
- ❖ Key Action 3 (KA3) — Support for policy reform.
- ❖ Sport.
 - Collaborative partnerships in the sport field.
 - Not-for-profit European sport events.

Deadlines:

Sport activities: **14 March**

Mobility of individuals in the field of education, training and youth: **17 March**

Additional Information:

http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/index_el.htm

5. INTERNATIONAL AWARD UCLG – MEXICO CITY – Culture 21

The objective of the "International Award UCLG – MEXICO City – Culture 21" is to recognise leading cities and people that have distinguished themselves through their contribution to culture as a pillar of sustainable development. The Award is expected to contribute to the dissemination and implementation of Agenda 21 for culture.



The category of city/regional government will be awarded to a city, local or regional government whose cultural policy has contributed significantly to linking the values of culture (heritage, diversity, creativity and transmission of knowledge) with democratic governance, citizen participation and sustainable development. The Award will be given to the local or regional government candidate that wins a competitive call process, open to UCLG (direct or indirect) members. The award will recognise an original policy, programme or project that explicitly includes the principles of Agenda 21 for culture. The action awarded should count on, at least, two years of execution and have documented proof of the impact and the successes achieved.

The programme presented by the winning city will receive the amount of 50,000 euros, which will be used for its international promotion (the publication of a book, participation in forums, international visibility) and to strengthen the local implementation of the Agenda 21 for culture.

Deadline: 31 March

Additional Information:

http://agenda21culture.net/index.php/features?opti-on=com_content&view=article&id=182

6. Dubai International Award for Best Practices

The Dubai International Award for Best Practices (DIABP) was established under the directive of the late Sheikh Maktoum Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, during the United Nations International Conference that convened in Dubai between 19 – 22 November 1995. The Award reflects the continuing policy and commitment of the Dubai Government and the United Arab Emirates towards sustainable development of human settlements on the basis of mutual international cooperation. The award is administered jointly with UN-Habitat. To date, nearly 4,000 practices from 140 countries have been collected and documented. These are managed and disseminated via the Best Practices Database and are classified into one of four categories – Award Winners, Best Practices, Good Practices or Promising Practices.



The Award is open to Government organizations or agencies, including bilateral aid agencies ; cities, local authorities and their associations; non-governmental organizations (NGOs); private sector; research and academic institutions; media; public or private foundations etc.

Deadline: 31 Μάρτιου

Additional Information:

<http://www.unhabitat.org/content.asp?typeid=19&catid=34&cid=160>

Business & Development Planning



Manchester City Council: Addressing the Challenges of Project and Programme Management

Manchester has some of the most exciting developments and programmes in the UK but some of the biggest project challenges. To tackle these challenges Manchester City Council is developing skills towards programme and project management excellence. In 2003 the Chief Executive of Manchester City Council, Sir Howard Bernstein, launched an initiative to introduce a standard and generic method to support the delivery of projects across all service departments. This presented a major corporate challenge for an organisation of 25,500 employees. The mandate included some key deliverables:

- ❖ Improve project delivery capability through capacity building and sustained support promoting a new language and culture for programme and project management.
- ❖ Bring greater surety to the delivery of programmes for capital work, regeneration and business transformation.
- ❖ Deliver a wide range of service improvements and community benefits to the people of Manchester through successfully managed projects.
- ❖ Raise awareness of project risks and their management

At a time of major change in local government Manchester City Council has developed a 'public sector' Project Management Method based on an industry standard, PRINCE2.

The Manchester City Council's four-phase approach to achieve improvements in performance was consisted of:

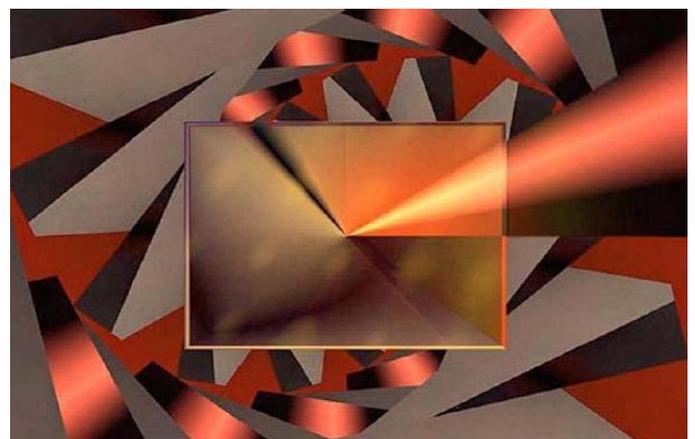
- ❖ Promotion of cultural change through the introduction of a standard method for project delivery .
- ❖ Improvement of project scrutiny through introduction of in internal 'gateway' approval process.
- ❖ Automation of the methods to support collaborative working.
- ❖ Creation of a 'Centre of Excellence' for programme and project management.

The four-phase delivery was designed to be continuous and overlapping. It is important to recognise that in three years the strategy outline has remained the same. The 'Manchester Method' can, has and will continue to improve the lives of those who live, work and visit Manchester; not through any one project, but as a thread through all projects delivered by Manchester City Council. The method has applied common sense in line with the Project Management best practice to benefit the community in the delivery of a wide range of projects.

The reputation that Manchester City Council has developed through the adoption of project management best practice has resulted in over 50 other councils and associated partners including the police and fire services expressing an interest in, and in many cases, adopting the approach developed.

Additional Information:

<http://www.local.gov.uk/>



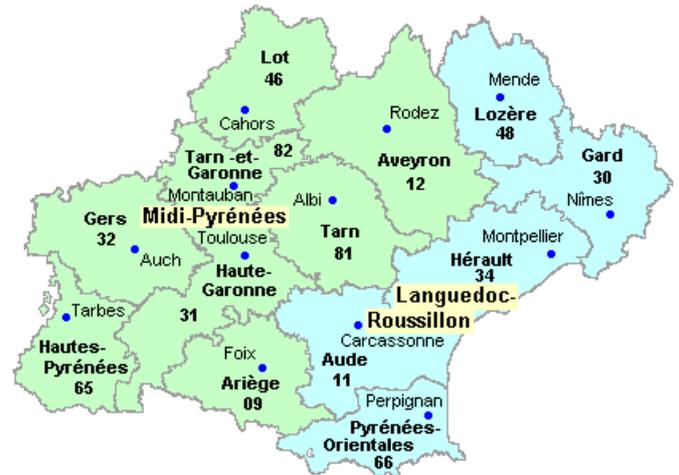
The Voice of E.G.T.C.s



The EGTC Award goes to Euroregion Pyrenees-Mediterranean

The President of the Committee of the Regions, Ramón Luis Valcárcel, delivered the award 'Building Europe across Borders' to the EGTC Euroregion Pyrenees Mediterranean for its project Creamed – Business Incubators network.

The ceremony took place during the 4th annual meeting of the EGTC Platform. Herwig Van Staa, coordinator of the EGTC Platform and chairman of the jury, stated that 'The jury was impressed by the results the project had achieved in creating employment, in particular among young entrepreneurs'. 'This is an excellent opportunity to encourage the EGTC to keep on working and implementing these fruitful actions in the future, in spite of the budgetary difficulties', he added.



Creamed is a €1.4 million project co-funded under ERDF (Interreg IVB SUDOE territorial cooperation program). In the context of the present economic crisis, CreaMed provides networking opportunities for people in charge of business incubators and gives general support to business incubation. Furthermore, it encourages start-up firms in their efforts to stimulate innovation and their internationalization. The main goal of the project is to promote the attractiveness of the territory of the Euroregion and to organize in a coherent and complementary way the strategy for supporting the development of business incubators in the four member regions. Project partners are the Labour Department of the Government of Catalonia, the Balearic Islands ParcBit Technology Centre, the Languedoc-Roussillon Synersud Network and the Midi-Pyrenees Business Incubator Network.

Furthermore, during the ceremony two honourable mentions were awarded, one to the EGTC Gate to Europe in recognition of the project 'Together without borders'. This EGTC managed to involve a high number of territorial entities and had achieved a significant impact compared to the size of its budget, explained Mr Van Staa. The other honourable mention went to the EGTC Euroregion Tyrol – South Tyrol – Trentino for its 'Euroregio Youth Festival'. The jury considered the focus on young people particularly inspiring and saw a high potential for scale-up and replication.

Additional Information:

www.eurocreamed.eu

EU funded Projects of Greek Local Authorities

1. Municipality of Trikala: SABER: Satellite Broadband for European Regions (CIP, 2007–2013)

The SABER Thematic Network brings together national and regional authorities, to analyse the experience of regions which have used satellite solutions to develop guidelines for deployment, share best practices and disseminate information to regions across Europe. SABER, coordinated by ERISA, is comprised of a triple helix of 26 partners including regional economic development organisations, intermediaries working with regions



and leading European companies that operate across the entire satellite broadband value chain. SABER works with regions in 3 streams to accommodate regions at different stages of readiness to explore satellite solutions. Regions in need across Europe have available to them a common approach towards large-scale deployment of satellite solutions supporting the objective of 100% EU broadband coverage. These regions have also available to them guidelines and toolkits to support them in their endeavour to address their broadband needs, both now and into the future, through effective public sector intervention.



These guidelines and toolkits take into account satellite developments that are taking place and which could have a positive impact on the achievement of the DAE 2020 objectives. All SABER outputs are widely disseminated and made available to regions and stakeholders across Europe using an information repository and a programme of round-tables, workshops and a conference. Beyond the lifetime of the project the partners will continue to maintain the information repository using their extensive networks to continue to disseminate the findings.

SABER 5th Workshop took place on 23rd January 2014 in Toulouse, France, at Airbus Defense and Space (Astrium) premises. 50 people attended the meeting. Ms Kalli Liatou, IT and European projects Department participated in the meeting on behalf of the Development company of the Municipality of Trikala. E-Trikala is the only partner representing Greece.

Additional Information:

Web: <http://www.project-saber.eu/cms/>



International and European Conferences

The City as Cultural Ecosystem (Bilbao, 5–6 March)

For the first time, Bilbao is the venue for the Forum d'Avignon, the prestigious debate forum on culture in Europe. An international meeting in which art, architecture, politics and entrepreneurship profes-



nals will analyse the different aspects of 'The city as a cultural ecosystem'. The Forum d'Avignon Bilbao will show how culture can help boost economic development and the wellbeing of citizens in general, how it can increase the degree of innovation and creativity and how it is decisive when facing global attraction and competition.

Additional Information:

<http://forum-avignon-bilbao.com/>

6th European Summit of Regions and Cities (Athens, 7–8 March)

The Committee of the Regions (CoR), together with the Region of Attica, will organise the 6th European Summit of Regions and Cities in Athens at a key political moment for the future of Europe. The Summit will be held at the eve of the Spring European Council and a few months ahead of the elections to the European Parliament. It will also mark the 20th anniversary of the CoR.



The objective of the Summit is to take stock of the efforts made at European, national, regional and local level to deliver job-rich recovery. It will also bring a high-level debate with European political leaders about the 2014 European elections and the future of the EU.

The Summit will start on Friday afternoon 7 March (after a CoR Bureau meeting in the morning), with a session about Europe's strategy for growth and jobs from a local and regional perspective, including the specific concerns from the Greek political level. In two parallel workshops international experts and local and regional politicians will discuss the European progress in terms of job creation and economic recovery, and the way regions and cities are involved in the delivery of the EU strategy. The second Summit day, on Saturday morning 8 March, includes a debate about the forthcoming European elections, the future of the EU and the role of local government in bringing Europe closer to its citizens. The event will welcome a total of up to 800 participants including members of the CoR and of national, regional and local parliaments and councils, stakeholders from the Greek civil society, representatives of associations and experts from the EU institutions. The organisation of the Summit is supported by the Hellenic Presidency of the Council of the EU, the Information Office of the European Parliament in Athens and the European Commission Representation in Greece.

Additional Information:

<http://cor.europa.eu/el/events/summits/Pages/athens-2014.aspx>

Innovation Convention 2014 (Brussels, 10–11 March)

The Innovation Convention is an essential part of the Innovation Union flagship initiative, the European Union strategy which aims to create an innovation-



friendly environment that makes it easier for great ideas to be turned into products and services that will bring our economy growth and jobs. The Convention provides a platform to debate and inform policies that will contribute towards the building of a research and innovation eco-system in Europe that can support this objective.

Additional Information:

http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/ic2014/index_en.cfm

The World City Forum (Amsterdam, 12–14 March)

A new and different event, similar to the World Economic Forum in Davos. It will be the first single, global premier CITY event that joins the public and private interests. Each Partner City and Founding Member will be an exclusive partner. The results of the local pilot projects and accompanying Milestone



Meetings, conferences and workshops around the themes will together form a dedicated conference stream for each Partner City. Both existing and new cities will need smart and innovative technology to help them achieve their long-term sustainability goals. The conference themes of the World City Forum will help their ability to provide clean energy, transportation, food, water and waste disposal – providing key strategies to ensure a brighter future for their citizens.

Additional Information:

<http://www.worldsmartcapital.net/worldcityforum>

Urban Transformation Conference 2014 (Rotterdam, 13 March)

The conference will be held on the occasion of the grand opening of the Rotterdam Central Station,



one of the most modern mobility hubs in Europe. How will cities develop? What is the importance of resilient cities, mobility, sustainability for urban transformation? These and more questions will be answered in the conference by world-renowned speakers.

Additional Information:

<http://www.urbanrenewal2014.com/>

Green Cities (Brussels, 10–11 March)

Green Cities is an annual conference co-hosted by the Green Building Council of Australia and Property



Council of Australia. Focusing on sustainability within the built environment, Green Cities' exciting program features international keynote speakers, networking events, green building site tours and educational master classes.

Additional Information:

<http://greencities.org.au/16/about.aspx>

Rehab 2014 (Tomas, 19–21 March)

International Conference on Preservation, Maintenance and Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings and Structures aims at pushing further the discussion



on built heritage and the preservation of its legacy, establishing a settle of knowledge and experience from several parts of the world. The importance of conservation of historical constructions (built landscape, urban fabrics, buildings, and engineering works) are of utmost importance to preserve the cultural references of a community.

Additional Information:

http://rehab2014.greenlines-institute.org/rehab2014website/conference_topics.html

Green Energy for Sustainable Development (Pattaya City, 19–21 March)

The 2014 International Conference and Utility Exhibition on: Green Energy for Sustainable Development will be a venue to exchange research



ideas, experiences, technical, social, financial, economic and policy issues covering greening energy

Additional Information:

<http://www.icue2014.ait.asia/>

URBAN AGENDA 2020 (Dubai, 31 March– 1 April)

Dubai is hailed as one of the world's most attractive cities to live in, with an ever-expanding number of businesses and people streaming in to make it their home. But how can Dubai and such other 'power cities' continue to manage such growth while being



attractive places to live in? URBAN AGENDA 2020 will examine the factors that go into making a developing city livable and understand how cities can develop dynamically and ensure economic growth – while maintaining a great living environment.

Additional Information:

<http://www.smg-online.com/UrbanAgenda2020/>

European Affairs

The Presentation of the Priorities of the Greek Presidency of the Council of the EU at the Committee of the Regions

Presenting the priorities of the EU Greek Presidency to the members of the Committee of the Regions (CoR) in CoR plenary session on 30 January, the Greek Minister for Internal Affairs, Yannis Michelakis, said: "The priorities of the EU Greek Presidency were set on the basis of the core principles underlying the CoR activities, namely subsidiarity, partnership and proximity. In this respect, the Greek Presidency has called on the CoR to work on opinions and recommendations on two issues of paramount importance: energy policy and the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian macro-region".

Minister Michelakis underlined the symbolic importance for his country to be holding the EU Presidency: "One year and a half ago we were the weakest country in the EU and, today, after a series of reforms, we are taking the reins of the EU Presidency which involves a lot of responsibility. The EU Council's Presidency is a challenge not only for Greece but also for Europe".

The Minister stressed that the Greek Presidency would focus on stimulating growth and employment: "High levels of unemployment put the cohesion of Europe at risks. We have to find a balance between stability and budgetary discipline."



In order to implement the EU framework for growth, employment and cohesion, the Greek Presidency intends to work toward improving the use of financial instruments by investing in the "real economy", with a special focus on SMEs. Greater attention will also be paid to fiscal fraud, stimulating confidence in the European economy by achieving the Banking Union, and improving the EU regulatory framework.

Immigration was also referred to as a top priority. "We have seen the tragic dimension on the EU maritime and land borders. We must have a global vision because immigration is a challenge affecting us all. We also need to be guided by solidarity and cooperation, and fight the criminal networks behind these human flows". The EU maritime policy and the energy sector are also high on the Greek Presidency's agenda: "The underwater resources might have the answers to future energy problems". The same goes for the drawing up of an EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian macro-region: "We will work in close cooperation with the forthcoming Italian Presidency to make this process successful and create a European Mediterranean macro-region".

In the ensuing debate with the CoR political groups, CoR members expressed their support to the Greek Presidency's priorities. Members reacted to the Minister's call for moving forward with the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region Strategy, highlighting that such a Strategy would be a driver for growth and jobs in the Mediterranean, while setting a good example for other macro-regions.

Additional Information:

<http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/Pages/greek-presidency-energy-adriatic-ionian.aspx>

Greek Presidency of the Council
of the European Union

Ελληνική Προεδρία Συμβουλίου
της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης

Thessaloniki declared as the Best Mid-Sized European City

The annual competition organized by the Financial Times' FDI magazine (Foreign Direct Investments), declared Thessaloniki, northern Greece, to be the best European city of the future for 2014 in terms of human resources and lifestyle. About 470 locations including 46 medium-sized cities participated in the competition "European Cities of the Future 2014".



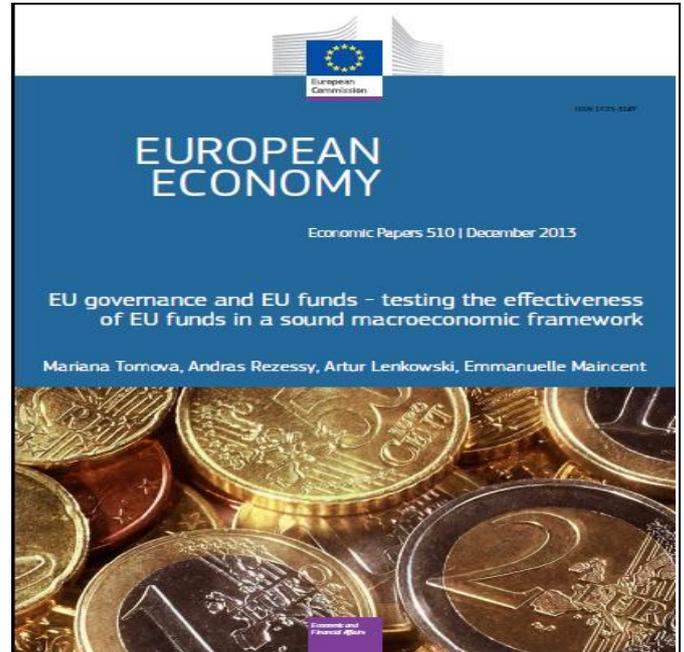
The Greek city Thessaloniki became the "Best Mid-Sized city for human capital and lifestyle" ranking first among 46 other medium-sized towns. The criteria for this category included the labor of the city, the level of education, the number of universities, the students, the quality of life as well as the number of doctors in the city. The FDI magazine introduced the parameter of both the city's and the wider region's population to the competition. This is an important distinction with international scope for the city of Thessaloniki. Criteria sorted into broader categories are taken into consideration at the FDI's competition for European cities. Some of these categories are the dynamics of the city's economy, the workplaces, the human resources, the municipality's friendliness to the businesses as well as the strategic promotion of foreign direct investments.

Additional Information:

<http://www.fdiintelligence.com/Locations/Europe/European-Cities-and-Regions-of-the-Future-2014-15?ct=true>

EU Governance and EU Funds

In a recent economic paper issued by the Staff of the Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs of the European Commission, it was shown that sound fiscal policies proxied by low levels of government debt and deficit and sound macro-economic



economic policies proxied by low levels of net foreign liabilities are beneficial to socio-economic development. Furthermore, we find evidence that ESI funds are effective in helping Member States to enhance socio-economic development and this effectiveness is higher when combined with sound national fiscal and macroeconomic policies.

Additional Information:

http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/economic_paper/2013/pdf/ecp510_en.pdf

Mapping Smart Cities in the EU

A recent report commissioned to provide background information and advice on Smart Cities in the European Union (EU) and explain how existing mechanisms perform established a [working definition](#) of a Smart City and the cities fitting this definition across the Member States were mapped.



An analysis of the objectives and Europe 2020 targets of Smart City initiatives finds that despite their early stage of development, Smart City objectives should be more explicit, well defined and clearly aligned to city development, innovation plans and Europe 2020 in order to be successful.

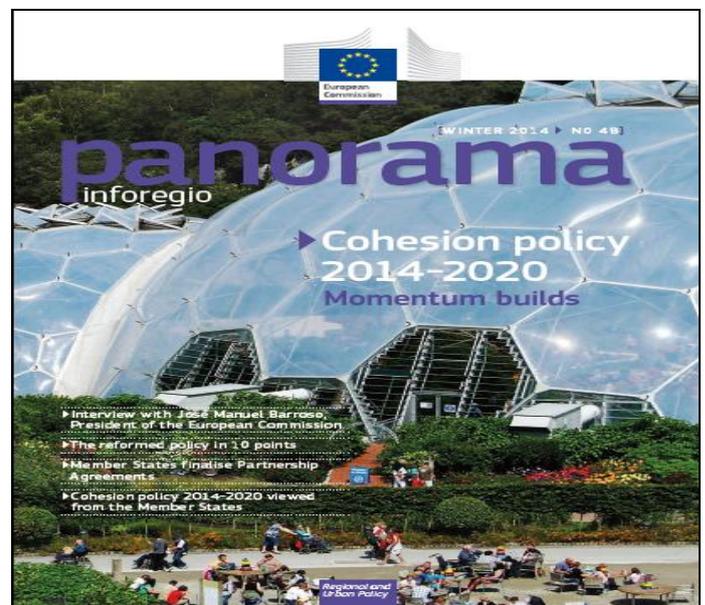
Additional Information:

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/etudes/join/2014/507480/IPOL-ITRE_ET\(2014\)507480_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/etudes/join/2014/507480/IPOL-ITRE_ET(2014)507480_EN.pdf)

Cohesion Policy 2014–2020 – Momentum builds

The Winter edition of Panorama magazine takes as its theme the reformed Cohesion Policy 2014–2020 and analyses the details of what this means for all stakeholders. In an exclusive interview European Commission President Barroso outlines how the reformed Cohesion Policy will help create growth and jobs and achieve the objectives of the Europe2020 Strategy.

The readers of the magazine also contribute to the debate in an expanded "In Your Own Words" section where representatives from Member States, regions and associations across Europe share their thoughts on the reform and their hopes for the new funding period.



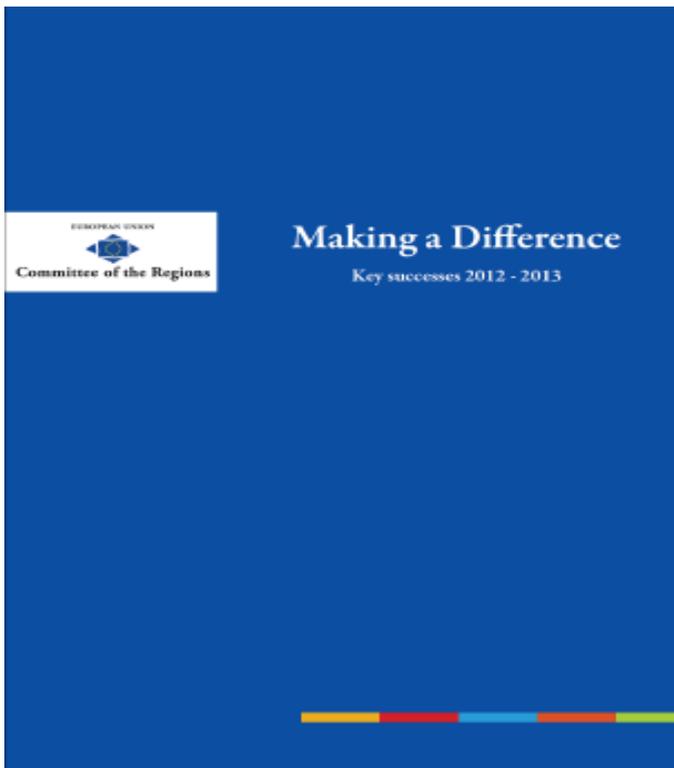
Elsewhere in this issue the key points of the reform and the thematic priorities are outlined; the budget approval process from the European Parliament's point of view is described; and information on how to apply for funding and a review of communications strategies and obligations is provided.

Additional Information:

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/information/panorama/index_en.cfm

Key Successes of the Committee of the Region's Activities

The Committee of the Regions (CoR) is a consultative body of the European institutions, namely the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council. The impact of its work largely depends on its ability to provide evidence of local and regional experiences with EU policies and programmes on the ground in time for them to be fed into the EU decision-making process.



This input can be fed in at various stages in the legislative cycle, namely the pre-legislative stage, the legislative stage and the evaluation stage.

The CoR has a number of instruments at its disposal such as opinions, resolutions, monitoring reports and thematic conferences, to name but a few. The CoR also has inter-institutional relations which provide the framework for a systematic input into the work of the European institutions.

This brochure provides an overview of the impact of the CoR's activities in major policy fields over the past two years. These years were decisive in defining the new framework conditions of the next multiannual programming period from 2014 to 2020.

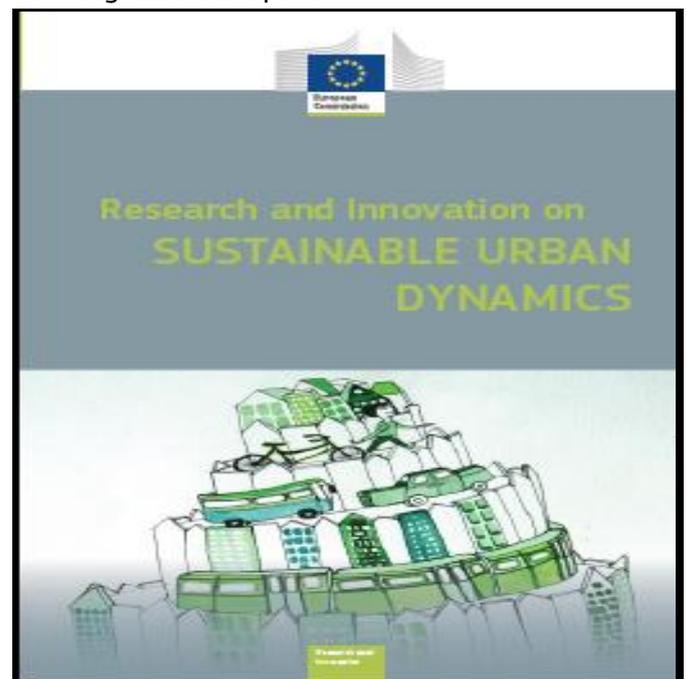
Additional Information:

<http://cor.europa.eu/en/documentation/brochures/Documents/making-difference-2012.pdf>

Research and Innovation in Urban Affairs

As part of its preparations for Horizon 2020 (the European Framework Programme for Research and Innovation 2014-2020), the European Commission's Directorate General for Research and

Innovation organized a one day stakeholder seminar entitled 'Sustainable Urban Dynamics'. The workshop took place on 28 March 2013 on the premises of MIUR (Italian Ministry of Education, Universities and Research) in Rome. 70 researchers, administrators, urban planners and stakeholders from around Europe participated at the seminar. The purpose of the brainstorming workshop was to identify potential research subjects to be covered under the Societal Challenge 6 - Inclusive, innovative and reflective societies, under the item 6.1.4: 'The promotion of sustainable and inclusive environments through innovative spatial and urban planning and design.' This brochure complements other R&I activities on urban issues, especially from the Societal Challenge 3 - Secure, clean and efficient energy and the Societal Challenge 4 - Smart, green and integrated transport.



Addressing the need to create more 'Inclusive Societies', the above edition is part of Horizon 2020 Challenge 6, which is largely dedicated to social sciences and humanities. A budget of 70 billion euros has been proposed for the H2020 Research and Innovation Framework Programme. The programme covers the period from 2014 to 2020.

Additional Information:

http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/sustainable-urban-dynamics_en.pdf

International Affairs

Buenos Aires wins 2014 Sustainable Transport Award

The City of Buenos Aires, Argentina, has become the 2014 winner of the 9th annual Sustainable Transport Award. The city was awarded this honour for its reduction in CO2 emissions, and improvements in safety for pedestrians and cyclists in the past year.



In 2013, Buenos Aires gave its 9 de Julio avenue, the widest avenue in the world, an extensive transit makeover. The city replaced several of 9 de Julio's lanes of car traffic with bus-only lanes for a high-quality bus rapid transit (BRT) system. The BRT has 17 stations along the median, accommodating 11 bus lines and improving travel for 200,000 passengers per day.

In addition, Buenos Aires added a new 23-kilometre BRT corridor, Metrobus Sur, and has transformed dozens of blocks in the city centre into an environment that encourages walking and cycling over driving, and promotes a culture that prioritises people over cars.

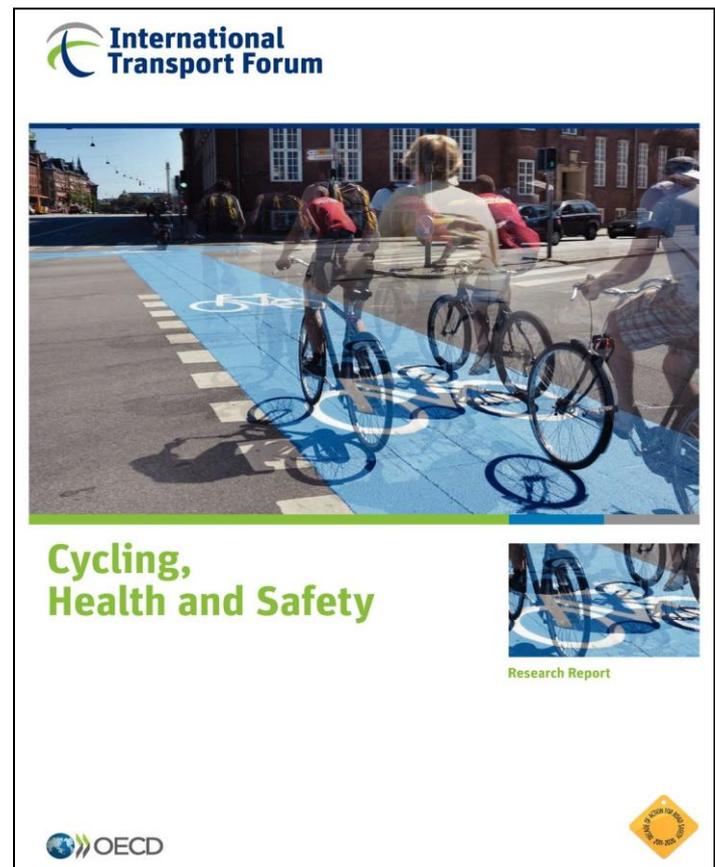
Established in 2005, the Sustainable Transport Award has been given annually to a city that has implemented innovative and sustainable transportation projects in the previous year.

Additional Information:

<http://cities-today.com/2014/02/buenos-aires-wins-2014-sustainable-transport-award/>

Cycling, Health and Safety

Many jurisdictions around the world are trying to retain or increase the share of cycling in urban traffic in order to benefit from the many health and transport efficiency benefits. Safety is a key concern and should be accounted for in these policies.



This report of the International Transport Forum's Cycling Safety Working Group monitors international trends in cycling, safety and policy, and explores options that may help decision makers design safe environments for cycling. Key messages relate to strategic goal-setting for cycling policy and managing crash risks while increasing health benefits. The report also discusses how to better capture crash and bicycle usage statistics. The safety impacts of a wide range of pro-cycling measures are examined in detail.

Additional Information:

http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/transport/cycling-health-and-safety_9789282105955-en

Consultations



European Tourism of the Future

Tourism is a major economic activity with a broadly positive impact on economic growth and employment in Europe. It is also an increasingly important aspect in the life of European citizens, more and more of whom are travelling, either for leisure or business. As an activity which impinges on cultural and natural heritage and on traditions and contemporary cultures in the European Union, tourism provides a textbook example of the need to reconcile economic growth and sustainable development. The main objectives of this consultation are to better identify the key challenges and opportunities for the European tourism industry's future; and to help revising, if necessary, the Action Plan for the sector adopted by the European Commission in 2010 (COM(2010)352). The European Commission is organising in parallel another consultation on ways to further reduce the regulatory and administrative burden on the sector, tourism-related public administrations and other tourism stakeholders in the EU.

Submission deadline: 15 March

Additional Information:

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/item_detail.cfm?item_id=7150&tpa=0&tk=&lang=en

INTERREG EUROPE

The interregional cooperation programme 2014–2020, called 'INTERREG EUROPE', is currently being shaped. Its objective is to help European regions to design and implement regional policies and programmes more effectively, in particular the EU Structural and Investment Funds programmes for Growth and Jobs, but also, where relevant, the programmes under the European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) goal. The programme aims to do so through enabling exchange of experience, knowledge and good practices among relevant stakeholders from different European regions.

The programme will address four thematic objectives:

- ❖ Strengthening research, technological development and innovation.
- ❖ Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs.
- ❖ Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors.
- ❖ Protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency.

Two actions are envisaged in this programme:

- The programme will fund interregional cooperation projects which allow partners from the different EU Member States, Norway and Switzerland to work together on a shared regional policy issue under the four thematic objectives supported.
- The programme will provide assistance to all European regions through policy learning platforms covering the four thematic objectives. These platforms will offer services such as individual advice, peer reviews, thematic seminars and recommendations on the design and implementation of Structural and Investment Funds programmes.

Submission deadline: 21 March

Additional Information:

<http://www.interreg4c.eu/interreg-europe/public-consultation/>

The Seminars of the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA)



Implementing the New Structural and Investment Funds Regulations: Comparing 2014–2020 with 2007–2013

Date: 6–7 March

Location: Maastricht

Additional Information:

http://seminars.eipa.eu/en/order_activity/one/&tid=5428

Understanding EU Decision-Making: Principles, Procedures, Practice

Date: 13–14 March

Location: Maastricht

Additional Information:

<http://seminars.eipa.eu/en/activities09/show/&tid=5448>

Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA) of EU-Financed Projects: Why and How?

Date: 24–26 March

Location: Barcelona

Additional Information:

<http://seminars.eipa.eu/en/activities09/show/&tid=5485>

Effective Communication and Visibility Plan of Projects Funded by the European Union

Date: 24–25 March

Location: Maastricht

Additional Information:

<http://seminars.eipa.eu/en/activities09/show/&tid=5502>

Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA) of EU-Financed Projects – Advanced Course

Date: 27–28 March

Location: Barcelona

Additional Information:

<http://seminars.eipa.eu/en/activities09/show/&tid=5486>

Successful Preparation and Implementation of Twinning Projects

Date: 27–28 March

Location: Maastricht

Additional Information:

<http://seminars.eipa.eu/en/activities09/show/&tid=5488>

Programme Management for Migration Funds (2014–2020): Key Issues and Challenges ahead

Date: 27–28 March

Location: Maastricht

Additional Information:

<http://seminars.eipa.eu/en/activities09/show/&tid=5503>

Financial Management of EU Structural and Investment Funds

Date: 31 March– 1 April

Location: Maastricht

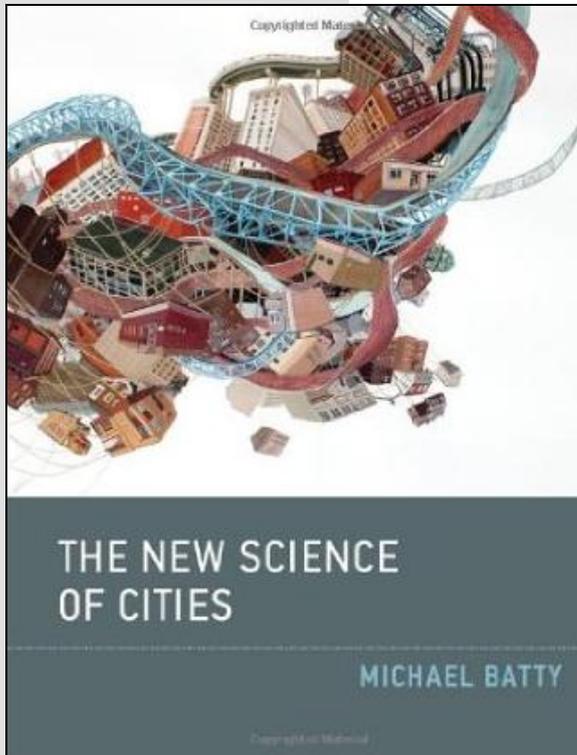
Additional Information:

<http://seminars.eipa.eu/en/activities09/show/&tid=5427>



The Library of Local Government

The New Science of Cities



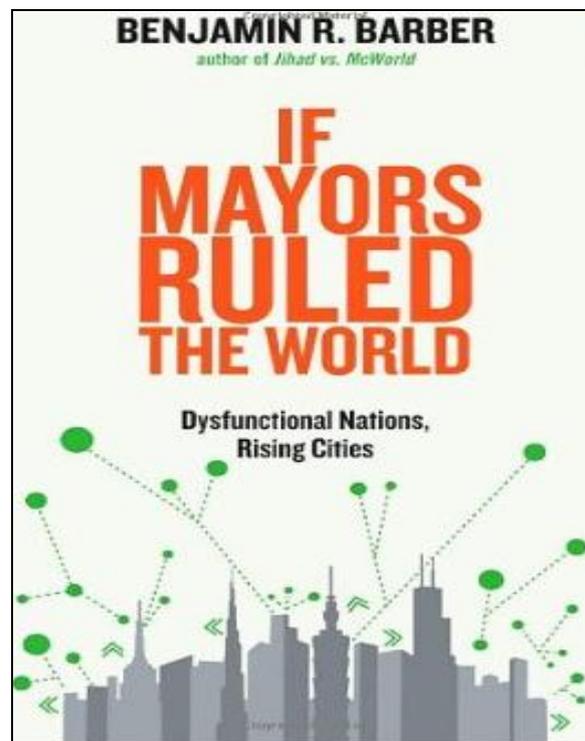
Pages: 400

M. Batty

Publisher: MIT Press, 2013

In *The New Science of Cities*, Michael Batty suggests that to understand cities we must view them not simply as places in space but as systems of networks and flows. To understand space, he argues, we must understand flows, and to understand flows, we must understand networks -- the relations between objects that comprise the system of the city. Drawing on the complexity sciences, social physics, urban economics, transportation theory, regional science, and urban geography, and building on his own previous work, Batty introduces theories and methods that reveal the deep structure of how cities function. Batty presents the foundations of a new science of cities, defining flows and their networks and introducing tools that can be applied to understanding different aspects of city structure.

If Mayors Ruled the World Dysfunctional Nations, Rising Cities



Pages: 256

B. R. Barber

Publisher: Yale University Press, 2013

In the face of the most perilous challenges of our time – climate change, terrorism, poverty, and trafficking of drugs, guns and people – the nations of the world seem paralyzed. The answer, says Benjamin Barber in this highly provocative and original book, is yes. Cities and the mayors who run them can do and are doing a better job. He demonstrates how city mayors, singly and jointly, are responding to transnational problems more effectively than nation-states mired in ideological infighting and sovereign rivalries. Featuring profiles of a dozen mayors around the world – courageous, eccentric, or both at once – *If Mayors Ruled the World* presents a compelling new vision of governance for the coming century. Barber makes a persuasive case that the city is democracy's best hope in a globalizing world, and great mayors are already proving that this is so.

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OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT
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