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(Resolutions, recommendations and opinions)

RESOLUTIONS

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

P7_TA(2013)0001

Urban redevelopment as contribution to economic growth

European Parliament resolution of 15 January 2013 on urban re-development as contribution to economic growth in the framework of the EU Cohesion Policy (2011/2311(INI))

(2015/C 440/01)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Articles 174 and 176 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which establish the objective of economic, social and territorial cohesion and define the structural financial instruments to achieve this, and provide that the European Regional Development Fund is intended to help redress the principal regional imbalances in the Union,
- having regard to the Commission Communication of 3 March 2010 entitled 'Europe 2020 A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth' (COM(2010)2020),
- having regard to its resolution of 20 May 2010 on the contribution of the Cohesion policy to the achievement of the Lisbon and the EU 2020 objectives ⁽¹⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 14 December 2010 on achieving real territorial, social and economic cohesion within the EU — a *sine qua non* for global competitiveness? ⁽²⁾,
- having regard to the Commission Communication of 9 November 2010 entitled 'Conclusions of the fifth report on economic, social and territorial cohesion: the future of cohesion policy' (COM(2010)0642),
- having regard to the Commission Communication of 23 November 2010 entitled 'An Agenda for new skills and jobs: A European contribution towards full employment' (COM(2010)0682),
- having regard to the Commission Communication of 16 December 2010 entitled 'The European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion: A European framework for social and territorial cohesion' (COM(2010)0758),
- having regard to the Commission Communication of 26 January 2011 entitled 'A resource-efficient Europe — Flagship initiative under the Europe 2020 Strategy' (COM(2011)0021),

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 161 E, 31.5.2011, p. 120.

⁽²⁾ OJ C 169 E, 15.6.2012, p. 29.

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- having regard to its resolution of 23 June 2011 on the state of play and future synergies for increased effectiveness between the ERDF and other structural funds ⁽¹⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 8 June 2011 entitled ‘GDP and beyond: measuring progress in a changing world’ ⁽²⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 8 June 2011 on ‘Investing in the future: a new Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for a competitive, sustainable and inclusive Europe’ ⁽³⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 5 July 2011 on the Commission’s fifth Cohesion Report and the strategy for post-2013 cohesion policy ⁽⁴⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 27 September 2011 on absorption of Structural and Cohesion Funds: lessons learnt for the future cohesion policy of the EU ⁽⁵⁾,
- having regard to the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 6 October 2011, laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund covered by the Common Strategic Framework and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund and repealing Council regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 (COM(2011)0615),
- having regard to the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 6 October 2011, on specific provisions concerning the European Regional Development Fund and the Investment for growth and jobs goal and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 (COM(2011)0614),
- having regard to the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 6 October 2011, on the European Social Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1081/2006 (COM(2011)0607),
- having regard to the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 6 October 2011, on a European Union Programme for Social Change and Innovation (COM(2011)0609),
- having regard to its resolution of 15 November 2011 on The European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion ⁽⁶⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 9 July 2008 on the theme ‘Towards a new culture for urban mobility’ ⁽⁷⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 24 March 2009 on the urban dimension of cohesion policy in the new programming period ⁽⁸⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 23 April 2009 on an Action Plan on Urban Mobility ⁽⁹⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 23 June 2011 on the European urban agenda and its future in cohesion policy ⁽¹⁰⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 13 October 2005 on the urban dimension in the context of enlargement ⁽¹¹⁾,

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 390 E, 18.12.2012, p. 27.

⁽²⁾ OJ C 380 E, 11.12.2012, p. 81.

⁽³⁾ OJ C 380 E, 11.12.2012, p. 89.

⁽⁴⁾ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2011)0316.

⁽⁵⁾ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2011)0403.

⁽⁶⁾ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2011)0495.

⁽⁷⁾ OJ C 294 E, 3.12.2009, p. 42.

⁽⁸⁾ OJ C 117 E, 6.5.2010, p. 73.

⁽⁹⁾ OJ C 184 E, 8.7.2010, p. 43.

⁽¹⁰⁾ OJ C 309 E, 18.12.2012, p. 10.

⁽¹¹⁾ OJ C 233 E, 28.9.2006, p. 127.

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- having regard to its resolution of 26 September 2006 on the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment ⁽¹⁾,
 - having regard to the Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities, approved at the Informal Ministerial Meeting on Urban Development and Territorial Cohesion held in Leipzig on 24 and 25 May 2007,
 - having regard to the Toledo Declaration for Urban Development, approved at the Informal Ministerial Meeting held in Toledo on 22 June 2010,
 - having regard to Rule 48 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Regional Development (A7-0406/2012),
- A. whereas 80 % of European citizens live in an urban context (this figure is increasing further due to the acceleration of rural-to-urban migration flows), where there is a greater concentration of the effects of the economic crisis, and where the challenges of the fight against climate change, job creation, well-being and quality of life are played out;
- B. whereas urban areas should draw up medium-/long-term action plans in the fields of sustainable economic, social and territorial cohesion;
- C. whereas cities represent the engine of the economy, manufacturing and employment, yet at the same time are where one encounters the problems of suburbanisation, unemployment and, more generally, social exclusion and segregation, and environmental pollution;
- D. whereas strong urban areas also have a positive influence on the surrounding countryside which can thus lead to spillover effects;
- E. whereas it is necessary to rethink the concept of urban periphery to change the current trend towards spatial segregation, which gives rise to social polarisation;
- F. whereas the current transformation processes within the urban fabric produce growing expectations and problems that the state traditionally seeks to resolve, which therefore require mechanisms for innovative and integrated economic, social and territorial cohesion;
- G. whereas in many cities socio-demographic change has provoked a movement of people from their dwellings in older urban areas to new and more peripheral housing estates, urban areas on the fringes of cities or simply new towns close to big agglomerations;
- H. whereas social inequality is a challenge in many urban areas, and whereas inequalities between neighbourhoods are often due to inappropriate housing policies and to the fact that service provisions are often restricted to more affluent areas;
- I. whereas revisiting traditional approaches can become an opportunity to launch a process of urban experimentation and pathways of design, based on a reinterpretation of the planning of spaces, community needs and citizens' involvement;
1. Stresses that the local development model represents a key strength of the cohesion policy since decisive mobility factors encourage the selection of the best choices closest to the citizens, joint actions and more coherent, effective and efficient measures giving moreover greater visibility to community interventions in the EU areas facing more difficult challenges;
2. Calls for a new EU regulatory phase connected to a plan to safeguard and regenerate urban areas, which — while respecting the principle of subsidiarity — may supply the legal basis required, define common and shared medium to long-term goals and optimise the use of cohesion policy funds;

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 306 E, 15.12.2006, p. 182.

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3. Hopes for actions aimed at the completion and restoration of existing parts of cities, including marginalised neighbourhoods, the functional conversion of disused spaces and redevelopment areas, the enhancement, through a dynamic development process, of the attractiveness of the places where people live, and the return to the community of strongly symbolic and historically rich spaces which have lost their original function and have become progressively neglected, while promoting cultural heritage;
4. Asks for cultural and economic resources to be mobilised, assuming as a priority social sustainability of urban transformation, hence contributing to the urban solidarity, social inclusion and integration of vulnerable and marginalised groups in urban areas, in order to fully harness the development potential in the knowledge that processes of urban regeneration risk pushing out weaker sections of the population; underlines, therefore, the necessity to closely involve the inhabitants from the earliest stage possible;
5. Emphasises the key role that urban areas have to play in achieving the economic, social and environmental objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy, and highlights the fact that the Union can only be globally competitive if the cohesion policy fully harnesses the development potential of all its regions and urban areas;
6. Calls for an integrated approach which involves the interconnection of nature and the environment with history and culture and with society and commerce, ensuring the development of infrastructure, the improvement of urban spaces and the growth of the economic fabric, promoting a mixed use of the territory, via the integration of residential and non-residential works, tangible infrastructures and intangible connectivity systems;
7. Stresses that new forms of urban regeneration are required, focusing on the need for communities to have public spaces, parks, leisure, culture and sport;
8. Calls for participatory planning dynamics in partnership with associations and citizens to guarantee the necessary connection between general policies and specific territorial spaces, by enhancing their peculiarities, identities, memory and history and by reinforcing the sense of belonging to the community and trust in institutions;
9. Highlights that urban regeneration and economic revitalisation are closely related and that the construction of an attractive location can become a factor in economic recovery; points out that in order to achieve this, urban regeneration should be matched with a new approach combining efforts to prevent urban decline, promote the development of needy and marginalised areas and support local economic growth and job creation, complemented by social measures;
10. Calls for decisive actions for the fight against energy inefficiency, via the functional re-designation of buildings and the construction of more resource efficient dwellings, including for social housing; reducing congestions, contamination and noise in such a way as to make the city more competitive as regards environmental problems;
11. Stresses the need for a strategy to preserve and make secure the urban and housing heritage in areas classified as being at high risk of earthquakes or flooding;
12. Reiterates the need to coordinate the use of funds to ensure an integrated approach to the dysfunction of demographic development, progressive ageing and urban concentration; draws attention to the fact that structural fund projects can help provide solutions to serious problems and should focus on people and pay particular attention to the underprivileged in this society, e.g. children, young people, women and the elderly;
13. Welcomes the steps taken to promote networks between cities and the exchange of experience and good practices; points out that these steps should be further strengthened and extended to encompass functional urban areas; calls for the expansion of existing instruments for this purpose while underlining that existing programmes and bodies should be used before new structures are created;
14. Welcomes the provision that at least 5 % of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) resources be made available for integrated actions for sustainable urban development, to be delegated to cities for management; emphasises that this figure is a minimum target and should be used to support the development in functional urban areas; calls on the different levels of authority to make use of new instruments such as community-led local development;

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15. Opposes rigidity in the use of the above resources in the implementation of integrated territorial investments (ITI); is of the opinion that the Member States should be given the possibility to implement the integrated actions for sustainable urban development also through a specific operational programme or a specific priority axis;
16. Highlights that, while urban areas can make a vital contribution as growth centres and growth drivers, it is necessary to integrate local development needs when addressing the problems of suburban, neighbouring and rural areas, in order to promote a relationship that is not in conflict but is complementary and synergetic, and in order to tackle the gradual loss of the rural-urban fringe, due to the trend of urban spread, and the conversion of rural areas into building land, while developing the accessibility to public services;
17. Calls for an improvement of the administrative capacity — e.g. through increased use of technical assistance — of local and regional authorities, and of economic and social actors, in the management of the structural funds, for the purpose of real multilevel governance, in order to ensure that objectives are met; considers it crucial that sustainable multifunctional networks, based on good practices, are developed and promoted in a way that will stimulate the formation of vibrant, integrated, urban-rural partnerships based on the needs of individual regions;
18. Highlights the opportunity to create networking between pilot projects on sustainable urban development financed by the ERDF and the new multiannual Horizon 2020 programme, in order to guarantee innovative solutions and replicable strategies in urban regeneration;
19. Is convinced that the experience of the Covenant of Mayors can form a good starting point for further developments in the pursuit of the EU 2020 Strategy objectives;
20. Calls for a sustainable mobility management model, integrated with town planning, that comprises more public facilities and systemic logistics networks appropriate to the needs of the urban distribution of goods and services, with appropriate attention given to green transport needs;
21. Is convinced that environmental problems like the management of waste represents a major problem that transcends merely technical aspects and has an impact on social issues; urges, further, that measures to ensure quality water supply and purification services in towns be continued, since this benefits the public and the environment at the same time;
22. Stresses that the increase in green spaces and urban parks forms an element of extremely high value in terms of the natural, historic and cultural heritage, and contributes to regulating negative microclimate effects, a better energy budget and financial savings, increases sustainability and the quality of the urban environment, and allows social and recreational needs to be met;
23. Hopes that, in defining the pathways for urban development, priority is given to technical materials and solutions that allow energy-saving standards in line with the objectives of the European policies;
24. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission and Council.

P7_TA(2013)0002

Role of territorial development in cohesion policy

European Parliament resolution of 15 January 2013 on optimising the role of territorial development in cohesion policy (2011/2312(INI))

(2015/C 440/02)

The European Parliament,

— having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Title XVIII thereof,