



Office of the
Deputy Prime Minister

Creating sustainable communities

Conclusions of Bristol Ministerial Informal Meeting on Sustainable Communities in Europe

UK Presidency

Bristol, 6–7 December 2005





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SUMMARY

The purpose of the Informal Meeting in Bristol (6–7 December 2005) was to discuss and agree the benefit to all Member States of creating sustainable communities across Europe. Ministers were asked to endorse the “Bristol Accord” – eight characteristics of a sustainable community, and a commitment to share good practice case studies. Ministers were also asked to agree to specific proposals to: (i) enhance the impact of European Investment Bank (EIB) loan finance and (ii) foster generic “place-making” skills.

The “Bristol Accord” set out (i) eight characteristics of a sustainable community; and (ii) an agreement to compile good practice case studies that demonstrate sustainable communities’ characteristics to an agreed template. Building on the Rotterdam *Urban Acquis*’ principles of effective urban policy-making, the Bristol Accord comprised characteristics of successful places.

Ministers were requested to note the contribution of the EIB to the sustainable communities agenda. Ministers were asked to agree to the establishment of an Expert Working Group to consider how to enhance the impact of EIB loans. The group would comprise Member States, EIB and the European Commission and report to the same group of Ministers under the German Presidency in the first half of 2007.

Finally, Ministers were asked to agree the importance of fostering skills for successful place-making and the value of cooperative activity on this theme across Member States. Ministers were asked to support a proposal for a European Skills Symposium, hosted by the UK’s Academy for Sustainable Communities and organised in partnership with European Urban Knowledge Network (EUKN). The aim of the Symposium is to share good practice and to build capacity in the generic skills required for creating sustainable communities as the first step in a possible longer term programme of European cooperation for skills development. Ministers from 12 Member States agreed to make a contribution of €10,000 in support of the Symposium and an associated bursary scheme, principally for new Member States and candidate countries.

These themes build directly on the Rotterdam conclusions (2004) – notably the *Urban Acquis* and the EUKN – and subsequent progress under the Luxembourg Presidency. The Bristol papers reflected continuity and set out how work on these themes would continue under future Presidencies.

Ministers were also asked to note the European Commission’s staff working paper “Cohesion Policy and Cities: the urban contribution to growth and jobs in the regions” and the Commission’s intention that the conclusions of the paper might be reflected in its final proposal for the Community Strategic Guidelines on Cohesion. Ministers were asked to agree to submit detailed comments in writing by 17 February 2006, noting that the Guidelines will need to be adopted by the Council and the European Parliament, and will therefore be discussed in the Council’s Structural Actions Working Group and the General Affairs and External Relations Council in due course. Ministers noted the linkages between the contents of the staff working paper and the aim of the UK Presidency’s Sustainable Communities approach – as exemplified in the Bristol Accord.

Creating Sustainable Communities in Europe

UK Presidency's Conclusions

Purpose

1. The purpose of the Informal Meeting in Bristol (6–7 December 2005) was to discuss and agree the benefit to all Member States of creating sustainable communities across Europe. Ministers were asked to endorse the “Bristol Accord” – eight characteristics of a sustainable community, and a commitment to share good practice case studies. Ministers were also asked to agree to specific proposals to: (i) enhance the impact of European Investment Bank (EIB) loan finance and (ii) foster generic “place-making” skills.

Context

2. Ministers agreed that, despite the diversity of geography, socio-economic performance and demography, all EU Member States share a similar set of challenges to building more attractive places – or “Sustainable Communities” – where people want to live and work, both now and in the future.
3. Ministers acknowledged the influential role that regions, cities and other urban areas should play in delivering the revitalised Lisbon Agenda, in the context of the National Reform Plans and the proposed Community Strategic Guidelines for making Europe and its regions more attractive places to invest and work¹. National policies therefore needed to create innovative, flexible and balanced solutions to economic, social and environmental challenges. The Bristol Accord’s Sustainable Communities approach will help Member States to deliver Lisbon goals.
4. Ministers noted the importance of territorial cohesion in delivery of the growth and jobs agenda. The purpose of territorial cohesion was to achieve a more balanced development, to build sustainable communities in cities and other human settlements in urban and rural areas and to see greater consistency with other sectoral policies that have a spatial impact². They welcomed the continuing cooperation between Member States in taking forward the conclusions on Territorial Cohesion, endorsed at Rotterdam and Luxembourg, by the Ministers responsible for spatial development.
5. Ministers acknowledged the importance of complementary efforts to ensure that territories are well led and well served; and are well designed and built, in order to achieve the creation of sustainable communities across Europe.
6. Ministers also noted that sustainable development is a fundamental objective under the Treaties of the Union that “requires dealing with economic, social and environmental policies in a mutually reinforcing way”³.

1 Draft Community Strategy Guidelines (July 2005).

2 *ibid.*

3 Conclusions of European Council, Gothenburg, 15 and 16 June 2001.

7. Ministers recognised the contribution of the Sustainable Communities approach in helping Member States to address common challenges to their communities; and, in particular, to deliver their Lisbon goals, social justice, territorial cohesion, and sustainable development.

Three key themes: a summary

8. Ministers endorsed the “**Bristol Accord**”, which set out (i) **eight characteristics of a sustainable community**; and (ii) contained an **agreement to compile good practice case studies** that demonstrate sustainable communities’ characteristics to an agreed template. Building on the Rotterdam *Urban Acquis*’ principles of effective urban policy-making, the Bristol Accord comprised the characteristics of successful places – cities and other human settlements in urban and rural areas.
9. Ministers noted the commitment of the UK Presidency to reaching an agreement before the end of 2005 on the financial perspectives for the period 2007-2013. They underlined the importance of an early agreement on the financial perspectives in order to create a stable basis for planning future Structural Fund programmes. It was recognised that grant finance at European level has been an important lever for attracting additional public and private support from national sources and for the promotion of a more strategic and innovative approach to sustainable communities and urban development issues.
10. Ministers noted the role of the EIB and its contribution to a sustainable communities and urban development agenda. They also took note of the new cooperation agreement currently being worked out between the Commission the EIB and the Council of Europe Development Bank in the field of urban renewal and development and social housing. They agreed to the establishment of an **expert group to consider how to enhance the impact of EIB loans** in fostering sustainable communities. The group would comprise Member States, EIB and the European Commission and would report to the same group of Ministers under the German Presidency in the first half of 2007. The European Parliament and the Committee of the Regions would have observer status on the group.
11. Finally, Ministers agreed the importance of fostering skills for successful place-making and the value of cooperative activity on this theme across Member States. Therefore they agreed a proposal for European **Sustainable Communities Skills Symposium** hosted by the UK’s Academy for Sustainable Communities – in partnership with the European Urban Knowledge Network (EUKN) – in November 2006. The aim of the Symposium would be to share good practice and to build capacity in the generic skills required for creating sustainable communities as the first step in a possible longer term programme of cooperative activity on skills development. Ministers from 12 Member States agreed to make a contribution of €10,000 in support of the Symposium and an associated bursary scheme, principally for new Member States and candidate countries.

(1) A Common Approach to Creating Sustainable Communities: “The Bristol Accord”

12. At the Informal meeting in Rotterdam in 2004 Ministers endorsed a set of principles common to successful urban policies – the *Urban Acquis* (see Annex 2). Ministers agreed that the Bristol Accord’s Sustainable Communities approach – represented by eight characteristics attached – complemented the *Acquis*. Where the *Acquis* listed agreed inputs of successful urban policy, the Accord defined an aspirational set of objectives of successful places (both urban and rural).

13. They agreed that the Accord's sustainable communities characteristics were familiar to all Member States, but their combination into a single approach was original. As such the Accord's Sustainable Communities approach represented an ambitious and inspiring set of goals or outcomes that could serve as a common framework for evaluating success. Ministers recognised that the Accord provided an important next step towards achieving the goals of Lisbon.
14. Ministers endorsed the Bristol Accord. It comprised:
 - (i) A common, European set of characteristics that define a successful sustainable community (for example, a city, small town, neighbourhood or rural area).
 - (ii) An agreement to compile good practice case studies displaying these characteristics to the template established by the EUKN. The case studies should demonstrate flexible and transferable solutions to common challenges. Ministers agreed that all future case studies would be submitted and considered by the EUKN. The information would be made available through the EUKN.
15. Ministers recognised that Part II of the Accord (below) sought to “Encouraging Good Practice, Policy Learning and Capacity” (final category of *Urban Acquis*) by recommending that Member States agree to compile and share good practice case studies of successful places. Ministers agreed to prepare case studies from their own Member States to be submitted to the EUKN⁴. Sharing of good practice also featured heavily as part of the UK Presidency's proposals regarding EIB and the Skills Symposium (see below).

THE “BRISTOL ACCORD”, DECEMBER 2005

Part I: Characteristics of a Sustainable Community

Definition: Sustainable communities are places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.

There are a number of key pre-requisites for the aim of creating genuinely sustainable communities across Europe. These are:

- i. **Economic growth** is of central importance. Without economic growth, EU Member States are unable to invest in the creation and maintenance of sustainable communities.
- ii. The integrated Sustainable Communities approach grows directly out of Europe's unique tradition of **social inclusion and social justice**.
- iii. The **role of cities** is key to success. Successful cities with strong cultural identities deliver sustainable communities beyond their limits – regionally, nationally and even internationally. And achieving the goals of Lisbon will require Europe's cities to be places of international excellence that allow the knowledge economy to thrive.
- iv. Sustainable communities are ones that **respond to the challenge of social segregation** at all levels, including neighbourhoods.

4 www.EUKN.org

- v. Sustainable communities also embody the principles of **sustainable development**⁵. They balance and integrate the social, economic and environmental challenges and meet the needs of existing and future generations.
- vi. Recognition that sustainable communities can exist at **different spatial levels**: neighbourhood, local, city, regional.

Sustainable communities are diverse, reflecting their local circumstances. There is no standard template to fit them all. But they should be:

- (1) **ACTIVE, INCLUSIVE AND SAFE** – *Fair, tolerant and cohesive with a strong local culture and other shared community activities*
- (2) **WELL RUN** – *with effective and inclusive participation, representation and leadership*
- (3) **WELL CONNECTED** – *with good transport services and communication linking people to jobs, schools, health and other services*
- (4) **WELL SERVED** – *with public, private, community and voluntary services that are appropriate to people's needs and accessible to all*
- (5) **ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE** – *providing places for people to live that are considerate of the environment*
- (6) **THRIVING** – *with a flourishing, diverse and innovative local economy*
- (7) **WELL DESIGNED AND BUILT** – *featuring quality built and natural environment*
- (8) **FAIR FOR EVERYONE** – *including those in other communities, now and in the future*

See Annex 1 for full descriptions of eight agreed characteristics

Part II: Agreement to compile Good Practice Case Studies

Case study requirements

Case Studies should demonstrate:

- i) The social, economic, demographic, and environmental challenges and opportunities faced by the place.
- ii) An integrated approach to territorial development, sustainable communities ingredients and integration processes.
- iii) Efforts to integrate urban, rural, and regional dimensions into development strategies.
- iv) The role of local leadership and services in promoting the sustainable communities.
- v) Skills and investment actions (where appropriate).
- vi) The successful outcomes and achievements studying each location.
- vii) The positive roles that national, regional and local levels of government, and the EU have played.

All case studies should be prepared according to the agreed EUKN template.

The eight case studies presented by the UK Presidency are listed at Annex 1 and will be made available on the EUKN web site.

⁵ In this respect, the Sustainable Communities approach builds on previous EU initiatives, such as the Aalborg Charter, Agenda 21 and Commission communication towards thematic strategy on the urban environment (COM2004(60)).

Governance and Sustainable Communities

16. Ministers recognised that good governance was a pre-requisite for the creation of more sustainable communities. They recalled that at the Warsaw Summit in May 2005 the Heads of State and Government in their Declaration were “convinced that effective democracy and good governance at all levels are essential for creating sustainable communities where people want to live and work, now and in the future.” They also noted the conclusions of the High Level Meeting on Governance and the EU, held at London (21–22 November 2005), where a number of elements and principles of effective democracy and good governance were agreed – see Annex 3. Those Ministers present in Bristol endorsed these elements and principles.

(2) Investment in Sustainable Communities: the European Investment Bank (EIB)

17. Ministers noted the current draft of the European Commission’s Community Strategic Guidelines for 2007–2013, which states: “Cohesion policy can help to create sustainable communities, by ensuring that economic and social and environmental issues are tackled through integrated strategies for renewal, regeneration and development in both urban and rural areas.”
18. Ministers noted the important added value provided by Structural and Cohesion Funds (SCF) in creating sustainable communities and agreed that this could be enhanced by improved lending for suitable projects and programmes of territorial improvement. One source of such lending was the EIB. Ministers discussed the current and potential role of EIB in creating genuinely sustainable communities across Europe.
19. Ministers recognised the geographical and technical scope of projects for which EIB currently provided loans, and the role it performed as co-financier. Ministers noted the importance of technical assistance support in providing ‘investment-ready’ projects for funding by European Commission, EIB and International Finance Institutions (IFIs). Ministers also noted the importance of commercial project finance skills in increasing the generation and delivery of high quality interventions that could attract EIB investment and lending. The importance of planning effective, long-term investment strategies for places was also noted.
20. Ministers agreed to the UK Presidency’s proposition to constitute an Expert Working Group of Member States, EIB and the European Commission. The European Parliament and the Committee of the Regions would have observer status on the group. Ministers agreed that the group should seek to identify ways to maximise the quality of EIB-supported actions. The group’s terms of reference were agreed:
 - i) Analyse EIB experience in financing and lending to urban projects for the development of sustainable communities, including the relationship between grants and loans;
 - ii) Assess the opportunities for greater promotion of effective practices within and between Member States based experience;
 - iii) Develop the role of EIB in this area.

21. As part of its work, the group would aim to share knowledge about accessing EIB loan finance for sustainable communities projects and to coordinate Member States' views concerning new and emerging EIB initiatives. This would include assessing complementarity with SCF grants – where possible – and the impact of EIB loans on territorial cohesion.
22. UK and Germany will work together with the Commission and Council Presidencies to lead and coordinate meetings of the group over a 16 month period from the end of the UK Presidency. The group's findings would be reported to the same group of Ministers at the proposed German Ministerial Informal Meeting in May 2007.

(3) Skills for Sustainable Communities: realising the “Skills Dividend”

23. Member States recognised the importance of investing in generic ‘place-making’ (technical, administrative governance and other) skills – such as territorial leadership, community engagement, partnership working, project management, community governance and cross-occupational working – in order to build and maintain better cities, towns and regions for their citizens. European cities will benefit from improved joint learning and good practice.
24. Member States agreed that – despite different and distinctive approaches in each country – the base of skills required to deliver attractive places and sustainable communities was common to all. It was also a new and increasing demand. Member States agreed that there are compelling advantages to working together in order to foster these ‘place-making’ skills – both to improve local outcomes and to build capacity across Europe.
25. Ministers offered their support for a “European Sustainable Communities Skills Symposium”. The Symposium would be hosted, organised and run by the UK's Academy for Sustainable Communities (ASC) in partnership with the EUKN and held in November 2006 in Leeds, UK. Ministers considered that the Symposium should be the first step in a process of longer term cooperative activity on skills development. Ministers noted that URBACT was prepared to take forward work on this theme, including help with the preparation and subsequent review of the Symposium. In case of successful outcomes, actions for promoting skills could be continued in any future or successor URBACT programme under the third objective of Cohesion Policy 2007–2013. It was important that the Symposium should complement other planned events, such as the Urban Futures 2.0 Conference in Stockholm in May 2006. All information concerning the Symposium would be made available through the EUKN and ASC web sites.
26. Ministers agreed that the Symposium should be supported by a bursary scheme designed to support the attendance of experts and practitioners from new Member States and candidate countries. Ministers from 12 Member States agreed to make a contribution of €10,000 in support of the Symposium and an associated bursary scheme, principally for new Member States and candidate countries.
27. Ministers agreed that further cooperative activity and decisions to hold future Symposia would be reviewed after the Symposium. It was agreed that this review – and a similar one of the EUKN pilot – would inform future work on skills and knowledge that could be combined under future cooperation programmes.

European Commission draft staff working paper: “Cohesion Policy and Cities: the urban contribution to growth and jobs in the regions”

28. Ministers welcomed the presentation by Commissioner Danuta Hübner of a draft staff working paper responding to the questions raised by the Rotterdam conclusions (paragraph 3.22) and the European Parliament's Regional Policy Committee report on the Urban Dimension at a European level. They noted the Commission's intention that the conclusions of the paper might be reflected in its final proposal for Community Strategic Guidelines for Cohesion so that sustainable urban development can be fully taken into account in the programmes for 2007–2013.
29. They agreed that cities and urban areas had a central role in delivering territorial dimension to cohesion policy and welcomed the opportunity to give initial reactions to the draft paper. They also noted the linkages between the contents of the draft paper and the aim of the UK Presidency's sustainable communities approach – as exemplified in the Bristol Accord. They agreed to submit detailed comments in writing by 17 February 2006, noting that the Guidelines had to be adopted by the Council and the European Parliament, and would therefore be discussed in the Council's Structural Actions Working Group and the General Affairs and External Relations Council in due course.

Implementation Strategy

30. The Implementation Strategy that Ministers agreed to develop at Rotterdam had been updated to reflect new and continuing workstreams for the current and forthcoming three presidencies. This included all initiatives under URBACT.

Research papers

31. Ministers welcomed the research commissioned by the UK Presidency. Ministers agreed that the papers on Sustainable Communities in Europe (“source” document) and Skills for Sustainable Communities had provided valuable material to inform discussion at both the Director Generals' meeting in London in October, and in Bristol in December 2005.

ANNEX 1

EIGHT CHARACTERISTICS OF A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY

(1) ACTIVE, INCLUSIVE AND SAFE – *Fair, tolerant and cohesive with a strong local culture and other shared community activities*

Sustainable communities offer:

- a sense of community and cultural identity, and belonging
- tolerance, respect and engagement with people from different cultures, background and beliefs
- friendly, co-operative and helpful behaviour in neighbourhoods
- opportunities for cultural, leisure, community, sport and other activities, including for children and young people
- low levels of crime, drugs and antisocial behaviour with visible, effective and community-friendly policing
- social inclusion, equality of opportunity and good life chances for all.

(2) WELL RUN – *with effective and inclusive participation, representation and leadership*

Sustainable communities enjoy:

- representative, accountable governance systems which both facilitate strategic, visionary leadership and enable inclusive, active and effective participation by individuals and organisations
- effective engagement with the community at neighbourhood level, including capacity building to develop the community's skills, knowledge and confidence
- strong, informed and effective partnerships that lead by example (e.g. government, business, community)
- strong, inclusive, community and voluntary sector
- sense of civic values, responsibility and pride.

(3) WELL CONNECTED – *with good transport services and communication linking people to jobs, schools, health and other services*

Sustainable communities offer:

- transport facilities, including public transport, that help people travel within and between communities and reduce dependence on cars

- facilities to encourage safe local walking and cycling
- an appropriate level of local parking facilities in line with local plans to manage road traffic demand
- widely available and effective telecommunications and Internet access
- good access to regional, national and international communications networks.

(4) WELL SERVED – *with public, private, community and voluntary services that are appropriate to people’s needs and accessible to all*

Sustainable communities have:

- well-performing local schools, further and higher education institutions, and other opportunities for lifelong learning
- high quality local health care and social services, integrated where possible with other services
- high quality services for families and children (including early years child care)
- good range of affordable public, community, voluntary and private services (e.g. retail, fresh food, commercial, utilities, information and advice) which are accessible to the whole community
- service providers who think and act long-term and beyond their own immediate geographical and interest boundaries, and who involve users and local residents in shaping their policy and practice.

(5) ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE – *providing places for people to live that are considerate of the environment*

Sustainable communities:

- providing places for people to live that respect the environment and use resources efficiently
- actively seek to minimise climate change, including through energy efficiency and the use of renewables
- protect the environment, by minimising pollution on land, in water and in the air
- minimise waste and dispose of it in accordance with current good practice
- make efficient use of natural resources, encouraging sustainable production and consumption
- protect and improve bio-diversity (e.g. wildlife habitats)

- enable a lifestyle that minimises negative environmental impact and enhances positive impacts (e.g. by creating opportunities for walking and cycling, and reducing noise pollution and dependence on cars)
- create cleaner, safer and greener neighbourhoods (e.g. by reducing litter and graffiti, and maintaining pleasant public spaces).

(6) THRIVING – *with a flourishing, diverse and innovative local economy*

Sustainable communities feature:

- a wide range of good quality jobs and training opportunities
- sufficient suitable land and buildings to support economic prosperity and change
- dynamic job and business creation, with benefits for the local community
- a strong business community with links into the wider economy
- economically viable and attractive town centres.

(7) WELL DESIGNED AND BUILT – *featuring quality built and natural environment*

Sustainable communities offer:

- sense of place – a place with a positive ‘feeling’ for people and local distinctiveness
- user-friendly public and green spaces with facilities for everyone including children and older people
- sufficient range, diversity, affordability and accessibility of housing within a balanced housing market
- appropriate size, scale, density, design and layout, including mixed-use development, that complement the distinctive local character of the community
- high quality, mixed-use, durable, flexible and adaptable buildings, using materials which minimise negative environmental impacts
- buildings and public spaces which promote health and are designed to reduce crime and make people feel safe
- buildings, facilities and services that mean they are well prepared against disasters – both natural and man-made
- accessibility of jobs, key services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling.

(8) FAIR FOR EVERYONE – *including those in other communities, now and in the future*

Sustainable communities:

- recognise individuals' rights and responsibilities
- respect the rights and aspirations of others (both neighbouring communities, and across the wider world) also to be sustainable
- have due regard for the needs of future generations in current decisions and actions.



CASE STUDIES PRESENTED BY UK PRESIDENCY IN BRISTOL, DECEMBER 2005

1. Elblag, Poland
2. Hannover métropole, Germany
3. Helsinki, Finland
4. Northern Way, UK
5. Rotterdam, Hoogvliet, Netherlands
6. Thames Gateway, UK
7. Valencia, Spain
8. Vienna – Bratislava – Budapest corridor, Austria, Slovenia and Hungary

ANNEX 2

URBAN ACQUIS (ROTTERDAM, 2004)

The experiences of different European countries on urban policy over the past decade have generated a set of common principles that underpin successful policies. EU Ministers endorsed this *Urban Acquis* at the Rotterdam Informal as providing the basis for developing a more coherent approach to urban policy.

The *Urban Acquis* embodies certain key principles which fall into 5 categories:

Priorities

- a. Economic competitiveness, social cohesion and environmental quality must be balanced;
- b. Cities must be liveable, places of choice and places of cultural identity;

Mechanisms for Successful Urban Policy

- c. National, regional and local sectoral policies should be better integrated;
- d. In common with specific urban programmes the mainstream government resources which deliver the services affecting cities, should take into account the specific situation of cities;
- e. Policies for cities must be long term;
- f. Leadership from the top must be balanced with empowerment of communities below;
- g. Agreements, partnerships and trust between different levels of government are needed, not rigid controls;

Engaging Stakeholders

- h. Public, private and community partners in cities should engage in constructive working relationships;
- i. Partnerships must be balanced with democratic accountability of elected local government;
- j. Citizens' participation should be based on a dialogue with experts to stimulate citizens' ownership of the urban living environment;

Achieving the Right Spatial Balance

- k. Policies should be concentrated long term upon particular areas of need or opportunity in cities;
- l. Social challenges in deprived areas must be linked to economic opportunities in the wider region.
- m. Institutional collaboration between cities and regions should be encouraged;
- n. Balanced urban networks of, and functional cooperation between small, medium, and large-sized cities should be encouraged;

Encouraging Good Practice, Policy Learning and Capacity

- o. Good practice and successes should be promoted widely;
- p. Policies should be subject to evaluation to determine success;
- q. The regeneration skills of professional, community partners, local government should be increased.

ANNEX 3

GOVERNANCE AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

1. Key elements of the effective democratic governance of places are –
 - i) effective citizen participation (involving society, social partners, and all levels of government) through both representative and appropriate forms of participatory democracy, designed to give communities power and influence over the decisions that affect them;
 - ii) decisions and actions to be taken at the right level – be it the neighbourhood, local, regional, national or European level – the principle of subsidiarity is the guide here;
 - iii) effective leadership of place; to create a vision of the place, gain the community's acceptance of that vision, and working with partners to secure its successful delivery; and
 - iv) high standards of conduct, skills and communications, in particular communication between different types of professionals.
2. Governance means the rules, processes and behaviour that affect the way in which powers are exercised.
3. In any context good governance is characterised by the five principles of openness, participation, accountability, effectiveness, and coherence.
4. Effective democracy and good governance at the European, national, regional, and local level are built on the six pillars of pluralist democracy, the rule of law and constitutionality, Human Rights, a fair and accurate media, an effective and active civil society, and a fair and open market-based economy.
5. Sustainable communities also means safeguarding the interests of future generations.
6. European values, standards and norms on Human Rights, democracy and the rule of law are expressed in the *acquis* of the Council of Europe, in particular in the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the European Charter of Local Self-Government.
7. There is great diversity of governance arrangements across Europe's cities, towns and regions; governance arrangements, whilst meeting European values, need to reflect the traditions, culture, and circumstances of the place.
8. The Principles of Metropolitan Governance (Appendix I) adopted and published by the OECD in 2001 in "Cities for Citizens – Improving Metropolitan Governance" can be seen as a bench mark for the governance of metropolitan areas and as a pointer to what may be good governance in other areas.

OECD Principles of Metropolitan Governance, 2001

from “Cities for Citizens – Improving Metropolitan Governance” (OECD, 2001)

There is no one model of metropolitan governance. It is clear that (in addition to the broad principles which underlie any adequate system of democratic government – transparency, accountability, accessibility, representativeness, constitutionality, and protection of fundamental freedoms) a number of principles can also be applied in order to define the adequacy of systems of governance for metropolitan regions in the 21st century:

Cities for Citizens: Cities should be developed, not only to meet the needs of the economy, but also to help fulfil the aspirations of people for a higher quality of life through measures that can also maintain and enhance the attractiveness and liveability of cities.

Coherence in Policy: The objectives and institutional frameworks of metropolitan governance should be adapted to and focussed on key local problems such as economic development, affordable housing, congestion, sprawl, safety, environmental quality, and the regeneration of older areas, which should be tackled simultaneously, taking into account linkages and trade-offs.

Co-ordination: Metropolitan governance must reflect the potential and needs of the entire urban region. The roles and responsibilities of each level of government in respect of metropolitan areas should be clearly defined in order to facilitate policy coherence and cross-sectoral integration. Given the administrative fragmentation of metropolitan regions, co-ordination is also necessary among local authorities across jurisdictions, and between elected authorities and various regional boards or agencies with functional or sectoral responsibilities.

Endogenous Development: Rather than basing economic development mostly on attracting investment through financial and fiscal incentives, emphasis should be put on investment in infrastructures and human development to take best advantage of local resources. Metropolitan governance can help to set priorities, taking a coherent approach to development based on the strengths and opportunities of a region.

Efficient Financial Management: Metropolitan governance should allow for the costs of measures to be reflective of benefit received and assure complete transparency, accountability and monitoring. It should also guarantee that all parts of the urban region are considered in assessments of the appropriate level for and of the costs and benefits of public services.

Flexibility: In order to adapt as necessary to economic and social trends, technological innovation, and spatial development, institutions have to be open to changes. A forward-looking, prospective approach is also indispensable to allow for flexibility as well as sound strategic planning.

Participation: Given the growing diversity and size of metropolitan regions, governance must allow for the participation of civil society, social partners and all levels of government involved in the metropolitan area. New technologies and methods of communication can encourage and support more interactive policy environments, bringing government closer to people.

Particularity: Except where the case for standardisation is justified, policies and institutions of government must be crafted to fit the unique circumstances of various parts of the country and to achieve the best cost efficiency measures.

Social Cohesion: Metropolitan governance should promote a mix of populations, non-segregated areas, accessibility and safety, and the development of opportunity, and facilitate the integration of distressed urban areas.

Subsidiarity: Services must be delivered by the most local level unless it has not sufficient scale to reasonably deliver them, or spill-overs to other regions are important.

Sustainability: Economic, social and environmental objectives must be fully integrated and reconciled in the development policies of urban areas, as reflected in the concepts of the healthy city and the ecological city; in the context of the wider bio-region, this implies greater co-operation between urban and rural areas.