



COLLABORATION BETWEEN TOWNS AND CITIES
ON THE EDGE OF EUROPE'S CAPITALS

APPENDIX 1 to Protocol

STRATEGIC PLAN 2007- 2010

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The public sector is currently under pressure from many sides

- *The globalisation*
- *Free circulation of services in the EU countries*
- *The increasingly influence of EU decisions and policies – today experienced by even local communities*
- *The perspective of more tasks there need to be achieved with fewer resources*

In order to meet these challenges, it is important to exchange knowledge and experiences, prepare best practises and to collaborate directly among the municipalities. In this way the municipalities are better prepared to cope with the challenges and can continuing to develop local government and the performances of tasks.

In this context, The Edge Cities Network will need to focus on a number of selected strategic topics and organizational initiatives. These themes and initiatives should be designed to improve the work, projects and further development of the Edge Cities Network and in this way strengthening the local government in the partner municipalities to the benefit of the citizens.

PART I - STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT TOPICS 2007- 2010

As agreed at the Steering Group meeting in Ballerup in May 2006, the strategic development topics of the next 3 years will to a considerable extent follow the perspectives of the EU Lisbon Strategy and the new programmes for Regional Development 2007- 2013. In this light the ECN has agreed about following focus areas:

- 1) *Economic development/ competitiveness*
- 2) *Health and disease prevention*
- 3) *Citizen and youth participation/e-government*

1. Economic development/ competitiveness

1.1. Education and Innovation

Education is a key condition for citizens' ability to thrive and manage in today's knowledge economy. You will have to develop a number of different skills to make you act in and shape tomorrow's society. ICT, collaboration, critical thinking, problem solving and communication skills are essential as well as the skills within mathematics, science and engineering is fundamental for ensuring technical innovation.

This makes demands on the education given by the local authorities. The development of modern knowledge economies has increased the importance of education policies and demands efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources.

Furthermore, in today's globalized world innovation and new initiatives are required by everyone – also the municipalities. The global development makes new demands to the policies of the Edge Cities. The partners of the Network must be conscious about the role of their own capital-region in the global scene. And the partners will have to use all kinds of human competence and qualification present in our local community.



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The Edge Cities network will focus on how the partner municipalities can be prepared for the challenges of a globalized society and a knowledge-based economy.

The Network will exchange knowledge and work together within different ways of improving education and innovation in the edge cities.

2. Health and disease prevention

2.1. Public Health

All over Europe a marked rise is seen in the number of people having a bad health and living with an unhealthy life style. In September 2002, the European Parliament and the Council adopted a decision on a programme of Community action in the field of public health (2003–2008).

The general objectives of the programme are:

(a) to improve information and knowledge for the development of public health;

(b) to enhance the capability of responding rapidly and in a co-ordinated fashion to threats to health;

(c) to promote health and prevent disease through addressing health determinants across all policies and activities.

The Edge Cities Network will focus on how local government can improve the health protection among citizens and the initiatives/health strategies to be taken in order to create greater awareness about health and disease prevention. In its work with health, the Network will especially work within the field of public health and social inequalities.

3. Citizens and youth participation/e-government

3.1 Citizen participation

As stated in the “Governance and Citizen Consultation and participation” conference’s issue paper, citizen consultation and participation have become highly relevant and is indeed a core issue in developing local democracy. It is recommended by the OECD that the interaction between the citizen and the government is strengthening – but it is as well both a demand and a wish among the citizens and the public institutions themselves.

The Edge Cities Network will focus on how the partners are working with citizen participation and consultation, and how the interaction can be further strengthened.

3.2. Children & Youth participation

“A direct way to foster a next generation of conscious and committed citizens as well as the next generations of local politicians”. This was stated during the presentation of the Fingal Youth Council at the ‘Governance and Citizen Consultation and participation Conference’ in Brussels, November 2006. The involvement and commitment of children and young people are of great importance for the development and progress of the future local communities. Furthermore, the new ideas and activities of children and young people are contributing to engender innovation and change.



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The Edge Cities Network will focus on how the partners are involving and cooperating with the children and young people. The partners will exchange ideas and knowledge within this field, and get to learn about the different initiatives and results of the edge cities municipalities.

PART II – STRENGTHENING THE NETWORK

The Edge Cities Network also needs to focus on its own situation and organisation. Within the last years the Network had partners resigning their membership without new members to come in. From the beginning, the Network has been a dynamic body with a varying level of activities and it is important to continue this way to assure that all partners always find it relevant to be in the Network and that the Network becomes a network for everyone within the different organisations of the member municipalities.

1. Members of the Edge Cities Network

1.1. New Members

Throughout Europe each municipality has its own portfolio. In order to assure the most extensive collaboration, it is important to have many different partner municipalities. Therefore the Edge Cities Network has the goal to get 10 new member partners within the next 3 years.

It is also important to identify other kind of partners. If the network is going to collaborate about e.g. health and that health is not in the remit of all the partners, it is possible to turn to a partner on another public level for instance on the regional or national level.

It is also important to extend the collaboration within the different partner organisations and the network will elaborate a plan to assure that professional networks will be set up in different areas.

1.2. Present members

In line with focusing on attracting new members, the Network also needs to focus on how to maintain present members and ensure that the Network is getting deeply rooted in the organisations of the partner municipalities.

Each partner should prepare a strategy for the Edge Cities Network to become fully integrated in the organisation – both among the politicians and the officers. Internal/external communication and information of the Network must be strengthened and a certain level of ongoing activities should ensure that more and more staff within the member municipalities is involved in the Edge Cities Network.

2. Forum of Elected Members

The Forum of Elected Members is established in order to strengthening the dialogue and knowledge sharing between the politicians in the member municipalities. Within the next years it is important that the Forum is further developed and formalised. A well-running Forum of Elected member will also improve the work getting the Edge Cities Network deeply rooted in the members' organisations.