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Come ask the big questions
Come find the big answers

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12 → 15
June 2023

Brussels
20Urban23
Summit

WRAP UP REPORT

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FOREWORD

"The Brussels Urban Summit 2023 (BUS) is an initiative of Brussels-Capital Region, Eurocities, Metropolis and the OECD Champion Mayors for Inclusive Growth Initiative.

As lead partners, we would like to express our deepest gratitude to our supporting/contributing/media partners, moderators, speakers, participants and staff for contributing to the success of this major international congress".

Lamia Kamal-Chaoui

Director of the Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities at the OECD

Jordi Vaquer

Secretary General, Metropolis

"Faced with a global cost-of-living crisis, OECD Champion Mayors met with city leaders from around the world at the BUS to discuss how to ease pressures on urban households. They drew inspiration from **innovative and ambitious policies** *to endorse the* **"OECD Brussels Blueprint for Affordable Cities and Housing for All".** *This new guide is for all cities as they seek to help struggling households make ends meet now and in the years to come".*

"The Summit brought together very different urban realities, but shared problems, perspectives and solutions emerged. We look forward to working with the world's largest cities to deepen exchanges that can improve metropolitan quality of life."

André Sobczak

Secretary General, Eurocities

"European mayors are putting climate action as a key priority: 54 percent of European mayors mentioned it as one of their key priorities in our first annual Eurocities Pulse Mayors survey. The second priority that came up was mobility, at 23 percent. It really shows climate action is a key priority in cities, which is not so surprising. It was interesting to put a number to this, and sends a clear message to the new members of the European Parliament, and the new European Commissioners next year. Cities are already acting to make the ecological transition a reality on the ground. However, they need some support from the European Commission to scale up a certain number of initiatives".

Anne Claes

Director General, Brussels International

"The BUS was the catalyst that created synergies between cities in Europe and throughout the world: to ensure that the ground was laid for the members of Eurocities, Metropolis and OECD's Champion Mayors to share their concerns and solutions for more sustainable and inclusive cities. Hopefully, the cooperation between these networks will continue and strengthen with a view to achieve this common goal".

Why?

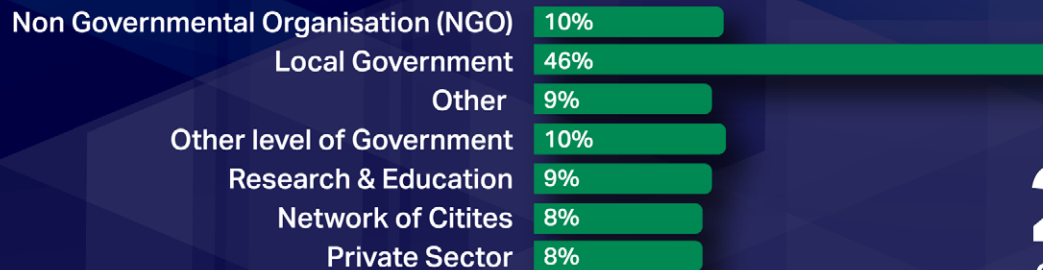- *strenghten **cooperation** between cities globally*
- ***boost the voice of cities** in national and international policy-making*
- *discuss **urban answers on global challenges** with focus on inequality, migration and climate*

Brussels 20Urban23 Summit

12 → 15 June 2023

1734 attendees

52,4% men
47,6% women

90+ speakers

74 mayors

Diversity of participants

Non Governmental Organisation (NGO)	10%
Local Government	46%
Other	9%
Other level of Government	10%
Research & Education	9%
Network of Citites	8%
Private Sector	8%

227 cities

80 countries

- **5** plenary sessions
- **8** side events
- **27** urban exchanges
- **4** power lunches
- **15** urban visits in Brussels
- **3** city adventures in Belgium

localizing SDG's in African Cities • **culture**
mental health in cities • **urban planning** •
city diplomacy • *digital cities*
• *inequality* • **homelessness**
urban food systems • **climate** • citizen science
aftermath of the Turkey Earthque • a caring approach to city-making
participatory governance • **mirgration & diversity** •
rural-urban linkages • *sustainable urban mobility*

PLENARY SESSION ON INEQUALITIES

Greg Clark
Moderator

Synopsis:
Around the world, cities represent hubs of growth and opportunity, yet they can also be highly unequal places. That inequality threat-ens growth and undermines the social fabric on which our societies depend. This panel highlights solutions from cities around the world to reduce inequalities and benefit from inclusive growth through new housing policies.

SPEAKERS

Jaime Pumarejo
Mayor of Barranquilla

Marvin Rees
Mayor of Bristol

Matus Vallo
Mayor of Bratislava

Susan Aitken
Mayor of Glasgow

Philippe Close
Mayor of Brussels

How do you see the challenge of inequality in your cities today? What actions have you been taking to support low-income households through recent crises (pandemic, cost of living) ?

Philippe Close: cities' real challenge is to take all citizens into account, to include the invisible, such as the unemployed.

Solutions to inequality are:

• **public housing**
• tackle **inflation** with salary indexation
• **solidarity** among the population

Susan Aitken: with so many crises, there is an increasing number of poor people or people at risk of poverty. This affects the economy of the city. We need long-term actions to develop services (affordable housing, affordable food provision) according to wage category, to keep everyone's head above water.

Jaime Pumarejo: over the last 3 years we've had immigrants from Venezuela in Barranquilla and other major cities in Colombia. We're trying to preserve the environment but we also want to give them a decent place to live, employment and access to social benefits to lift them out of poverty. It costs public money but this is an opportunity for a new workforce, new personal savings (in pension funds e.g.) and global positive returns to the community.

What impact does economic inequality have on the social contract and trust in democracy in cities? What actions are you taking in your cities to reinforce trust and cohesion?

Marvin Rees: 1 household in 10 is facing difficulties, regardless of social class and ethnicity. 1 child out of 10 lives in poverty or faces food insecurity. People who are left behind don't trust the nation state.

Matus Vallo: anti-democracy feelings increasingly arise across Europe, such as populist far-right movements. In 2018, an alliance of 4 major cities and of more than 30 members was created to offer an alternative to populism, to give citizens trust back, to deliver services that people need for transition.

How do you plan to deliver on your mandate to promote inclusive growth?

Marvin Rees: by building houses and infrastructure and investing in decarbonisation.

Matus Vallo: by implementing city housing policy and building more affordable housing. By providing good services and a place for democracy, showing people how to behave and treat each other in public.

Jaime Pumarejo: by improving the quality of public spaces and creating a sense of identity and belonging ("Todos al parque", kids and elderly alike). By improving inclusive housing. By building climate resilience.

*"We need **long term actions** to develop services according to wage category, to keep everyone's head above water."*

Susan Aitken, Mayor of Glasgow

Susan Aitken: by giving people access to dignity in life, such as childcare and affordable rents.

Philippe Close: by means of education. It offers people a better life and therefore facilitates growth. A smart city is a city of knowledge.

What is the leadership challenge with the citizens and all the other public bodies that can be in your control? What do you have to do to achieve growth?

Jaime Pumarejo: we have to set priorities. But how can we build a roadmap that is agreed by most? We are trying to develop decentralisation. The decision has to be closest to the citizens.

Marvin Rees: good things for some can have negative consequences for others.

Philippe Close: we are highly decentralised and a third of Brussels' population is not Belgian. We have to win their trust, to make choices, to take leadership.

Susan Aitken: when there are different political views, transition can bring collusion. Politicians have to have the courage to stick to their vision and to communicate. Many changes might be difficult at the beginning but have later improvements.

Matus Vallo: the role of the mayor is to be a mediator. Choices and priorities are to be taken with the national government as a partner and with citizens as active participants.

CONCLUSIONS

Key challenges identified in discussions:

• Crises reveal inequalities.
• We didn't analyse the situation and didn't adapt our actions to the new situation.
• Many positive changes can also be negative for other social classes.

Key solutions proposed in discussions:
Proposed changes to restore confidence and social cohesion:

• Analysis of the situation
• Creation of new jobs
• More education
• Access to more affordable housing

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS by Lamia Kamal Chaoui (Director of OECD):

• Mayors are concerned by the impact of the pandemic. Poverty can't be the new normal. Urgent actions are needed to prevent future crises and mayors are in the frontline.
• We need to further connect and restructure urban economies.
• We need to champion the democratic system (e.g. Bratislava's alliance of cities).
• Ukrainian cities are in the frontline to defend democracy. **At OECD we stand by Ukraine and we continue to raise your voice in G7 and G20 and to governments.**

PLENARY SESSION ON MIGRATION AND DIVERSITY

June 14, 2023
10 am to 12 pm

Greg Clark
Moderator

Synopsis:

Many urban societies and economies have flourished as a result of migration and its positive impact on cultural diversity. However, rising global mobility has also led to more inequality, increasing demands on public services, lack of affordable housing and pressure on social cohesion. This session examines how migration and growing diversity shape our cities today and what strategies local governments can develop to turn social, cultural and economic challenges into opportunities.

SPEAKERS

Doug Saunders
Journalist and author on cities and migration

Fatma Şahin
Mayor of Gaziantep (Turkey)

INTRODUCTION:

During the last 10 years, and especially in the years since the peak of the pandemic, cities have overwhelmingly been facing two large-scale new challenges around the world:

1 a "crisis migration": during the last 10 years, it has exploded due to a number of conflicts. According to the United Nations, there are 103 million forcibly displaced people in the world. Only five countries are responsible for 3/4 of the migrants' crisis in the world: Ukraine, Venezuela, Syria, Afghanistan and South Sudan. They have either been invaded or fallen into civil war. And almost 40% of these refugees and migrants are hosted by five countries, which tend to be adjoining countries.

2 a shift of migration settlement from the urban core to the urban periphery due to housing prices going up, which is driving migration settlement to the outskirts. The peripheral districts are lacking urban resources: public transit networks are crowded, buildings are very densely occupied, etc.

What we can learn from the mayors of the most successful cities is a set of new ways of approaching migration in the periphery. It implies looking at what is missing from the migrants' point of view: the places where they settle in, the connection networks to the economy, social and political life in the city, to the education system, etc. Everything that can make them as successful as previous generations of migrants.

Ayşe Çaglar
Professor of Social and Cultural Anthropology (University of Vienna)

Raf Tuts
UN-Habitat

Andriy Sadovyi
Mayor of Lviv (Ukraine)

Adama Sangaré
Mayor of Bamako (Mali)

Claudia Lopez
Mayor of Bogota (Colombia)

What are the links between migration and urbanisation and how do these make opportunities and dilemmas arise?

Ayşe Çaglar: migrants have always been actors, shaping cities. In Europe, we tend to reduce them to cross-border migrants. Nation states have a key role in defining and institutionalising what kind of mobility is considered to be migration and what kind of mi-

gration should be seen as problematic. We need to take a global perspective and try to explore the dynamics: inequalities and the complexity between cross-border migrants and cities could not be understood without looking at the internal migrants.

At the global level what is driving migration to and from cities?

Raf Tuts: migration is

a very strong driver of cities' growth. Cities are attracting migrants increasingly because of conflicts and climate change. There are 280 mn international migrants now in the world wanting to settle in Europe, Asia and North America. However, there is a much bigger wave of internal migration: about 1 billion currently. It is a huge pressure on cities. How can we alleviate it?
• By analysing data at the local level : flows of

migrants, pressure on infrastructure, housing and education needs;
• By looking at urban planning solutions;
• By looking at public space as a very important driver of social inclusion;
• By creating local-level urban policies that take migration into account, including housing;
• By increasing the overall capacity of local authorities to deal with these flows.

How has migration shaped the city and what are today's challenges?

Andriy Sadovyi: since the Russian invasion, we've had 5mn internally displaced people. My responsibility is to support my citizens and new citizens with accommodation. We're starting to build temporary housing. Adama Sangaré: 47% of people living in Bamako are not originally from Bamako. Migrants are not just cross-border migrants since rural municipalities are increasingly being left by people migrating to the capital city. To encourage people to stay in their towns and to economically connect them to local communities, funding is important: international organisations should provide access to credits to local authorities.

In Bogota, what do migrants bring to the city that would otherwise be absent?

Claudia Lopez: in the short term, local populations and migrants are going to share the pains; in the long term, if we persevere, they're also going to share the opportunities and benefits. In Colombia, the national government provided a 10-year legal status of inclusion for Venezuelans: administrative barriers preventing newcomers to access city social services were removed. 57.000 kids from migrant families got into Bogota's public schools within a year. Venezuelans and migrant families living in poverty got access to a basic income.

What policy and leadership combinations are needed to make migration work?

Ayşe Çaglar: cities are no harmonious and cohesive places, rather places of conflict. This contentious nature of cities might be useful to envision the living together. City leaders and policymakers have to support the development of this city-based fractured connectivity, beyond communitarian politics. It doesn't mean negating diversity but translating it.

"City leaders and policymakers have to support the development of this city-based fractured connectivity, beyond communitarian politics."

Ayşe Çaglar, Professor

At the global level, what can cities do to make migration more sustainable?

Raf Tuts: urban communities that view migrant refugees as active and contributing members of their neighbourhoods are most likely to turn human mobility into an engine of prosperity. In addition, the needs are to be reflected into policy and budgeted for. Finally, mayors need to support each other and learn from each other.

What are the innovations that you are most proud of?

Andriy Sadovyi: our municipal hospital hosted 30.000 wounded, civilians and soldiers, internally displaced people, children, women and old people. We also built accommodation for wounded people.

Adama Sangaré: Bamako is working with other governmental organisations and a number of charities to see how young migrants can be included in society and how their families can be treated the same way as everyone else.

In Bogota, how have you succeeded to optimize the benefits of migration?

Claudia Lopez: rapid inclusion is key with, for example, education opportunities especially tailored to kids and social protection for really small kids. The temporary protection status that the Colombian government provided to the Venezuelans for 10 years was the right thing to do: in Bogota, we now have the lowest social poverty level ever for 15 years.

"*Rapid inclusion is key* with, for example, education opportunities especially tailored to kids and social protection for really small kids. "

Claudia Lopez, Mayor of Bogota

Greg Clark
Moderator

Eric Corijn
Professor Emeritus social and cultural (urban geography (VUB - University of Brussels)

Nathalie Apperé
Mayor of Rennes (France)

Thembi Nkadimeng
Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (South Africa)

Doug Saunders
Journalist at The Globe and Mail and author (Canada)

What are the ways to understand how diversity and cities connect?

Eric Corijn: a nation state – which is an idea of the 19th century – is built on the notion of common history, arts, culture but also politics. When we are from different places, we have to look for a common destination, a project. A city has no fixed identity: it's hybrid. And it's closer to the world than to its nation state.

In Rennes, what is your diversity and how do you value it?

Nathalie Apperé: in France, we have forgotten that one third of the French come from former migration waves. We are convinced that there is a national (idealised) identity that needs to be protected from migratory flows. If we want to value diversity, we first have to stop making the act of migration a humiliating journey. This implies reviewing the European legislation, meaning the Dublin agreements, on the one side, and the Member States' internal hosting rules, on the other side, in order for everyone to live in dignity.

Does the world understand how cities and diversity have evolved? What's missing?

Doug Saunders: having many people of different colours/cultural backgrounds/religions in your city is not diversity if those people are not equal citizens, equally participating. When I look at cities that have moved toward real diversity, I look at what New York City has done to give residents of the city the right to vote, though they're not citizens and don't necessarily have a legal status of migrant. The right to vote based on residency rather than citizenship is crucial to diversity, as is crucial the ability to own a house.

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What policy combinations will make diversity work for cities in the longer term?

Eric Corijn: identity is offered to people by the state though people do not automatically identify with that identity. People are mixing: mixed marriages, religions, ethnicities. Hybridity is the new citizen's identity. Diversity is a fact. Urbanity isn't nationality.

How to make diversity a source of social capital for everyone?

Nathalie Apperé: if there is a fear of migrants, it's because we don't know them, their stories. We have real political and cultural work to do on interactions, on the history of migrations, on the understanding of our own selves as products of complex processes across mankind.

What do great leaders do ?

Doug Saunders: they allow people to shape their own communities and don't impose structures.

Thembi Nkadimeng: they collaborate.

Nathalie Apperé: they let democracy live; citizens are more mature than politicians claim.

Eric Corijn: they carry a story, a narrative, that is "The city should be shared together".

*"People are mixing: mixed marriages, religions, ethnicities. Hybridity is the new citizen's identity. Diversity is a fact. **Urbanity isn't nationality**. "*

Eric Corijn, Professor

CONCLUSIONS

Diversity is inherent to cities. Cities are not fractions of nations. They are a different kind of space that is about networks and connectivities and flows.

Digitisation has increased the potential for diversity in our cities, because it's allowed people to simultaneously be in more than one place at the same time. Hybridity, dexterity, agility, is part of our new scenario.

Laws and policies really matter, but on their own are not enough. **We need to focus more on the empowerment of individuals, of families, of communities, of groups of people with the intention of enabling living together.**

To this effect, we have to serve the needs of the population and at the same time to unfix the identities so that people are not trapped in legal groups or in groups that are particularly targeted or as seen as problematic.

We need to evolve away from 'normalities' and 'rigidities', and to be disposed not to agree with orthodoxies about diversity. Instead **let's try to find a new path where we indeed discover how to live together.**

SPEAKER

Engineer-architect and President of Brussels-Capital climate expert committee

Leo Van Broeck

PLENARY SESSION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

PART 1: A CALL TO ACTION

The window of opportunity for staying within 1.5 degree and meet the objectives of the Paris Agreement is closing fast. To reach this target, cities must be seen as part of the solution. And, first of all, we need to see more clearly where the problem lies: the issue is not climate change. The problem is the collapse of our global ecosystem, the Earth, because of human beings. Biodiversity loss and nitrogen cycle are the two first planetary boundaries. To be carbon neutral is not enough: there is less carbon emission today. Indirect emissions (consumption, production) can be up to 100 times higher than direct emissions (buildings, transport).

So what can we do? Plant our streets, make public space permeable for rainwater, rewild our parks, transit towards a sharing economy, focus on better quality and shrinking quantity, listen to experts, depolarise governance and democracy, ... start now!

PART 2: PANEL ON GLOBAL CLIMATE CITY LEADERSHIP

Aitor Hernandez
Moderator, journalist at Politico

Synopsis:
Cities are profiling themselves as leaders in fighting climate change. They're competent for urban planning, manage large building portfolios and can steer the market thanks to their powerful purchasing power. However, given the ever pressing climate emergency, how can city leadership, ambition and policy implementation accelerate and intensify to ensure we reach our climate targets on time?

SPEAKERS

Anne Hidalgo
Mayor of Paris

Karin Wanngård
Mayor of Stockholm

Kostas Bakoyannis
Mayor of Athens

Paris is hosting the Olympic Games next year. You see this as an opportunity to reclaim spare public space. What are the challenges you're facing in this regard? And what would be your advice to other cities ?

Anne Hidalgo: the Olympic Games are a major event aimed at accelerating ecological and social transition in Northern Paris (a poor and cosmopolitan territory). If we want good living, if we take responsibility for mitigating the impacts of climate change (in Paris, by 2050, it will be 50°C), we need proactive policies and to return urban space to nature. We've started to clean up the Seine for health and environmental reasons. The Games, by bringing together politicians, will help make the Seine suitable for open-air swimming. Major ecological projects are complex and face resistance. We need to go beyond and work on the technical and human aspects:

identify the main pollutants, mobilise funds, mobilise private expertise, help people change behaviour, convince them make an effort, boost the construction of sewers and drains, allocate public funds to storm water basins.

What is the holistic approach of Stockholm to climate change? Many say that progress is difficult to measure. What is your opinion on that?

Karin Wanngård: Stockholm has a long history of emission reduction (reduced by 50% since 1990). But we need to set higher goals and translate each of them into concrete action. We need to move to electric cars, carbon capture and storage of all annual emissions. In short: to be a role model for our citizens to change behaviour.

"We need to set higher goals and translate each of them into concrete action."

Karin Wanngård, Mayor of Stockholm

How is it for you in Athens? Athens was at the forefront of extreme heat the last few years. How do you tackle it?

Kostas Bakoyannis: we all share the common struggle of liberating square meters from pollution, abandon and neglect, and regaining this space for green space. In Athens, everything we do, without compromise, has a focus on climate change. Europe is breaking heat records, facing extreme drought and mega fires. We need to educate and raise awareness, as a matter of public health; to cool urban areas by planting trees, bring water across the city, etc.; and to appoint a chief officer. Public and private sectors need to work hand in hand.

What about the citizens' pushback ? How do you, Mayors, deal with that?

Anne Hidalgo: we are all convinced that we have to encourage business leaders and political representatives to act. Renowned scientists are

pessimistic given that the situation doesn't improve much. Why such resistance? Because lobbies are extremely powerful and well organised, working on confusion and inaccurate communication. We therefore have to provide information on the actual risks for our societies and our planet. Mayors need to work more closely with one another, be better coordinated. We have to stop being naïve and include scientists, citizens and the private sector.

Karin Wanngård: I fully agree. Most of the population understands that it's important.

Kostas Bakoyannis: we should take the world as it is and not as we would like it to be. We should take the hard decisions the earliest on possible, but shouldn't ask too much at a time, otherwise we'd face opposition.

"We have to stop being naïve and include scientists, citizens and the private sector. "

Anne Hidalgo, Mayor of Paris

PART 3: PANEL ON RADICAL SOLUTIONS FOR CLIMATE NEUTRAL CITIES

Greg Clark
Moderator

Synopsis:
The mid and long-term goals for emission reductions and climate neutrality by 2050 are clear, but are they ambitious and radical enough? In the last few years, cities have taken ambitious decisions and undertaken innovative actions. But can we say that it is at the level of the emergency? Do cities need to implement more radical solutions to reverse the emission curb? What are the critical enablers that drive change? And what actions and investments should be prioritised to speed up climate and energy transition from an urban perspective?
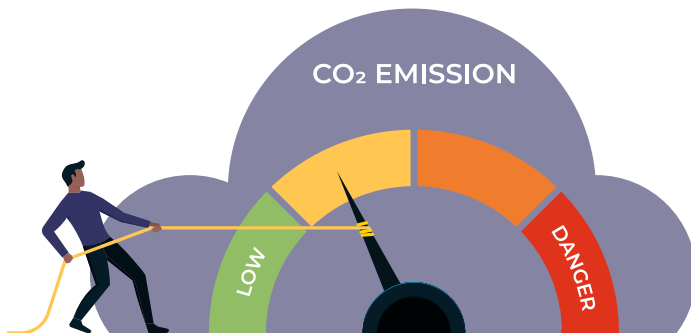
SPEAKERS

Mathias De Clerq
Mayor of Ghent

Carolina Cosse
Mayor of Montevideo

Eszter Davida
Urban planner, member of the New European Bauhaus (NEB) High Level Round Table

CO₂ EMISSION

LOW

DANGER

How to have a bigger impact in a shorter period of time?

Carolina Cosse: the pandemic has had an impact on all of us. It has also changed my view on policies: health is a state problem and environment is linked to it. If there's no work, no school, there's no health. Uruguay is facing urgent problems (e.g. jobs, health, violence, food, waste). And in parallel to these, there's the environmental strategy. To decarbonise, we need to work with people, with our neighbours, to rediscover places, to plant trees but with a social content, meaning taking the old, the youth, pregnant women, etc. into account. Social justice is key.

What is implemented in your city that is radical?

Mathias De Clercq: firstly, 20 years ago, we started with mobility. Pedestrian zones were implemented. The amount of bikes increased, air quality improved, safety as well. Secondly, big companies (in particular, Arcelor Mittal, the steel plant) have started investing in greener energy. That is quite radical when industry changes and adapts!

Finally, we've set up in all schools one veggie day a week on Thursdays. Meat consumption decreased and carbon emissions alike. These are very concrete actions!

New European Bauhaus has invested in new solutions. What would you suggest to us?

Eszter Davida: based on the collection and analysis of as many examples as possible of what has been done here and there, we now have a large number of potential tools to use. But to propose radical solutions, the challenge is to get people involved to enable change on a larger scale. One possibility is to review regulation to integrate the ideas of recycle, reuse, etc. Another possibility is to build on the tools that were implemented during the pandemic to set forth affordable housing, cohousing, better quality of public space, etc. A third direction is to look at ownership and at the concept of living together, and experiment different types of strategies to reach out to local communities and include them better, as real actors.

*"Participation from all generations is radical and **education is the tool.**"*

Carolina Cosse, Mayor of Montevideo

How can we go further? Is it by rationing housing? By completely banning construction? By setting limits on population growth? Any more radical ideas?

Carolina Cosse: to be radical is to face issues, look for the causes, join forces and find solutions without looking elsewhere. The lack of housing is big: the right to a house should therefore be set as a priority. The emergency is to develop good living conditions. A solution is: offer public land to communities or co-operatives (sorts of community land trusts) to build houses. Participation from all generations is radical and education is the tool.

Mathias De Clercq: cities do already quite radical things. I agree: participation is key. Children need to be put at the centre, because parents and grand-parents will follow. And don't think about climate versus economy: it's climate and economy. Finally, leave no one behind. In short: local leadership, good companies, join forces, convince, etc. are solutions.

Eszter Davida: many good ideas arise from mayors. Highlight them. And adapt them to each region. Focus on one radical action for each city. And design crisis plans: make them right now. Crisis is not over even though the pandemic is done.

"Children need to be put at the centre, because parents and grand-parents will follow. "

Mathias De Clerq, Mayor of Ghent

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CONCLUSIONS
by Greg Clark

Key challenges identified in discussions:

• Call for action, concrete actions, act now (urgency)
• Big picture: not solely carbon emissions but global ecosystem of the Earth (biodiversity, land use, industry, building, water, etc.)
• New urban imperatives, new roles of cities: urban resilience and real alternatives

Key solutions proposed in discussions:

• Leadership examples, role models, innovators, promote change in citizens behaviour
• Greening of public spaces, bring water back in cities, circularity and planet-positive actions
• Radically different kind of participation and citizenship, promote democracy, leave no one behind, involve communities and scientists, organise differently, develop new models of living together

CLOSING SESSION OF THE BRUSSELS URBAN SUMMIT
INTERVIEW WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SUMMIT PARTNERS

SPEAKERS

June 16, 2023
10 to 11.30am

Dagur Eggertsson
Mayor of Reykjavik, chair of OECD Champion Mayors for Inclusive Growth

Pascal Smet
State secretary of the Brussels-Capital Region

Carolina Cosse
Mayor of Montevideo, Metropolis co-president, President Metropolis Women

Burkhard Jung
Mayor of Liepzig, president of Eurocities

What answers have we identified to the major global and urban challenges? What have we really learned from urban initiatives and solutions for urban change?

Burkhard Jung: we've learned how to work together and what our solutions are. So many inspiring ideas to empower cities. Challeng-es are urban and we are ready to face them.

Carolina Cosse: we all face the same problems and it's important to know that. Cities have to go beyond day-to-day business and work for social renewal, with their citizens to preserve freedom and protect democracy.

Dagur Eggertsson: issues are very similar.

Solutions are many and can be very technical. Cities need to work with national governments, financial groups, the private sector and the most vulnerable groups, to address the climate issue. But the most critical question of all time is: how do we plan housing to cope with the mismatch between population growth and housing shortage?

What really matters for the year ahead?

Burkhard Jung: there's great resistance in cities but we should move towards new alliances, reinforce our networks and global solidarity. We have to defend the EU values and particularly democracy, support Ukraine and fight populism.

Pascal Smet: since challenges are all the same, we need to work much more together and share good practices, especially with Africa which is currently experiencing dramatic urbanisation and could avoid the mistakes we've made in the past.

Carolina Cosse: cities are capable of managing debt and loans from international financial institutions. They're bankable but legislation needs to be adapted to make this possible. Secondly, cities must engage in dialogue with their citizens to consolidate politics, and therefore also democracy, and fight against xenophobia, discrimination, anti-migration, etc.

Dagur Eggertsson: it's important to keep in mind that cities are really the answers to the most pressing challenges in the world. Mayors have a responsibility. And affordable housing is an answer to multiple crises. The Brussels' blueprint is a proposal to be presented at the COP in New-York. Good urbanisation creates wealth and opportunity if we get it right.

Pascal Smet: it's essential that cities continue to connect with each other and work together. It is also important to focus our policies on good living, to make them future-proof.

"Good urbanisation creates wealth and opportunity if we get it right."

Dagur Eggertson, Mayor of Reykjavik

FINAL STATEMENT

CONCLUSION OF THE BUS
(on the Summit's website)

Final conclusions:

• There are many pressing issues
• Cities are hubs of massive flows of ideas, innovation, etc. without borders
• Cities are soft powers, accelerators of change, capable of working in networks
• Today we're living through a period of absolute transformation. The future role of our cities in the world depends on:

➡ ***How we want to live together***
➡ ***How we build new economic models***
➡ ***How we manage to live in our ecosystems***

CLICK HERE

to read 'CONCLUSION OF THE BUS'

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Brussels 20Urban23 Summit

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