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# Copenhagen Charter 2002

*A Statement on the Occasion of the Danish Presidency*

European Cities in a Global Era

– Urban Identities and Regional Development

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## The challenges

Globalisation generates new challenges in preparing strategies for urban and regional development. The Copenhagen Charter 2002 aims to recommend how to manage the challenges of the global era, in which maintaining growth and sustainability as well as identity and diversity has become increasingly difficult.

The global competition between cities and regions has shaped a new global division of labour. National borders and cultures do not limit the chains of production and consumption. Companies can choose where they want to locate, and people where they want to work and live, on a global market. These changes influence the cities and regions of Europe. The disparities between European cities and between cities and the countryside are increasing. Rural areas with small and medium-sized towns often have limited opportunities for development.

The global changes promote standardisation in many ways, including architecture, images and culture.

Diversity, identity and locally anchored development can protect against this conformity. In addition, the special characteristics of specific urban areas and regions provide the driving force for social and economic development. The location-specific qualities and identity give meaning to the sense of place by making it unique.

Cities comprise a paradox. They embody the leading centres of development, but they are also fertile soil for social exclusion and environmental problems. Many city residents have poor access to transport, housing, education, social services, jobs and other services. Most European towns and cities have old industrial and harbour districts that need to be regenerated. Determining how to regenerate balanced and polycentric development in cities and regions using the special local and regional qualities, competencies, identities and creativity is therefore a major challenge.

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Global effects

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Regional identity



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## Regional development in global competition

1. Use the forces of globalisation constructively by assessing the local potential in the global economy and integrating this into strategies for urban and regional development.
2. Use regional and urban identities as the starting-point in adapting to global changes and dynamics by interpreting and registering the characteristics of the physical environment, architecture and the social and cultural capital in the region and its cities.
3. Develop an integrated perspective on urban and regional policy by promoting awareness of the role of towns and cities in regional development, to promote regional cohesion and a polycentric urban pattern.
4. Co-ordinate strategies for urban and regional development and support partnerships between public and private actors.
5. Develop innovative and sustainable long-term perspectives in which regional identity and cities' potential strengths are linked to regional competencies, creativity and culture.

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## Meeting the challenges

An integrated approach to urban and regional policies is needed. Urban development and regional development are interrelated. All strategies and programmes with spatial effects at the local, regional, national and European levels influence urban and regional development. In the future, authorities need to take responsibility for enhancing co-operation and co-ordination to promote cohesion, sustainability and growth in all of Europe. Meanwhile, policy-makers must consider how globalisation affects regions and cities, to prevent imbalanced development. If an integrated approach is not implemented, the lack of co-ordination between different levels of authority will not only result in greater disparity between different areas in the same region but also increase the gaps between the regions of Europe. In the end, this will lead to development that is extremely unsustainable. Future regional policies in Europe can contribute to reinforcing the role of cities and towns as growth centres that benefit a whole region, to improve the territorial balance in European development.

Local, regional, national and European authorities need to take responsibility for ensuring sustainable and balanced urban and regional policy. Urban and regional authorities should assess their potential role in the global economy and convert this assessment into specific strategies for their territory. The foundation for this could be the principles of the Copenhagen Charter 2002. The 10 points of the Charter are not the final answers, but they outline main principles. Strategies for urban and regional development and implementation thereof need to be carefully tailored to individual circumstances to develop and enhance the characteristic identities of cities and regions. Interreg, URBAN and other EU programmes support regional and urban development and regeneration, but progressive strategies for urban and regional development should make use of these programmes in relation to national and regional initiatives.

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Regional balance

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Identity and quality

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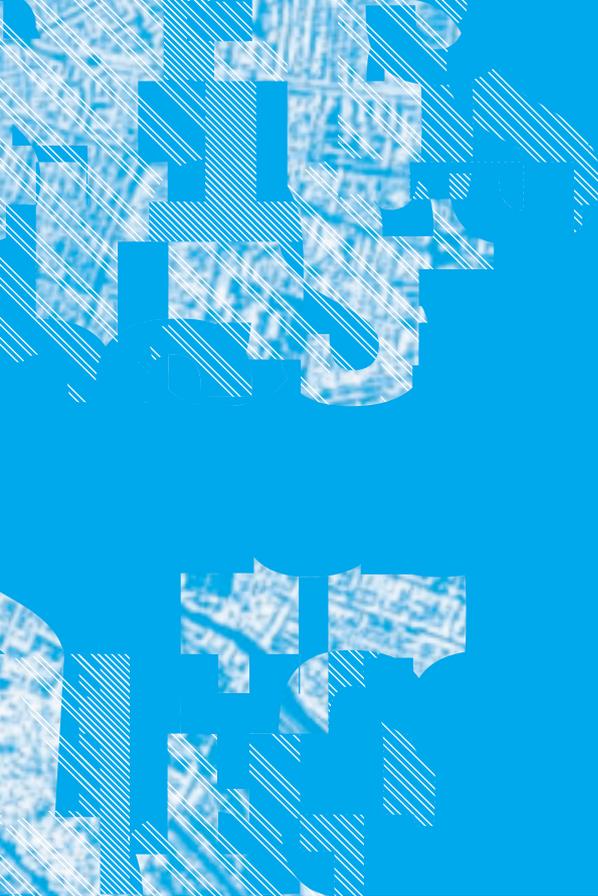
Co-operation and co-ordination



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## Urban identity and balanced regional development

6. Use the architectural history of the city and global trends to shape the urban and regional environment, to protect diversity and local identity and to counteract the monotony of the global architectural expression.
7. View the revitalisation of the city and region as a dynamic process and make use of local customs and new initiatives.
8. Create diverse and creative living and working environments in all urban districts by including all cultures and potential factors in the development process.
9. Enhance integration in the entire region to avoid social exclusion by ensuring that everyone has access to sustainable transport, jobs, housing, knowledge, education and social services.
10. Strengthen opportunities for public participation in the discussion on strategies for urban and regional development and thereby empower local actors by making use of their knowledge about the place and its potential.



The dynamics and effects of globalisation will profoundly affect the future development of the cities and regions of Europe. How can the global economy be used to promote the sustainable social, economic and environmental development of cities and regions? How can the potential benefits of global dynamics be realised without compromising the identity and diversity of European cities and regions? To put it another way, how can development be ensured that is both innovative and locally anchored? New objectives and a co-ordinated effort are needed to avoid development benefiting only a few areas and to avoid losing the quality and identity of European cities and regions as a result of international competition.

The Copenhagen Charter 2002 contains 10 principles on how the challenges of globalisation can be managed in strategies for urban and regional development to ensure cohesion as well as sustainable development. The aim of the Charter is to inspire policy-makers, researchers and other actors to participate in discussing future urban and regional development in Europe. This can improve the co-ordination of policies, programmes and strategies between different levels of authority.

The European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) adopted in 1999 comprises an important step towards the balanced development of the cities and regions of Europe. The Copenhagen Charter 2002 intends to contribute to establishing an agenda that gives priority to the role of cities in ensuring continuing efforts to achieve balanced development in Europe.

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