

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 13 November 2017

CDDG(2017)19
Point 4.3 of the agenda

EUROPEAN COMMITTEE ON DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE (CDDG)

SEMINAR ON DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE OF METROPOLITAN AREAS (Thessaloniki, 17-18 October 2017)

RESULTS

For information and action

Secretariat Memorandum
prepared by the
Directorate General of Democracy
Democratic Governance Department

*This document is public. It will not be distributed at the meeting. Please bring this copy.
Ce document est public. Il ne sera pas distribué en réunion. Prière de vous munir de cet exemplaire.*

Introduction

Democratic governance of metropolitan areas presents an important focal point for the European Committee on Democracy and Governance (CDDG). It gives real effect to the values and standards of democracy, as well as human rights and the rule of law, in metropolitan areas and is a priority as, in the coming decades, more people are likely to come and live in these areas.

Metropolitan areas are key sites for national economic growth and places to address challenges, in particular as regards sustainable development, good governance, and service delivery.

Following the survey conducted among member states and exchanges by the CDDG on issues of democratic governance structures of metropolitan areas and their functioning and consequences for policy makers and governance, a seminar was held by the CDDG on 17-18 October 2017. At the invitation by Mr Panagiotis Skourletis, Minister of Interior of Greece, the seminar was held in Thessaloniki in October in the framework of the Council of Europe/EU Technical Assistance Project on Institutional Enhancement of Local Governance in Greece.

Bringing together experts and representatives of member States of the Council of Europe (CoE) and metropolitan areas and regions, the Greek Government, local and regional authorities in Greece and other national and international stakeholders, including OECD and the European Network of Metropolitan Regions and Areas (METREX), it offered a comprehensive overview of various aspects of metropolitan governance and practical approaches to democratic participation.

Results of the seminar and key considerations

The seminar, following the format of a “cluster” meeting, was centred along two interrelated dimensions (see programme appended).

Governance structures of metropolitan areas, addressing:

- existing administrative governance structures and divisions of competencies versus the functional metropolitan area;
- reforms of governance structures and implementation of innovative arrangements for improved management and governance.

Democratic governance of metropolitan areas, including:

- mechanisms and structures to strengthen citizen involvement and civil participation;
- implementing policies for increased inclusiveness and improved integration of communities.

The abridged meeting report appended sets out preliminary findings of the seminar and information on possible follow-up to be given, taking into account the expected outcomes defined by the CDDG. These are based on contributions in preparation of the seminar as well as on presentations at the seminar.

While generally speaking the phenomenon of metropolitan areas is fairly recent, some types of metropolitan co-operation to address challenges in terms of transportation, economic competitiveness, employment and service provision have been in existence for quite some time.

Key challenges for metropolitan area governance point towards a continuing need for effective strategic coordination. This is required to enhance not only the well-being and development in a sustainable manner of the urban area and its hinterland in economic and financial terms, but also of its population and the associated social, cultural and environmental aspects in human terms along with specific approaches to democratic participation.

The outcomes of the seminar suggest that:

- metropolitan areas that are well governed, i.e. that have governance structures that are best suited for the specificity of a given functional area with little sign of fragmentation, present significant benefits although significant socio-economic and financial inequalities can be found within those areas;
- there is no single blueprint or 'one size fits all' framework for metropolitan governance structures and a variety of models can be found within a single country;
- distribution of powers, competencies, responsibilities (including financial resources) and degree of autonomy between regions and metropolitan areas needs to be clearly defined and effective;
- legislation at central level may set out specific criteria for metropolitan areas but, equally, significant input on requirements and priorities from the local/regional level is needed as well as strong collaborative arrangements;
- predominant governance models are soft and intermediate, coordinating a limited set of responsibilities and areas of competence (transportation, strategic and spatial planning, economic development, safety and security, large infrastructure projects, environment). In some instances strong models of governance have evolved subsequently or may be more appropriate;
- consensus among stakeholders and citizens' trust and involvement are needed but participation becomes more difficult as metropolitan areas increase in size.

One may also conclude that, metropolitan areas are functional areas which need a specific and comprehensive governance solution, the absence of which may have negative democratic and economic implications.

Next steps and possible action:

As a result of the seminar, participants expressed interest in further exploring certain issues, including:

- financial arrangements to better finance metropolitan activity (structures of governance requiring different arrangements, whereby each type of arrangement can comprise different instruments aligning incentives);
- self-determined decentralisation;
- the regional management of innovation and entrepreneurship;
- practical guidance and assistance for member States engaged in revising their legislation, implementing new rules and policies or practical solutions to building metropolitan areas (gradual or incremental approaches).

Currently, the Council of Europe experts, Mr Paul Hildreth (UK) and Mr Ioannis Psycharis (Greece) are preparing a more detailed seminar report. This will be transmitted to the CDDG and to all participants in the seminar. They will also prepare a policy advice report intended for the Greek authorities.

The seminar report will seek to set out:

- key issues and lessons to be learnt;
- practical guidance and assistance for member states on possible approaches to developing multilevel governance solutions for metropolitan areas, identifying Council of Europe standards and instruments and suitable toolkits of the Centre of Expertise that may for example assist in building administrative and financial capacity and intermunicipal cooperation;
- functional checklists and benchmarks for the creation and management of appropriate governance structures.

In doing so, the report will seek to give practical effect to Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1964 (2013) on *"Good governance of large metropolises"* as well as Congress Recommendation 392 (2016) *"Good governance in metropolitan areas"*, taking into account Council of Europe instruments and recommendations such as Recommendation Rec(2003)2 on neighbourhood services in disadvantaged urban areas and the Twelve principles of Good Governance.

Action required

The CDDG is invited to take note of the information provided, to authorise the Secretariat to take forward the preparation of the seminar report, and to decide on the follow-up to be given to the actions suggested by member states and seminar participants. The CDDG may also wish to formulate other measures that it considers appropriate.

APPENDIX

Democratic Governance of Metropolitan Areas :
(17-18 October 2017, Thessaloniki).

Abridged Seminar Report
Prepared by Mr Paul Hildreth, Council of Europe expert

Introduction

This report informs the CDDG about the seminar on Democratic Metropolitan Governance held on 17-18 October 2017 in Thessaloniki, Greece. It outlines the key challenges identified at the seminar and sets out the next steps for taking forward this work programme. The seminar contributed to the work of the CDDG on principles of Democratic Governance of Metropolitan Areas in Europe, providing an overview of different models of governance of metropolitan areas in Europe drawing on experiences of Council of Europe member states in this field. It was held part of the policy advice provided by the Centre of Expertise to the Hellenic Ministry of Interior in the framework of the "European Union – Council of Europe Technical Assistance Project on Institutional Enhancement for Local Governance in Greece".

The agenda (Appendix 1) focused on two interrelated dimensions of metropolitan governance: first, governance structures for metropolitan areas and second, participatory democracy in metropolitan areas. Following an introduction by senior officials from Greece, the EU and the Council of Europe the seminar was centred around five policy sessions which were informed by a background policy paper (Appendix 2). This took into account the responses to a questionnaire by participants as well as metropolitan areas unable to attend. Content from completed questionnaires was summarised in the short case studies in Appendix 2.

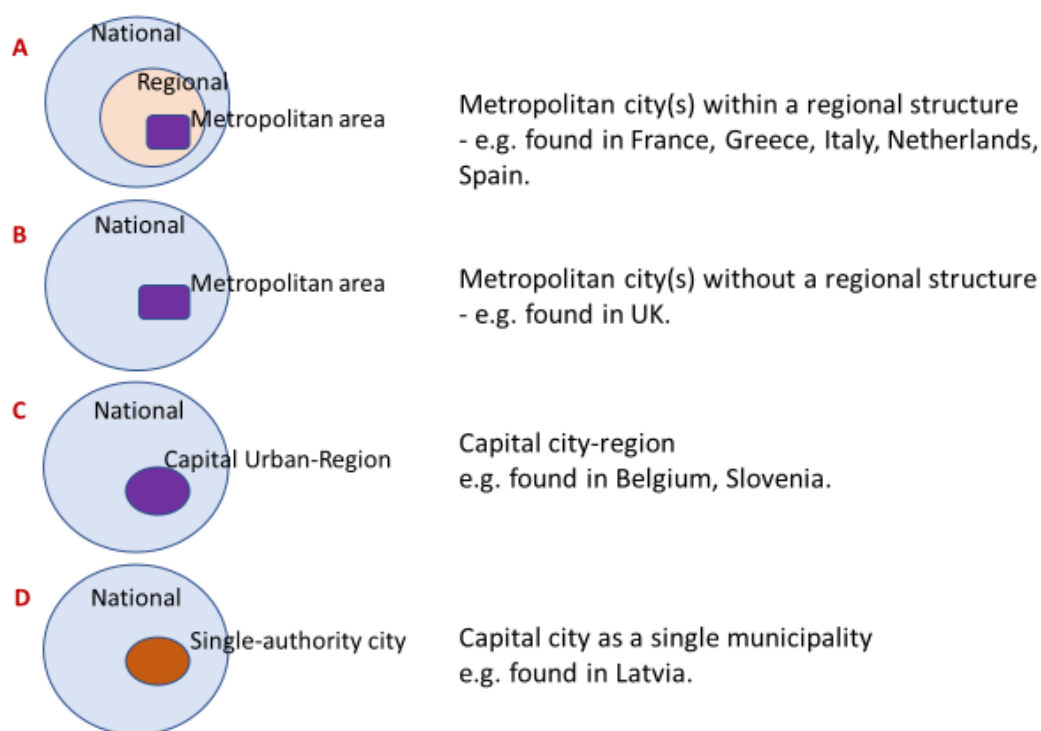
Overview

Evidence presented suggests that large urban agglomerations are more productive and that, in turn, a country's productivity may to a large extent be defined by the productivity of its urban agglomeration. In addition, fragmentation of metropolitan areas (i.e. measured by number of local municipalities within the metropolitan area) may impede economic growth and productivity and is associated with spatial income segregation of residents. The fragmentation of governance of large urban areas is central to the case for metropolitan governance, as cities outgrow their historic administrative boundaries. But the case is not just about economics. It is also about addressing the coordination of a wider set of challenges that encompass spatial and land use planning, transportation and other infrastructure projects, quality of life and climate change. This may also include social security and social protection, social policy and the refugee crises and natural and technological disasters.

The ten summaries of case studies outlined in Appendix 2 reflect different models for the governance of metropolitan areas and cities in member states, as illustrated in Figure 1:

- a) Metropolitan area, within regional structure – e.g. Amsterdam, Attica, Messina, Rotterdam and The Hague, Stuttgart, Thessalonica, Zaragoza (potential metropolitan area).
- b) Metropolitan area, without a regional structure) (no case study examples, but found, for example in UK).
- c) Capital city-region – e.g. Brussels-Capital Region and Ljubljana Urban Region.
- d) Capital city as a single municipality – e.g. Riga.

Figure 1 – Four national structures for the governance of metropolitan areas



Within these structures, there were wide variations in the number of local municipalities that fall within a single metropolitan area; lowest – Riga as a single city-wide authority, to highest – Stuttgart with 179. In nearly all cases, metropolitan area structures were set up through national law. Germany, where metropolitan governance is solely a federal (regional) matter, is an exception. Populations within these metropolitan areas vary from 0.5 million for Ljubljana to 2.5 million for Amsterdam and 3.8 million for Attica, for capital cities and 0.6 million for Messina and 2.3 million for Rotterdam and The Hague, for other metropolitan areas. These population differences reflect that urban systems (i.e. differences in city sizes) operate at a national level, rather than at a European level. Several of the case studies demonstrated histories of municipal collaboration going back many years, although the trend towards formal metropolitan governance arrangements is relatively recent. Most formal arrangements were established since 2005 or even more recently. As reflected in OECD research,¹ the most common metropolitan functions were spatial planning, economic development and transportation. There was a mix of urban structures with polycentric structures being the most common, followed by monocentric and multi-polar examples.

Reflecting the OECD framework (see Appendix 2), the types of governance analysed were summarised as: ²

- a) Soft – Informal collaborative arrangements subject to local agreement between participating municipalities (and other local partners) - e.g. Amsterdam.
- b) Intermediate – An inter-municipal authority/body or committee(s) established to manage inter-municipal cooperation and decision making across a single or range of responsibilities e.g. transportation, spatial planning – e.g. Stuttgart (with elements of strong), Rotterdam and The Hague, Ljubljana.
- c) Strong – Supra-municipal authority established as an additional layer of government created above existing municipalities, likely to be directly or indirectly elected (mayor and/or political body) – e.g. Brussels- Capital Region, Messina (potentially with directly elected mayor).

Building on this overview, the rest of the seminar considered three key questions explored through national and metropolitan case studies:

1. What are the background and reasons for forming metropolitan governance arrangements?
2. What has worked and what challenges have had to be overcome, about:
Governance structures for metropolitan areas; and
Participatory democracy in metropolitan areas?
3. Overall, what are the key policy issues for the Council of Europe to address?

¹ OECD, 2015. *Governing the city*. Paris: OECD publishing. Available at: <http://www.oecd.org/publications/governing-the-city-9789264226500-en.htm>

² Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, 2016: *Good governance in metropolitan areas*. Governance Committee, CG31(2016)17. 21 October 2016.

Key challenges for the governance of metropolitan areas

At the seminar practices for metropolitan governance in member states and metropolitan areas and capital cities were discussed through a series of case study presentations. These considered both appropriate governance structures and democratic participatory processes. On the basis of the exchanges along with the input prior to the event by participants as well as others that were unable to attend, the following paragraphs address key challenges for consideration by the CDDG as they are pertinent in taking this project forward.

First, there is a well-established and evidence-based case for metropolitan governance, both in relation to realising the economic, social and environmental potential of metropolitan areas and benefits for citizens, as well as to overcome the potential negative effects of fragmentation of administration across the metropolitan area. In an urban century,³ the role of metropolitan areas in national, regional and local governance is of ever greater significance for the organisation of sub-national territories. It is likely that, over time, more countries will adopt specific arrangements for the governance of their metropolitan areas.

Second, crucially, there is no single solution or blueprint for metropolitan governance. Each of the presentation case studies and illustrations in Appendix 2 has differences. They all reflect their own political, geographical, cultural, historical, economic and social contexts. Even in countries that have a national policy framework towards metropolitan areas, such as France, Greece, Italy and the UK, local context will to varying extents shape metropolitan outcomes within national contexts.

Third, building successful metropolitan governance structures requires a long-term and bottom-up process. Many of the formal governance arrangements presented in the seminar and in appendix 2 originated in 2005 or more recently. This in turn reflects the growing trend in Europe towards metropolitan governance. However, in many cases the foundations for cooperation may have been started much earlier, with examples going back to the 1950s and in one case, Brussels, as far as the end of the nineteenth century. This suggests that there should be a focus on developing strong collaborative arrangements for working across spatial, administrative and organisational boundaries.

Fourth, metropolitan governance is about doing things that are appropriate at that specific spatial level. It may combine urban and rural areas and needs to translate the functional economy of people and their movements – to work, to housing, to education, to shop and to culture – into the governance of geographical space. Therefore, the emphasis is on strategic functions that require coordination across this space. As a result, the most common functions found in metropolitan governance are strategic and spatial planning, economic development, transportation, sustainable development and culture.

³ OECD, 2015. *The Metropolitan Century: Understanding Urbanisation and its Consequences*. Paris: OECD Publishing. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264228733-en>

Fifth, metropolitan governance involves the challenge of developing effective mechanisms for participatory democracy. Two innovative examples were provided for Riga and Reykjavik. Whilst both cities are not large by European standards, valuable lessons can be taken from these two illustrations of good practices. Citizen's trust in their governance structures and its leadership is both of critical importance and challenging. Indeed, it is likely that the degree of citizen participation will be inversely related to the size of the metropolitan area. It is therefore important to see to it that building trust and participation is addressed as part of a metropolitan governance agenda. In that context, the Council of Europe's 12 principles of good governance and the Council of Europe's guidelines on civil participation in political decision-making have a role to play in meeting the challenges involved in working across physical, sectoral and organisational boundaries.

Sixth, working through the challenges of clearly defining and agreeing roles between regions and metropolitan areas is challenging as illustrated also in Greece. Metropolitan areas form part of a multi-level structure of governance. In smaller European countries, the region and capital city may be combined in a capital city urban region, or the capital city may be the only metropolitan area within the state. Elsewhere, in larger European countries, metropolitan areas can be part of a multi-level governance structure involving the national government, regions, metropolitan areas and local municipalities. Furthermore, as illustrated by the example of Germany, metropolitan areas may not correspond with historical regional boundaries. For example, the metropolitan area of Hamburg spans four federal states. In other instances, regional and metropolitan area patterns are not fully reflected. The UK is developing metropolitan areas without regions and the evolution of metropolitan governance is still at an early stage in Spain.

Seventh, metropolitan areas are not just 'dots on the map' or mere physical spaces. Above all, they are social constructions of people living in proximity in different physical, class and market conditions. As illustrated by the maps presented by Professor Ioannis Psycharis on Attica and Thessaloniki, social and income inequality may be a characteristic of the metropolitan city and raise important issues for the management of metropolitan areas is.

Next steps

A detailed seminar report on policies presented and identifying key issues raised by contributors, is being prepared and will be made available to all member States. The analysis will also make use of the cross-comparison framework as set out in the questionnaire for presenters of metropolitan case studies and will identify good practice and lessons to be learnt.

The report will also seek to set out key elements and approaches for member States in developing multilevel governance structures and policies for metropolitan areas and guidelines for the cohesive development of their hinterlands.

Finally, the report will define possible topics identified by participants that could usefully be examined in greater detail such as for example financial arrangements and incentives, decentralisation and devolution.

Appendix 1

PROGRAMME

Monday, 16th October 2017 - Arrival

// Accommodation at *Porto Palace Hotel*
 Address: 65, 26th Octovriou Avenue, 54628, Thessaloniki
 Tel. +30 2310504504 & 2310504500, email: info@portopalace.gr

Tuesday, 17th October 2017

09.30 – 10.00	Registration
10.00 – 11.00	Opening Session
11.00 – 11.30	Coffee break
11.30 – 13.00	Session 1: Metropolitan governance and current trends Overview of the content of the seminar. Presentation of contemporary research and knowledge about the adoption of governance frameworks by metropolitan areas in OECD and European countries.
13.00 – 14.30	<i>Lunch</i>
14.30 – 17.30	Session 2: Practices in Metropolitan governance in member States Sharing thinking about how national states are reviewing different options for the organisation of metropolitan governance structures in their own countries.

Wednesday, 18th October 2017

09.00 – 12.30	Session 3: Practices in Metropolitan and Capital cities Providing illustrations of how and why different models have been adopted for organising metropolitan governance in capital cities and other metropolitan areas.
12.30 – 14.00	<i>Lunch</i>
14.00 – 16.00	Session 4: Participatory democracy in metropolitan cities Exploring case studies of how metropolitan areas and capital cities have addressed the bottom-up participation in governance by their citizens.
16.00 – 17.00	Closing Session: Conclusions and lessons learnt Reviewing what has been learnt from the different contributions. Identifying best practice lessons and principles that should be addressed in recommendations for action.

// *Departure*

Tuesday, 17 October 2017

10.00 – 11.00 *Opening session: Welcome and introduction*

Mr Nikos Fotiou, Vice-Mayor of Administrative Reform and Civil Society, Municipality of Thessaloniki

Mr Demosthenis Papastamopoulos, Head of Cabinet, Hellenic Ministry of Interior (Mol)

Mr Daniele Dotto, Head of Unit - Governance and public administration, Structural Reform Support Service (SRSS), European Commission

Mr Daniel Popescu, Head of the Democratic Governance Department, Council of Europe (CoE)

Mr. Apostolos Tzitzikostas, Governor of the Central Region of Macedonia & Head of the Delegation for the Committee of Regions Greece

Mr Georgios Patoulis, President of the Central Union of Municipalities of Greece (KEDE) and the Institute of Local Administration (ITA)

11.00 – 11.30 *Coffee break*

11.30 – 13.00 *Session 1: Metropolitan governance and current trends*

Mr Diogo Machado, Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Local Development and Tourism, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

Mr Thomas Kiwitt, Network of European Metropolitan Regions and Areas (METREX)

Mr Dimitrios Kalogeropoulos, President of the Hellenic Agency for Local Development and Local Government (EETAA) and Member of the European Committee of Regions (CoR)

Mr Ioannis Psycharis, Council of Europe expert, Greece

Mr Paul Hildreth, Council of Europe expert, United Kingdom

13.00 – 14.30 *Lunch*

14.30 – 17.30

Session 2: Practices on Metropolitan governance in member States

Moderated by Mr Daniel Popescu, Head of the Democratic Governance Department, CoE

Mr Jurij Mezek, Senior Adviser, Office for Local Self-Government, Ministry of Public Administration, Slovenia

Dr Mark Ewbank, Senior Policy Advisor, Governance Reform & Democracy, Department for Communities and Local Government, United Kingdom

Ms Christine Troupel, Deputy Head of the Territorial Structures Office, Ministry of Interior, France

Mr Diarmuid O'Leary, Principal Officer, Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government, Ireland

Ms Paraskevi Patoulidou, Deputy Governor of the Region of Central Macedonia, Metropolitan sector of Thessaloniki, Greece

Please note that coffee and tea will be made available during the sessions.

Wednesday, 18 October 2017

9.30 – 12.30

Session 3: Practices in Metropolitan and Capital cities

Moderated by Mr Diogo Machado, Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Local Development and Tourism, OECD

Ms Tanja Blätter, Association of German Metropolitan Regions, Germany

Mr Olivier Filot, First assistant, Staff of the General Director, Brussels Local Authorities, Brussels Regional Public Service, Belgium

Mr Miguel Angel Abadia Iguacen, General Coordinator, Department of Urbanism and Sustainability of the City Council of Zaragoza, Spain

Ms Fatma Fridenberg, Deputy Director of the Legal Office, Riga City Council, Latvia

Mr Giuseppe De Biasi, Head of Cabinet, Metropolitan City of Bologna, Italy

Mr Lazaros Kyrizoglou, Head of the Regional Association of Municipalities (PED) of Central Macedonia, Greece

12.30 – 14.00

Lunch

14.00 – 16.00

Session 4: Participatory democracy in metropolitan cities

Moderated by Mr Paul Hildreth, Council of Europe expert, UK

Mr Juris Radzevics, Executive Director, City of Riga, Latvia

Mr Halldór Auðar Svansson, Member of the Reykjavik City Council, Chairman of the Committee on Administration and Democracy, Iceland

Dr Kyriakos Papanikolaou, Attorney at Law, Region of Attica, Greece

Mr Daniel Popescu, Head of the Democratic Governance Department, Council of Europe

16.00 – 17.00

Closing session: Conclusions and lessons learnt

Mr Paul Hildreth, Council of Europe expert, United Kingdom

Mr Ioannis Psycharis, Council of Europe expert, Greece

Mr Demosthenis Papastamopoulos, Head of Cabinet, MoI

Mr Georgios Patoulis, President of KEDE and ITA

Mr Apostolos Tzitzikostas, Governor of the Region of Central Macedonia & Head of the Delegation for the Committee of Regions Greece

Mr Daniel Popescu, Head of the Democratic Governance Department, Council of Europe

Please note that coffee and tea will be made available during the sessions.

Appendix 2

SEMINAR ON DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE OF METROPOLITAN AREAS 17-18 October 2017, Thessaloniki

Reason for seminar

This seminar is held as part of the “European Union – Council of Europe Technical Assistance Project on Institutional Enhancement for Local Governance in Greece” and stems from the invitation expressed by the Greek Minister of Interior Panagiotis Skourletis (in May 2017) to host the European Committee on Democracy and Governance of the Council of Europe (CDDG) Conference on governance of metropolitan areas in Thessaloniki.

Democratic governance of metropolitan areas gives real effect to the values and standards of democracy, human rights and rule of law and is a priority as, increasingly, in the coming decades, more people will come to live in these areas.

“Effective democracy and good governance at all levels are essential for preventing conflicts, promoting stability, facilitating economic and social progress, and hence for creating sustainable communities where people want to live and work, now and in the future”⁴.

The goal of this seminar is to provide the Ministry of Interior and participating CDDG delegations with a comprehensive overview on governance of metropolitan areas, benefitting from experiences and good practices of other CoE member states. To do so, the event brings together representatives of member states and metropolitan areas, with experts, relevant Greek stakeholders and international organisations (i.e. OECD and METREX).

Metropolitan areas could be considered as one of the key issues for the upcoming revision of existing legislation on administrative structures in Greece. The assessment of the existing metropolitan governance arrangements in Athens and Thessaloniki along with the examination of practices in other countries could be an important prerequisite to enrich the direction and context of these reforms.

Finally, sharing such experience allows to identify appropriate lines of action such as the compilation of best practices in the form of guidelines or a “toolkit” for interested authorities in member States.

⁴ Third Summit Heads of State and Government of the member States of the Council of Europe, Warsaw, 2015

The governance of metropolitan areas

A metropolitan area has been defined as a functional urban area usually with at least 500,000 inhabitants. A functional urban area is, in turn, an urban agglomeration with a continuously built-up urban core and surrounding area, where its limits are determined by the share of inhabitants that commute into the urban core.^{5 6}

Within a metropolitan area, there are many different challenges to be addressed, operating at different spatial levels:

- Meeting the service needs of individuals and communities in neighbourhoods (e.g. personal and operational services) from social care, education to waste disposal;
- Coordinating the strategic development of the whole metropolitan area (e.g. spatial planning, transportation, infrastructure investment, waste management, economic and sustainable development); and
- Supporting national and regional policy aims for promoting economic and sustainable development.

To do this effectively, requires:

- 'Working across boundaries' – to achieve collaboration between neighbouring municipalities and with state and regional institutions;
- 'Working across sectors' – to work effectively across the public, private and 3rd sectors; and
- 'Working across communities' – to work inclusively with the communities, neighbourhoods and stakeholders that collectively make up the metropolitan area.

However, to be classified as a metropolitan area governance body, it is suggested that it should meet four criteria:⁷

- It should cover the central city and a large share of the remaining parts of the metropolitan area;
- National and sub-national governments should be important actors within the organisation of metropolitan area governance, or its organisation should have the status of sub-national governance;
- The organisation should primarily focus on the governance of the whole of the metropolitan area e.g. strategic land use planning and transportation; and
- It should have a mandate that enables it to work on more than one issue relating to metropolitan area governance.

⁵ Ahrend, R., Gamper, C., and Schuman, A., 2014. *The OECD metropolitan governance survey. A quantitative description of governance structures in large urban agglomerations*. OECD Regional Development Working Papers, 2014/04. Paris: OECD publishing. Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/5jz43zldh08p-en>

⁶ Methodology described in: OECD, 2012. *Redefining urban. A new way to measure metropolitan areas*. OECD publishing. Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264174108-en>

⁷ Ahrend et al. 2014 op cit.

In this setting, it is acknowledged that the key challenge for the governance of metropolitan areas is to provide effective strategic coordination to enhance the well-being and sustainable development of the city and its hinterland.⁸ Whilst crucial to citizens, businesses and other stakeholders of the metropolitan area, there are also wider implications. The growth of metropolitan areas has been a striking feature of urbanisation in recent decades, with variations in patterns of urbanisation between Eastern/Central and Western Europe.⁹ Because metropolitan areas are increasingly recognised by national states and regional governments as key sites for national economic growth, sustainable development, good governance and service delivery, structures for metropolitan governance are increasingly common across European nations, sometimes within a regional government framework.

Seminar agenda

In this context, this seminar builds on the work on principles of democratic governance of metropolitan areas in Europe initiated in 2015 by the European Committee on Democracy and Governance (CDDG). It also considers:

- Recommendations by the Parliamentary Assembly (recommendation 1964 (2013)) and the Congress of local and regional authorities of the Council of Europe (recommendation 392 (2016) on 'good governance of large metropolises'.

In bringing forward the work of the CDDG, this European seminar explores and shares experience and knowledge about the good governance of metropolitan areas by:

- Enabling member states and metropolitan areas that are seeking to develop new mechanisms for their governance to learn from an exchange with more experienced metropolitan areas (and their states).
- Providing illustrations of good practice, both for formal structures and informal processes of metropolitan governance, consistent with the Council of Europe's 12 principles of good governance.
- Informing good practice recommendations and practical guidance for member states engaged in revising their practical guidance or in implementing new rules on the governance of metropolitan areas.

The seminar will address two interrelated dimensions of metropolitan governance, along with approaches for identifying governance structures best suited for different urban areas.

⁸ OECD, 2015. *Governing the city*. Paris: OECD publishing. Available at: <http://www.oecd.org/publications/governing-the-city-9789264226500-en.htm>

⁹ Dijkstra, L., Garcilazo, E. and McCann, P., 2013. The economic performance of European cities and city regions: Myths and realities. *European Planning Studies*, 21(3), pp.334-354.

These dimensions are:

- *Governance structures of metropolitan areas* – To consider different approaches to address the challenge of metropolitan governance in providing effective and strategic coordination across municipal bodies to improve the well-being and development of the city. Different national and metropolitan area illustrations will compare multi-level governance structures and divisions of competences across metropolitan areas and the circumstances in which they apply. This will include arrangements for capital cities. Different metropolitan case studies have been requested and these have been asked to address a common set of questions about metropolitan governance, to enable cross-comparison.
- *Participatory democracy in metropolitan areas* - illustrations of approaches being taken towards metropolitan governance to engage residents and other stakeholders and/or to encourage their participation in consultation/decision-making processes. Also, implementing policies for increased inclusiveness and improved integration of communities. This is because: 'It is widely recognised, as set out by European standards, that good urban governance should involve mechanisms for citizen participation. In this respect, large metropolises are 'light houses' of local democracy where both innovative approaches and challenges become more visible than elsewhere, not least because of the particularly complex urban and social situations that they face.'¹⁰

Governance structures for metropolitan areas

In 2014, the OECD reported a survey conducted across 263 metropolitan areas in 21 countries of at least 500,000 inhabitants (with an average below 2 million and median slightly above 1 million).¹¹ It was found that more than two-thirds of OECD metropolitan areas have established a body to coordinate responsibilities across the municipalities that form the metropolitan area. Within these, four broad categories of metropolitan governance bodies exist and, in practice, the larger the metropolitan areas, the more likely the arrangements are to be more formal in their structure. The four categories were described by the OECD as:¹²

¹⁰ Parliamentary Assembly, 2013. *Good governance of large metropolises*. Report to Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development, 4 November 2013. Doc: 13350:1.

¹¹ Ahrend et al., 2014 op cit.

¹² OECD, 2015 op cit.

- a) Informal/self-coordination – Informal collaborative arrangements are established only to provide consultation and share information across municipalities across the metropolitan area. They usually lack means for enforcement and provide no direct relations with citizens or with other levels of government. Thus, they are unlikely to be involved in direct service delivery. Legally, they are only subject to local agreement between participating municipalities and other local partners. Thus, they are relatively straightforward to set up and undo. This was the most common form of arrangement and encountered in 52 per cent of cases.
- b) Inter-municipal authorities – These may be set up to coordinate a single issue (e.g. spatial planning, transportation) or to provide broader coordination across the metropolitan area. The most common responsibilities include economic development, land-use planning, waste management and transportation. They are likely to have some formal basis, provided by central government, possibly by statute. Responsibilities and costs across the participating municipalities are shared through institutional agreements. These arrangements may involve other tiers of government and other sectoral organisations (e.g. business organisations). There will be a joint body to manage cooperation and share decision making and responsibilities. Accountability is to member authorities. This form of arrangement was found in 24 per cent of cases.
- c) Supra-municipal authorities – They are found where an additional layer of government is introduced above existing municipalities across the metropolitan area giving the metropolitan body defined powers and responsibilities, usually of a strategic nature (e.g. strategic planning, transportation, economic development and waste management). This may include a directly elected Mayor and assembly, or a non-elected metropolitan tier. This is established by central government statute. Collaboration is reinforced by way of legally defined different roles and responsibilities for upper tier and lower tier authorities. This form of arrangement was found in 16 per cent of cases.
- d) Special status 'metropolitan cities' – This is where a city within a wider metropolitan area is upgraded and given a 'special status' of being put on a higher footing by the government in relation to other municipalities in the metropolitan area. This form of arrangement was found in 8 per cent of cases. However, no examples were found in Europe.

Metropolitan governance illustrations

This seminar brings together representatives from member states and metropolitan areas from across Europe and will illustrate the diversity of approaches towards metropolitan governance reflecting distinctive geographical, historical and civic evolutions of different metropolitan areas and their national settings. They will include both illustrations of formal government frameworks and mechanisms for participatory democracy.

Speakers from the OECD and METREX will provide an overview of frameworks and approaches towards metropolitan governance in Europe. At a national level, it will include presentations from Greece, Ireland, France, Germany and the UK on metropolitan governance arrangements in their own countries. In terms of the discussion on capital and metropolitan cities, it will include Athens and Thessaloniki (Greece), Brussels (Belgium), Riga (Latvia), Reykjavik (Iceland), Stuttgart (Germany) and Zaragoza (Spain).

As indicated above, contributors representing national states or metropolitan areas provided input about their metropolitan area based on a series of background questions. These centre around the form of governance structure, reflecting the OECD framework set out above.

Accordingly, types of governance can be summarised as:¹³

- a) Soft – Informal collaborative arrangements subject to local agreement between participating municipalities (and other local partners).
- b) Intermediate – An inter-municipal authority/body or committee(s) established to manage inter-municipal cooperation and decision making across a single or range of responsibilities e.g. transportation, spatial planning.
- c) Strong – Supra-municipal authority established as an additional layer of government created above existing municipalities, likely to be directly or indirectly elected (mayor and/or political body).

Contributors were asked: when metropolitan governance arrangements were established; what the reasons were for establishing metropolitan arrangements; what the population of metropolitan areas is; the number of municipalities within the area; whether a regional tier exists between the metropolitan area and national government and whether the governance arrangements are established by national statute or through local or regional action and what functions are carried out at metropolitan level? In each case, contributors also indicated whether their case study most closely resembled a sprawl, monocentric, polycentric or multipolar structure. In addition to a focus on formal governance, respondents were asked about bottom-up approaches in citizen and other stakeholder engagement in consultation and decision-making processes. Finally, contributors were asked to indicate what has worked and what challenges and problems have had to be overcome.

¹³ Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, 2016. *Good governance in metropolitan areas*. Governance Committee, CG31(2016)17. 21 October 2016.

The final report will draw on all the seminar contributions. Contributions received prior to the seminar have been compiled in a series of short case studies.

The first set illustrate non-capital city metropolitan area governance arrangements - Amsterdam Metropolitan Area and Metropolitan Area Rotterdam and The Hague (The Netherlands), Stuttgart Region (Germany), and Messina (Sicily, Italy) – as well as one potential metropolitan area case study – Zaragoza (Spain). A second set illustrates urban/metropolitan arrangements in capital cities: - Brussels-Capital Region (Belgium), Ljubljana Urban Region (Slovenia) and Riga (Latvia).

a) Illustrations of metropolitan area governance

Amsterdam Metropolitan Area (AMA)

Summary of information	
When set up?	Been an informal network for 10 years. The Amsterdam Metropolitan Area covenant signed January 2017.
By national or local or regional action?	The transport authority (part of the AMA area) by statute. The AMA by local/regional action.
Population of metropolitan area?	2.3 million.
Number of municipalities	33.
Is there regional government?	Two provinces involved in constructing and participating in the network.
Responsible functions>	Economic development; transportation; land-use planning; tourism; housing (policy) – but adopted and acted upon by member authorities and other metropolitan parties.
Urban structure?	Polycentric.

The AMA is an example of the soft or informal model. Different partners work collaboratively to agree on policies for the metropolitan area that are then adopted and implemented by different members and other partners. By doing so, it provides a broad and strategic approach to addressing important issues at the metropolitan scale, supported by a small but effective executive office that is funded by network participants. It also cooperates along eight logical and pre-existing sub-regions. However, there are challenges in building a network that has access to financial and executive resources to address significant issues such as energy transition, as well as ensuring effective engagement of municipal and provincial representatives in consultation processes. Resident engagement is carried out through the participant municipalities.

Messina

Summary of information	
When set up?	2015.
By national or local or regional action?	National law.
Population of metropolitan area?	635,199.
Number of municipalities?	108.
Is there regional government?	Yes, Sicily.
Responsible functions?	Part responsibility for transportation, tourism, emergency services and education.
Urban structure?	Polycentric.

Messina, Sicily is described as a strong model, with a supra-municipality model. In Italy, metropolitan cities replaced the former 'province' of the 14 most major cities. They are governed by a metropolitan mayor (mayor to the principal municipality) and a metropolitan council. However, the governance system in Sicily is slightly different, due to its relative autonomy. At present, a commissioner undertakes the executive functions of the Council. The governance of the metropolitan area is in a process of change and it is likely that in future metropolitan mayors in Sicily will be directly elected.

Metropolitan Area Rotterdam and The Hague (MRDH)

Summary of information	
When set up?	Effective from 2015
By national or local or regional action?	The MRDH was set up by local/regional action.
Population of metropolitan area?	2.3 million.
Number of municipalities	23.
Is there regional government?	Yes, the province of South-Holland. The province and the MRDH must work together effectively to coordinate economic, transport and spatial planning.
Responsible functions>	Economic development and transportation.
Urban structure?	A dense, polycentric spatial structure. The MRDH area is formed by the two similarly sized cities of Rotterdam and The Hague and 21 medium and smaller-sized municipalities, which are connected by transport infrastructure but not by a contiguous built-up urban area. This reflects the polycentric spatial structure of the Netherlands at a more localised scale.

The MRDH is an example of the intermediate model, with a metropolitan scale body created in 2015 to manage responsibilities for transport and economic development in the area. The general management is composed of the 23 mayors of the municipalities in the region. Member authorities are also represented by their aldermen in two committees; transport and economic development as well as in two advisory committees made up of two councilors per municipality. The mayors of Rotterdam and The Hague serve as chair and vice-chair of the MRDH. The responsibilities for transportation are transferred responsibilities from central government. The responsibilities for economic development are based on (voluntary) co-operation and do not include any enforcement mechanisms. Its legal competencies and financial resources in this domain are therefore relatively limited. As an 'institution' the MRDH is relatively unknown to residents of the metropolitan area, which is not unusual with this kind of extended municipal governance. As communication with residents about MRDH falls to the municipalities. The different stakeholders such as the province, municipalities, universities and other parties are involved decision making processes in diverse ways. As an example, in 2016 the 23 municipalities worked together with the province of South-Holland with the neighbouring regions of Drechteden and Holland-Rijnland to establish a regional investment programme consisting of 150 projects in response to an urgent recommendation following OECD territorial review in 2015 to establish an investment strategy to strengthen the economy with investments in connectivity, economic development, energy transition and city environment. There remain challenges to secure the full agglomeration benefits for the region.

Stuttgart Region

Summary of information	
When set up?	1995
By national or local or regional action?	By law of Federal State of Baden-Württemberg, upheld by regional chambers of commerce.
Population of metropolitan area?	2.7 million.
Number of municipalities	179.
Is there regional government?	Yes. Federal State of Baden-Württemberg.
Responsible functions?	Economic development; transportation; land-use planning through mandatory regional framework; housing policy (on regional scale); power supply, planning of sites within regional plan.
Urban structure?	Polycentric.

The Stuttgart region comes between medium to strong structures. Although it is not formerly a supra-municipal authority, it does have a directly elected regional assembly. This in turn creates a strong political impact in placing regional issues high on the political agenda, leading to all political parties featuring clear programmes goals in aspects of regional development. Stuttgart Region has a long-standing tradition of public outreach and participation in planning procedures. Recent examples include: sites for wind turbines, large scale commercial sites and the regional transportation plan. Whilst there was opposition to the region in the early stages, recognition of the value of regional cooperation and the consequences of failing to do so have become increasingly recognised. It came into being out of an economic crisis and a huge majority of support from the Federal State Parliament.

Metropolitan (sub-region) Unit of Thessaloniki of the Region of Central Macedonia

When set up?	2010-Metropolitan (sub-region) Unit: L.3852/2010 (Kallikratis Reform)
By national or local or regional action?	National government level
Population of metropolitan area?	Metropolitan (sub-region) Unit: 1.110.000(2011)
Number of municipalities?	Metropolitan (sub-region) Unit: 14 municipalities
Is there regional government?	Yes, Region of Central Macedonia
Responsible functions?	Metropolitan (sub-region) Unit: environment and quality of life; spatial planning and urban regeneration; transport and communications; civil protection and security
Urban structures	Likely Monocentric, with urban sprawl trends

The “Metropolitan committee” of Thessaloniki is also part of the implementation of metropolitan governance in the Region of Central Macedonia. Metropolitan competences have been explicitly arranged for four strategic sectors: transport and networks, environment and the quality of life, civil protection and security, spatial planning and urban regeneration.

Existing metropolitan institutions include: (1) the Organisation for the Planning and Environmental Protection of Thessaloniki (ORTHE) which was set up in 1985 and absorbed into the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change in 2014 (2) Thessaloniki Urban Transport Organisation (OASTH) that was set up in 1957 and transformed many times (1979, 2010, and 2017) but still in operation.

Zaragoza (potential metropolitan area)

When set up?	Whilst there is progress in consultations between municipalities, there is no metropolitan governance arrangement in place at present.
By national or local or regional action?	Would involve decision making at Regional (Aragón) and national government levels.
Population of metropolitan area?	City of Zaragoza – 700,000; potential metropolitan area – 800,000,
Number of municipalities?	Potentially 15-21.
Is there regional government?	Yes, Aragón.
Responsible functions?	Unclear at present. Likely to reflect a usual range of strategic functions e.g. strategic planning, transportation, economic development etc.
Urban structures	Polycentric.

Zaragoza is a potential rather than actual metropolitan area governance case study. Structures under consideration are likely to put it somewhere between the soft and medium model. The metropolitan governance outcome would represent a further evolution reflecting the strategic development of the metropolitan area surrounding Zaragoza e.g., the Ebropolis-Association created in 1994, developing a strategic plan for the city and its surrounding area, which is now being worked on in its third evolution.

b) Capital city examples

Metropolitan region of Attica

When set up?	2010-Metropolitan region: L.3852/2010 (Kallikratis Reform)
By national or local or regional action?	National government level
Population of metropolitan area?	Region of Attica 3.830.000 (2011)
Number of municipalities?	Metropolitan region: 66 municipalities
Is there regional government?	Yes, Metropolitan region of Attica – Region of Attica
Responsible functions?	Metropolitan region: environment and quality of life; spatial planning and urban regeneration; transport and communications; civil protection and security
Urban structures	Likely multi-polar, with a sprawling development pattern (2 main poles, Athens and Piraeus and -at least- 10 medium sized inter-municipal centers)

Metropolitan regions were set up by Kallikratis Law 3852/2010. According to this Law metropolitan competences have been explicitly arranged for four strategic sectors: transport and networks, environment and the quality of life, civil protection and security, spatial planning and urban regeneration. The four sectoral “metropolitan committees” that operate in the Region of Attica are part of the implementation of metropolitan governance structures.

Existing metropolitan institutions include: (1) the Organisation for the Planning and Environmental Protection of Athens (ORSA) which was set up in 1985 and absorbed into the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change in 2014 (2) the Athens Urban Transportation Organization (OASA) which covers 52 Municipalities (3) the Regional Union of Municipalities of Attica (PEDA) which covers all 66 Municipalities of the Region of Attica.

Brussels-Capital Region

When set up?	1989, but with much earlier history of intra-municipal collaboration, going back as far as the late 19 th century.
By national or local or regional action?	National.
Population of metropolitan area?	Brussels-Capital Region – 1.2 million. (Metropolitan area of Brussels – potentially 1.8-2.6 million).
Number of municipalities?	Brussels-Capital Region – 19 (Metropolitan area of Brussels – potentially up to 35 municipalities).
Is there regional government?	Is a region of Belgium, alongside Flanders and Wallonia.
Responsible functions?	Includes: spatial planning; economic development; housing policy; tourism; emergency services. However, responsibilities area also shared with the 19 municipalities.
Urban structures	Monocentric.

The Brussels-Capital region fits in the strong model. It has its own Parliament of 89 members and constitutes one of the three federated Regions of Belgium. However, some of the subsidiary arrangements present a closer fit with medium- or softer-arrangements such as the Brussels association of municipalities and services, which is active in the distribution of water, gas and electricity and the more historical Brussels Agglomeration (see below). Prior to the creation of the Brussels-Capital region, regional competences for the 19 municipalities were the responsibility of the Brussels Agglomeration, established in 1971 and which retains some competences today. Since 2011, legislation provides for the possibility of a wider metropolitan area for Brussels that would encompass a population of between 1.8 to 2.6 million and up to 35 municipalities. A number of issues however remain unresolved. A future RER zone – the future express railway that connect the Brussels region – is also being considered, encompassing 135 municipalities with over 3 million inhabitants.

Ljubljana Urban Region

Summary of information	
When set up?	2006.
By national or local or regional action?	National Law, with legal decision signed by all 26 Mayors.
Population of metropolitan area?	537,893
Number of municipalities?	26.
Is there regional government?	No.
Responsible functions?	Transportation; Tourism; Emergency services and power supply.
Urban structure?	Multi-polar.

Ljubljana Urban Region illustrates the intermediate model. Its most important members are the 26 municipalities that form the LUR. Their inter-cooperation is important in the preparation of regional development plans and their implementation. This is organised through the Office of the Ljubljana Urban Region. It is important to stress that Ljubljana has status and responsibilities as the capital city of Slovenia, for example in spatial planning and development. The present arrangements were established as part of an ambition for Ljubljana to reinforce its situation as a European metropolis by 2020.

Riga

When set up?	Long municipal history, but single-level local government for Riga, enshrined in law in 1994. Status of Riga as the capital city recognised by Parliament in 2005.
By national or local or regional action?	National.
Population of capital city?	701,977
Number of municipalities?	One.
Is there regional government?	No.
Responsible functions?	Full range of municipal responsibilities, in line with other cities in Latvia, together with recognition of capital city functions.
Urban structures	Possibly monocentric.

Riga is differentiated from the other case studies as a city rather than metropolitan area case study and for being governed by a single municipality. In 2003, Riga City Council prepared a draft law 'Law on Riga as the Capital City', proposing to differentiate its role and legal status as the capital city. Whilst these proposals were not at that stage supported by Parliament, particular recognition was given to Riga's special position in 2005 in the 'Law on local governments'. Significance was given to the city's diplomatic, international, historical and communications functions within the national state.

Overall, these case studies illustrate a diversity of approach taken in different national and regional settings. In each example, there is a critical story about multi-level governance collaboration in design and implementation of metropolitan governance arrangements. They also illustrate the evolutionary processes involved; history is a significant factor in the emergence and nature of the governance of the metropolitan area.

Success factors for metropolitan governance

This seminar provides an opportunity to reflect on success factors for metropolitan governance, drawing on the variety of contributions. Any practical outcomes will be seen in the light of OECD research reported in *governing the city*.¹⁴ This recognises that there is no simple or off-the-shelf solution to the design of effective metropolitan governance. Any approach ought to be designed in geographical, historical and civic context, to ensure its legitimacy, appropriateness and ownership, considering three key factors:

- The nature of the challenge of coordinating policies horizontally - between municipalities and across policy areas, and vertically - with the state and regional institutions.
- Whether a stronger or softer institutional framework is required in terms of powers, financing structure, budgets and staff.
- The importance of being perceived as legitimate and to generate trust among citizens and non-governmental organisations, the private sector and other tiers of government.

Practical advice will take account of and reflect on existing evidence for likely success factors:¹⁵

- *Motivate collaboration through concrete metropolitan projects* – Better to build agreement around an identified need and an opportunity related to the economic, social and political context of the area. This may be progressed through tangible projects and initiatives to rally support and establish a 'bigger picture' for the area.

¹⁴ OECD, 2015 op cit.

¹⁵ OECD, 2015 op cit.

- *Build metropolitan ownership among key stakeholders* – Metropolitan governance reforms need strong advocates and leadership. This is both politically within the metropolitan area and from other stakeholders such as the private sector, NGOs, universities and central government. Ownership needs to be built both top-down and bottom-up.
- *Tailor reliable sources of metropolitan financing* – Consideration is needed of how metropolitan governance arrangements will be funded. Any structures and responsibilities need to be appropriate to the funding and staffing resources likely to be available.
- *Design incentives and compensations for metropolitan compromise* – Working across boundaries is challenging. Co-operation between municipalities and other stakeholders operates best on a voluntary basis where there is local commitment to succeed combined with encouragement incentives from the state. There also needs to be consideration of how best to encourage those who might feel threatened to engage in any reform.
- *Implement a long-term process of metropolitan monitoring and evaluation* – Building effective metropolitan governance, even when it is informal and voluntary, takes a long-time. It is helpful to underpin the progress with appropriate independent research to provide monitoring, evaluation and a supporting evidence base.
- *Any initiative towards metropolitan governance needs to be addressed as part of a wider multi-level-governance approach towards reform* – The national state is a critical partner in the evolution of metropolitan governance. Reform is stronger where it is part of a national approach towards building better institutions and a stronger and more sustainable economy.

Seminar Outcomes

Building on the earlier work of the CDDG outlined above and the preparation for this seminar, the intended outcomes are:

- An opportunity for shared learning of experience and knowledge about different approaches of good practice in metropolitan governance across different metropolitan areas and national settings. These will be set within an overall framework of different models of metropolitan governance;
- A conference report that will identify key issues raised by contributors, both in presentations and in discussion. This analysis will make use of the cross-comparison framework as set out in the questionnaire for presenters of metropolitan case studies. It will identify good practice and lessons to be learnt;
- The provision of practical guidance assistance for Member States in developing multilevel governance structures and policies for metropolitan areas and guidelines for the cohesive development of their hinterlands;
- The development of tools such as guidelines, functional checklists or benchmarks in relation to the creation and management of governance structures of metropolitan areas, giving practical follow-up to Recommendation 392 (2016) on “Good governance in large metropolitan areas” of the Congress.

The seminar may also give practical effect to recommendations such as:

- Recommendation Rec(2003)2 by the Committee of Ministers on neighbourhood services in disadvantaged urban areas, or
- Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1964 (2013) on good governance of large metropolises.