THE NETWORK
OF MAJOR
EUROPEAN
CITIES

EUROCITIES
Manchester Declaration

Europe's cities:
leading and succeeding
in the Knowledge Economy

Adopted by the members of EUROCITIES in Manchester on 24 November 2006

On the occasion of the EUROCITIES Conference & Annual General Meeting 2006

EUROCITIES

EUROCITIES is the network of major European cities. Founded in 1986, the network brings together the local governments of 128 large cities in some 33 European countries. EUROCITIES represents the interests of its members and engages in dialogue with the European institutions across a wide range of policy areas affecting cities. These include: economic development, the environment, transport and mobility, social affairs, culture, the information and knowledge society, and services of general interest.

EUROCITIES website: **www.eurocities.org**

CONTENTS

Introduction 3

Context 4

The Manchester Agenda 6

Actions to be developed and implemented by EUROCITIES on the basis of the Manchester Agenda .7

INTRODUCTION

This political declaration has been agreed by the members of EUROCITIES on the occasion of the EUROCITIES Conference & AGM **'Knowledge Cities:** *Villes du Futur***'** - held in the City of Manchester (England, UK) from 22 to 25 November 2006.

This declaration follows-on from political documents which have previously been adopted by EUROCITIES members including: **EUROCITIES Mission Statement and Strategic Objectives** (adopted at the 2003 AGM in Porto); **EUROCITIES Vienna Declaration** (adopted at the 2004 AGM in Vienna); and **EUROCITIES Statements concerning the Lisbon Strategy**.

EUROCITIES will seek to ensure the effective follow-up and implementation of the current declaration through its activities during the coming years, and especially in the framework of the **EUROCITIES Work Programme 2007**, which includes a number of specific actions to be developed on the basis of **The Manchester Agenda**.

CONTEXT

THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

There is a growing awareness at all levels of the need to ensure that public policies are designed and implemented in ways which are consistent with the principle of **Sustainable Development**. While we continue to pursue the goals of economic prosperity and social cohesiveness, we recognise that maintaining and improving our quality of life also depends on protecting and conserving our local and global environment. This requires the adoption of more integrated and holistic approaches to policy-making, taking social, economic and environmental objectives into account, as well as closer cooperation between the various territorial spheres of public governance (local, regional, national, …).

Economic globalisation creates an increasingly competitive climate for all kinds of commercial and industrial activity, with major consequences for European cities and regions especially in terms of business activity and employment.

The development and spread of **new technologies** (including the internet and ICTs, as well as "cleaner and greener" technologies making use of renewable energy sources) create new challenges and opportunities for both the public and private sectors.

Cities have always been the main centres (or "poles") of learning, skills, ideas and knowledge, in schools, universities, research institutes and private companies. Cities must continue to ensure their position at the forefront of the **knowledge economy** – for example by encouraging investment in education, skills and research.

City-level governments have a crucial role to play in supporting the development of the knowledge economy and managing change, for example by helping citizens and businesses to meet the challenges of economic globalisation. They can also take steps to improve their own "attractiveness" in terms of providing a positive environment for business and becoming a place where people want to live, learn and work.

THE EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK

The European Union continues to enlarge, with more countries preparing to join. This process presents new challenges and opportunities to cities, citizens and businesses - both in the existing Member States and in the accession countries. With a total population that will soon be more than 500 million people, a growing proportion of whom are living in large cities and their surrounding urban areas, the European Union has the potential to be the largest and most important political and economic block in the world.

Five years after the launch of the original Lisbon Strategy, in March 2005 the European Council adopted a revised version of the Strategy, with a stronger focus on promoting economic growth and creating more and better jobs. EUROCITIES has pointed out that the success or failure of **Europe's 'Growth and Jobs' Strategy** will depend on the extent to which cities are closely involved in the development and implementation of the national reform programmes in each of the Member States.

The new Cohesion and Structural Funds of the European Union, with new programmes to be launched at the start of 2007, are intended to help achieve the goals of the 'Growth and Jobs' Strategy. Cities and their governments have a crucial role to play in ensuring the successful implementation of these programmes, as has been recognised by the European Commission in its recent Communication on "Cohesion Policy and Cities".

The European Union's Sustainable Development Strategy was renewed in June 2006, five years after it was first launched at the Gothenburg Summit. EUROCITIES is strongly committed to ensuring that the principle of sustainable development is respected at all levels of policy-making and implementation, and to promoting integrated approaches that take social, economic and environmental objectives into account.

EUROCITIES remains committed to strengthening the urban dimension of European policies and increasing cities' involvement in European programmes and initiatives, including:

- i2010 - A European Information Society for growth and employment
- 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development
- Initiatives in the field of urban transport
- Initiatives in the field of energy efficiency and sustainable energy
- Initiatives to support the integration of immigrants in the framework of The Hague Programme and the Commission's Common Agenda for Integration
- The "Europe for Citizens" programme to be launched in 2007

EUROCITIES continues to participate in the **Territorial Dialogue** between the European Commission and the associations representing local and regional authorities in the EU. We work closely with Members of the European Parliament and are actively engaged with the **European Parliamentary Intergroup on Urban and Housing.** We closely follow the ongoing cooperation between national government Ministers responsible for urban policy and actively support the development of the **European Urban Knowledge Network**.

THE MANCHESTER AGENDA

Within the framework provided by **EUROCITIES Strategic Objectives** (adopted at the 2003 AGM in Porto), the members of EUROCITIES have identified the following factors for European cities to be successful in the knowledge economy:

1. **Strong and accountable political leadership** at the level of a city and/or metropolitan area, with a clear vision for the future
2. **Permanent partnerships** bringing together local and/or regional public authorities as well as other public and private stakeholders including businesses, public service providers, higher education and research institutions
3. **Measures to encourage the participation of citizens in all aspects of urban life,** including channels for permanent and continuous dialogue so that citizens can contribute to decision-making at local level
4. **Strategies to promote the development of a more cohesive, equitable and inclusive society** by tackling all forms of exclusion and discrimination, overcoming disadvantage, embracing diversity and encouraging intercultural understanding, including measures to support the integration of immigrants
5. **Ongoing programmes including education and training measures** to ensure that all citizens have access to the technology and skills necessary to participate in the information society and to share in the benefits of the knowledge economy
6. **Strategies to encourage the growth of business sectors based on knowledge and innovation**, with strong links to education and research institutions, in order to create quality and sustainable employment opportunities
7. **Strategies to ensure a well-managed urban environment** and create an attractive, healthy and sustainable city in which people want to live, work and spend their leisure time, and where businesses can grow and prosper
8. **Safe, accessible and integrated local transport networks**, including clean and reliable public transport services, and good connections – both physical and digital - with other cities in Europe and around the world
9. **City-wide initiatives to encourage more responsible public procurement** taking social, environmental and ethical considerations into account, and also to raise awareness and encourage more responsible behaviour of individuals, businesses and organisations with regard to the consumption of resources, encouraging greater energy efficiency, reducing waste and facilitating recycling.
10. **Strategies to promote culture and cultural activities** which contribute to social inclusiveness and citizens' quality of life, encouraging creativity and innovation and contributing to the sustainable growth of the knowledge economy

These factors can also be seen as guidelines for how cities may strengthen their position in the context of the knowledge economy and thereby contribute to building a more prosperous, inclusive and sustainable Europe in the coming years.

ACTIONS TO BE DEVELOPED AND IMPLEMENTED BY EUROCITIES ON THE BASIS OF THE MANCHESTER AGENDA

EUROCITIES will seek to ensure the effective follow-up and implementation of the current declaration through its activities during the coming years, and especially in the framework of the **EUROCITIES Work Programme 2007**, which includes a number of specific actions to be developed on the basis of **The Manchester Agenda**.

Specific activities will include the following:

1. Develop an initiative to encourage **citizens' participation** at local level, in the framework of the **Europe for Citizens** programme.
2. Develop actions to promote **Responsible Public Procurement** in local public administrations and also to raise citizens' awareness about the social/ethical and environmental impacts of their own purchasing decisions, building on the results of the CARPE (Cities As Responsible Purchasers in Europe) project.
3. Develop the **European Day of the Entrepreneur** initiative.
4. Develop initiative(s) to promote intercultural dialogue within cities that could contribute to the **European Year of Intercultural Dialogue** in 2008.
5. Continue to encourage member cities to sign and implement the **EUROCITIES Charter of the Rights of Citizens in the Knowledge Society**.