

# INTA 35

WORLD URBAN  
DEVELOPMENT CONGRESS

6-10 November 2011

Lyon et Grenoble - France

**Metropolises: development strategies and alliances**

**« Exit, Voice and Loyalty »**

## **Conclusions of the Congress**

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## Summary and Directions

Caution: This document is a brief summary of INTA35 debates, necessarily simplistic when compared to the richness of the debates and the multiplicity of places where it happens.

The inta35 Congress offered the opportunity to capitalize and think about the interactions that make the metropolitan territory.

Four main areas of questioning were recognized: identity and image, the mobilisation of resources and skills, cooperation and alliances and finally mobility and services.

The 35th Congress also tried to innovate by bringing the discussion around the "intermediate" or "regional" metropolises to establish the specific characteristics of this phase of urbanisation.

INTA35 took place over five days in Grenoble and Lyon and gained from the presentation of ideas on the metropolitan dynamics already debated in these two major cities of Rhône-Alpes Region. During the World Council of Urban Development (WUDC), Gérard Collomb, President of Greater Lyon and Marc Baïetto, President of Grenoble Alps Métropole (La Métro) have shown the challenges mobilising the two metropolises: the economic challenge, the demographic and social challenge and the urban territorial organisation.

On this last point, Marc Baïetto and Gérard Collomb, underlined that a metropolis tends to organise itself "de facto" and that it would be necessary to install modern and effective cooperation frameworks, without necessarily resorting to the creation of an additional level of administration.

This new dimension of shared government, working on a network basis, is designed to serve the different levels at which metropolises operate: the multipolarity of the urban districts, metropolitan poles, agglomerations' networks and cooperation with European and world cities. In both cases, in Grenoble and Lyon, a metropolitan system that serves as a framework, grounded in the reality of a large territory and open to others, is under construction. The challenge is to raise the stakes, with the aim of articulating the full territorial influence with social integration and to focus on the identity of the different territorial levels.

The discussions during the WUDC also highlighted a number of challenges faced by the metropolis:

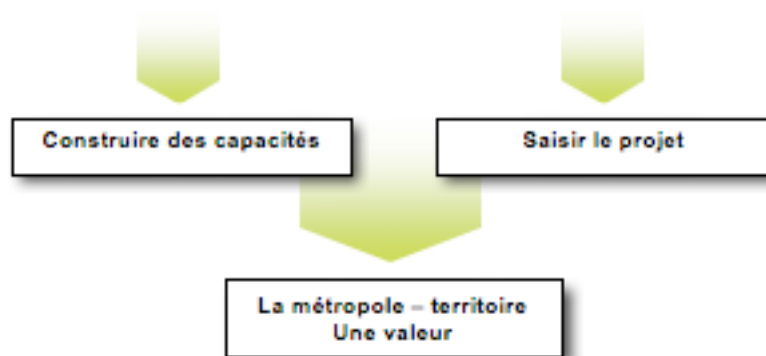
1/ In general, the challenges related to demography, social and economic aspects, environment, energy, digital as well as cultural issues, citizenship, democracy, ...

2/ more specifically, at the urban level, the organisation of the city, density, functional and social mix, safety,...

Given the importance of these challenges, there was a consensus on the urgent need for the rehabilitation of a long-term policy. **This fact argues for a renewed control of the metropolitan areas in view of the impacts of decisions taken or not taken, and their effects ... in 10, 20 ... or 50 years.**

Behind the often intense exchanges in view, due to the diversity of experience, two central questions brought together the participants:

- **The homogeneity of the processes going on in metropolitan areas,**
- **The issue of capacity building to meet the challenge of the complexity posed by these new metropolitan territories.**

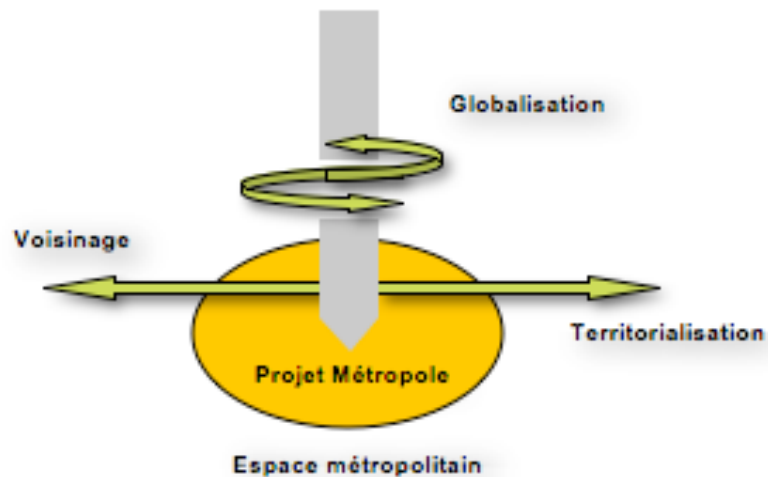


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The plenary sessions introduce the topic to be deeper discussed during the urban sessions  
The plenary sessions gave the chance:

- to introduce the themes from high-contrast pictures of the today metropolises on the five continents,
- to call out the participants from an introductory statement.

The economic theme saw the crisis imposing itself in the debate! ... From an initial query on the scales of the metropolitan project and the challenge of cooperation, exchanges focused on the effects of the crisis and its consequences. Finally, the factors that characterise more precisely the metropolises are rather the notion of risk (prosperity, sustainability, ..) and the levers of action to use (adaptation, speed, ...). The mid-size metropolises (regional?) appearing more concerned with neighbourhood's issues and hinterland and should intensify and enhance the quality of its partnerships and cooperation.



**On the challenge of social cohesion**, a query came up on the weakening of the State, the failure of the market and the assumption that intermediate metropolis might be "more human" (?)

Keywords such as habitability, the right to the city, image, framed several presentations of local projects, very similar among each other, and underlined the importance of a metropolitan narrative built globally, making the social components a central element of the metropolitan project.

During this sequence **the issue of "CO"** emerged as central (co-produce, co-realise, collaborate, co-operate, ...).

Finally, **the environmental issue** completed the challenge' formula with the parameters of mobility and proximity, from the presentation of climate-energy plans (the challenge of education!)

The public debate in the evening session brought together a large audience in Grenoble; the European witnesses (Vienna, Madrid, Turin) underscored:

- An intense interest for a collective approach nurtured by several local initiatives
- The crisis of confidence within the political establishment
- ... however, in the long run, a desire to build a metropolitan narrative (but it will take time)
- ... and in the everyday life, the notion that the local level is more favourable to civic engagement.

The urban conferences that follow and complete the plenary sessions, were abundantly illustrated with varied experiences and testimonies that made up the richness of the 35th Congress (Lyon - Bourgoin, Grenoble - Voiron, Brno, Bogota, Malmo, Madrid, Turin, Vienna, Lyubjana, Isfahan, Annecy, Quebec, The Azores, Reunion, St Petersburg, New York, Bonn, Tainan, Rotterdam, Lisbon, Portland, Cotonou, Medellin, Tallin, Aberdeen, Shanghai, North Lima, Hamburg, ...). They are not included in the summaries below.

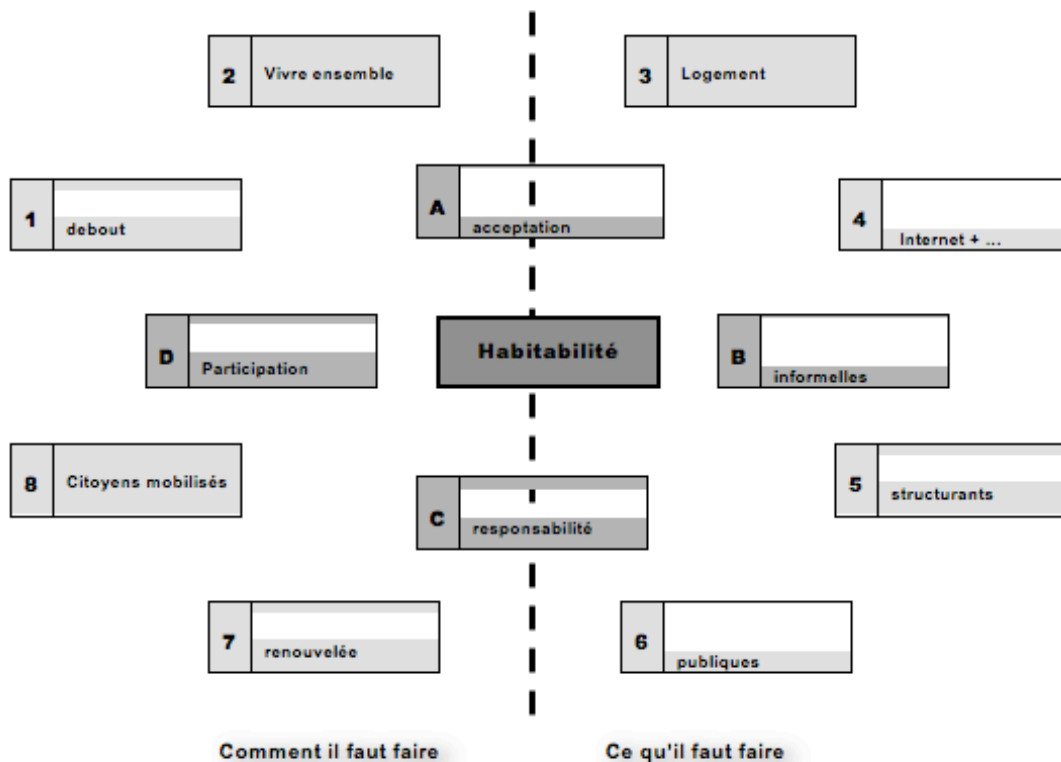
**The first conference dealt with metropolitan challenges, cooperation and partnership.** Rapidly, size and scale questions were replaced by the image of the "Mediapolis" or the "intermediary" metropolis managing the complex relation between perimeter - construction of the metropolis - citizens.

It is the construction of the metropolitan project in its various dimensions that appears central together with the need to overcome stereotypes.

In this regard, the question of adaptation of the planning instruments to the new condition, the importance of coordination, organization and linkage, is as decisive as the central role of political guidance.

**The urban conference on the social and inclusive metropolis led to a positioning grid. (below)**

Intermediate cities could become more social and inclusive if ...



Several conclusions emerged from this conference:

- A real great desire to act with the need to link the issue of continuous integration in the urban project, making it a driving force.
- questioning citizens' information and engagement ... with potential new political actors appearing.
- ...

**The third urban conference focused on economy, mobility and services.**

The discussions identified several trends:

- A change of status for the cities which territories are becoming vectors of wealth production (the concept of integrated metropolitan project)
- Economic strategy... very or too similar reference: Creative City, City of knowledge, multiple labels, ... return of the notion of productive city.
- New actors increasingly decisive and influential, such as major services' operators.
- The place of the citizen - an user lost in the technological gap

**The fourth urban conference addressed the specific issues of the metropolitan areas and tourism from two contrasting situations:**

- The metropolitan territory
- the insular spaces

In the first situation, the conclusions identified two scenarios, endogenous or exogenous to the question " what factors do accelerate change?"

Despite different situations, the ingredients look the same: addressing the issue of tourism in terms of economic sector and bring all stakeholders to take ownership of the project (each one loses in terms of vulnerability what he wins in the common process).

Several opportunities are emerging around the combination of different factors (different kinds of spaces, urban-rural, urban-nature and culture, ...).to make tourism a key development element.

In an insular situation, obviously the territorial issue is central, and it must be in capacity to innovate, to create for itself a new legitimacy.

### **General Synthesis**

**► The constants revealed by the Congress, ingredients to make real the metropolitan project:**

- The recognition of a certain homogeneity of the process ongoing in metropolitan areas (exchanges of experience, ...)
- The imperative need to build capacity to meet the challenge of the complexity of these new territorial entities and the provision of training, means and resources,
- The objective of defining a metropolitan project rooted in a long term planning, with several dimensions: gather the largest numbers and build a sense of belonging, consider the territory as an economic value, and make the social and human dimension an integral part of the project,
- Rehabilitate a long-term policy that is forward looking; decisions that impact the future are to be taken today
- Exit from the dependency discourses and conventional projects "each territory has its own identity"
- Refer to the innovative policies, shared, in networks linking public and private partners

**► The intermediate metropolis:**

- A metropolis "Mediapolis" at a human dimension built by strengthened cooperation and alliances.
- The challenge of planning and its adaptation to the necessary changes is decisive to build the Metropolitan project without delay as well as to engage more "hybrid" players.

**Jean Michel EVIN**

Director of the Planning Agency of Grenoble Region

Member of the scientific committee of INTA

## « Exit, Voice and Loyalty - Trends, questions and answers »

*« There were about 100 people forming the congregation in the village hall, a more or less equal mix of men and women. That was the sum total of house owners in the community. They had come together for their annual meeting to vote on the civic budget for the year. There was a long list of items on the agenda, but it was the large capital cost items that caught their attention :*

- At the top of the list was a new fire-fighting wagon. It would be their first ever, fires having been fought by chains of people passing buckets of water from hand to hand whenever a blaze erupted in one of the timber-frame houses ;*
- Second came the construction of a school for the growing number of children;*
- and Third were the materials and labour costs for re-surfacing the principal track that ran through the centre of the village.*
- Some revenue items were also of concern – the expenses payable for the mayor's assistant and of course if the school was to be built, a budget was needed for a teacher.*

*The debate became heated, as some questioned the need for all this expenditure. Three people left the meeting in disgust. : EXIT A few others claimed that they were not being listened to : VOICE. The majority stayed to vote on the issues and proposed that they could find the money to fund the increasing expenditure of their growing community through land sales – LOYALTY. »*

The date of the meeting was 1664 and the place was Harrisville New England, now known as New Hampshire in what has become the United States of America

There are many other examples of democracy at work but I chose this one, related to me by a delegate at our conference, as a means of demonstrating that the issues that we have been discussing over the past few days are not new. They are the challenges that all communities face as they evolve and which must be met in the never-ending search for what we call « Quality of Life ».

Of course the frame of reference changes constantly. Many people have referred to the global context in which we now live. Quite a few delegates have quoted world population figures and some to the threats posed to planet Earth by our burgeoning population and insatiable consumption of resources. I cannot sum up all of the issues addressed by delegates at the conference. Nor have I produced a précis of plenary and workshop sessions. I am going to provide simply a number of observations, contradictions and challenges provoked by some very stimulating discussions over the past few days. In structuring my comments I have changed slightly the order of the words in the title.

### **VOICE**

Until the 1960's people in the then-developed world usually did what they were told. Governments made laws, took decisions and agreed budgets for spending the monies raised by taxes, all for the good of the common man and woman. Sometimes there was organised dissent, but in general this was the accepted way that democracy worked. Public participation was regarded as an enlightened practice in development planning circles but was often no more than tokenism « Don't tell us what to do, we're the experts. But feel free to comment. »

The advent of television, the increasing use of telephony and then wireless technologies began to change the means of communication. Mike Berners-Lee, an American researcher working at CERN in this very region developed the World Wide Web that became the internet, and life for everyone with access to the technology changed completely. The development of social

networking applications and systems has altered radically the way in which people communicate – as demonstrated so powerfully by the so-called « Arab Spring » .

« Participation » is no longer an added feature. It is a fundamental tenet of how things are done. And it is clear from the many examples quoted that consultation is not just carried out when the proposals are in draft form and then stamped with the municipal or Government seal; people have to be involved in at least three stages :

1. in discussing and defining the issues ;
2. in discussing draft plans , ideas and proposals for resolving the issues
3. and in signing off on agreed plans and programmes.

There is no short-circuiting of this process. It is time-consuming and expensive but it has three great advantages. Firstly, it is a means of harvesting ideas. Secondly, it encourages comment, positive and negative. Thirdly, it is the most effective means of achieving alignment, without which implementation and sustainability cannot be achieved.

## **LOYALTY**

We took this word to refer to alliances and identity in urban societies. Indeed, « identity » was probably the most-used word of the conference. The « identity crisis», if it can be called that, seems most evident where agglomerations or groupings of urban settlements come together to solve sub-regional infrastructure issues and to compete in national and global markets. There was considerable commonality in these sub-regional issues across the continents from North and South America, to Europe, to coastal West Africa and to Asia.

From these analyses, it became clear that it is unrealistic to think that people can attach loyalty to a region or sub-region that does not have a natural geography. This may work for purposes of administration or budget allocation but it doesn't work for people. Loyalty is easiest to generate to a place : a village, a town, a community or a city, but not really an agglomeration of these things.

However, co-operation for economic or even environmental ends is vital to the wellness of the citizens of the places that combine to hold or improve their position in an increasingly competitive world. Intermediate cities need to enhance connections to what might be called the global gateway cities but must have local transit in economic development or else that connection will be lost. The dynamics of the Malmö/Copenhagen axis are a particularly good example of how collaboration across barriers of nature can lead to economic success.

Loyalty can also be to an idea, a concept or a project. Loyalty is then to a team which fosters and develops this project. We have seen and heard of such projects

## **EXIT**

The concept of « Exit » meant different things to different people. For some it meant social exclusion, which continues to be a serious problem in some cities, particularly those cities which have been subjected to high levels of inward migration from poorer countries. This too is an age-old problem but it is worth remembering that inward migration can be a rich source of ideas and energy ; like learning, it is a matter of rate and degree - time and scale – in absorbing and utilising this energy.

For others, « Exit » meant opting out, (like the people who left the Harrisville, New England meeting). « Opting out » sounds drastic and perhaps impossible if an urban community is to survive. But it could also refer to a conscious decision to opt out of some activities and opt-in to others; to move from old ideas and concepts to new perspectives.

For the disillusioned, the choice is « Stay or leave », or to use another hackneyed phrase « If you don't like the heat, get out of the kitchen ». If you stay – be committed to this place and to its future. Fight for change. Everybody has a contribution to make. Give them an invitation to help and, if necessary, the means to contribute.

Not every city can be a global leader in bio-tech, green tech, or pharmaceuticals and so on. Therefore « Build on your strengths ». It is an old axiom, but it still has value.



Breaking into new markets is easier through co-operation, especially for intermediate or smaller cities that do not have the financial or other capacities to do it alone. These intermediate cities need to develop strategies in collaboration with their local private sector, civic sector and educational institutions etc

I finish on Exit not just because we in Europe (and I am sure that those not from Europe will understand why I concentrate on this) are facing a huge economic crisis caused by public sector debt and made worse by the activities and reactions of markets. Exit from the seventeen-country Euro-zone has been considered an option but, fortunately, has been rejected by those who understand the catastrophic consequences of leaving.

The same concerns could arise shortly for cities. In his contribution to the Conference, Joe Montgomery, formerly a high-level civil servant in London, talked of the eminency of potential bankruptcy of certain cities in the UK. Whereas a number of commentators, including myself, have talked of the difficulty of funding « enabling infrastructure », a fact which is inhibiting regeneration, the financial failure of cities would have even more serious consequences and would be a major cause for EXIT, en masse, of both investors and citizens!

Even though we raised these difficulties and dangers there was very little discussion across plenary and seminar sessions of the new financial mechanisms needed to meet the challenges of our cities. Except perhaps in the context of the City of Aberdeen in Scotland, where new initiatives are being tried, such as the latest import from the USA - Tax Increment Financing (TIF's) which allows borrowing against potential increments in tax income. However, it still requires a guarantee and that, inevitably, is provided by the Public Sector. Further effort is required to explore, for example, the contribution of the Third sector and the potential to leverage philanthropic capital (similar to the way equity is used to leverage debt in the private sector, but with much reduced risk!).

The other point I would make is that, comparing our economic and social problems with some of the less-developed countries represented at the conference, most of us live in a privileged society. We enjoy the basic freedoms sought by all of humankind (to communicate, to associate and to vote), our basic conditions and needs are provided for (security, shelter, nourishment etc) and we have the two great assets of opportunity and an investment context which encourages enterprise.

We owe it to those who do not yet have these privileges to work with them to create the same life chances for their people as we enjoy.

The value of an INTA conference is to be able to air and talk about these issues. We are all learning from each other. And I would say that, although the intellectual theme was well chosen and the conference proceedings very well organised, the greater value lies in the informal discussions between delegates and hosts, particularly in providing access to political figures with whom contact would be much more difficult. Once again, our thanks to the hosts in Lyon and Grenoble for facilitating these encounters.

**Roy Adams**

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