CITY-REGIONS IN EUROPE: THE POTENTIALS AND THE REALITIES
SPECIAL OUTLOOK: THE ROLE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT COOPERATION

Iván Tosics

Metropolitan Research Institute, Budapest

The aim of the paper is to analyse the recently very fashionable 'city-region' (metropolitan area) issue. Two very different sources of information will be taken into account for the same group of cities. One of these is a recent URBACT project, which focuses on exploring administrative set-ups and territorial policies within eight European metropolitan areas (Birmingham, Budapest, Cologne, Frankfurt, Glasgow, Lille, Malmö, Milan). The other is a very fresh ESPON analysis on urban functions for all EU metropolitan areas, which differentiates between morphological and functional urban areas. The combination of these two empirical sources allows the comparison between administratively-politically dominated 'actions' and geographic-economic 'realities' for the eight case study urban areas.

On this empirical basis it is interesting to explore the large differences between EU countries (and regions) towards city-region cooperation. As it will be demonstrated, there are very different metropolitan-wide policies observable in relation of planning, economic and regulatory functions.

Within the general topic of city-region cooperation the paper aims to have a special outlook on public transport solutions on metropolitan level. Transport is obviously an important element from the point of view of city-region relationships. The travel-to-work area is considered to be one of the most important determinants of the Functional Urban Area around the core city and is therefore one of the potential delimiting factor for the city-region area.

The structure of the paper is as follows. First the general challenges towards city-regions are discussed, then the empirical results of the METROGOV project are summarized, followed by the analysis of different functions to enhance cooperation on the different city-region levels, with special emphasis on the role of transport in the city-region agenda.

The paper is largely based on the recently completed final report of the METROGOV project (Homan-Howl-Tosics, 2007).

1. The current situation in urban areas and the city-regions

Europe is a highly urbanised continent. The spatial extension of cities started with the industrial age, as the most dynamic cities started to open up to the surrounding areas to find land for their rapid economic and demographic growth. The expansion of urban areas further accelerated in the 20th century with the widespread ownership of private cars. Following the United States, this process started in Europe before WWII in some countries (Britain and Belgium for example), while it has become a European wide issue during the last 30-40 years.

Urban sprawl has led to the current situation of larger and larger catchments of cities into their surrounding areas, creating major problems for cities, which lose to neighbouring municipalities an important part of their economic assets (retail and leisure in particular) and even resident population. This in turn has caused problems to smaller municipalities which had to face rapid growth with, usually, limited means of dealing with it. Besides all that the extreme increase in car traffic has hit the whole urban area with all its negative consequences.

Urban Europe today is characterised by large, functionally unified urban areas lacking democratic accountability because political structures have not adapted to this evolution. City-regions are an economic and social reality even in those countries where the administrative and political systems do not recognize this yet.

1.1 The double challenge urban areas have to face

European cities face external challenges, and internal changes in their recent development, that the cities cannot address in isolation.

- The external challenge of globalisation, the growing role of international trade, and large multinational economic players requires greater city competitiveness. Only collaboration with the surrounding areas gives enough strengths and economies of scale to stay competitive in the international marketplace.

- The internal challenges, which in many cities take the form of suburbanisation and urban sprawl, which in turn cause growing environmental and social discrepancies within the urban areas around some large cities, and in other cities parallel growth of the inner and outer areas. The handling of the internal territorial restructuring also requires collaboration with the surrounding areas.

There is a long history of national attempts to modify administrative structures in order to respond better to these challenges. In the 1960s and 1970s there were many attempts by central governments to create metropolitan-wide administrative systems, either through mergers of municipalities or through the establishment of a new government level (OECD, 2000:6). The 1980s and 1990s, however, brought a retreat from these efforts: with the exception of the French "communautés urbaines" most of the earlier established structures were dissolved (see for example. the abolition of metropolitan councils in the UK). New initiatives usually proved to be unsuccessful, similarly to the defeat of the idea to create city-provinces in the Netherlands, see Kreukels (2000:474). "Attacks" against the metropolitan level came from above (political considerations) or from below (distrust from the population).

From the late 1990s the idea of metropolitan governance has enjoyed a revival. The OECD, one of the international think-tanks supporting the idea, lists Bologna, Toronto, Mexico City and London as positive examples of area-wide experiments for strategic planning and the establishment of structures with some legal capacity and authority (OECD, 2000:6). The new attempts differ from the earlier models in putting more emphasis on governance, network-like structures and flexibility.

All this shows that recent moves by national governments to understand, and give some recognition to, the role of the city-region is therefore probably long overdue. The evidence for the need to look at urban governance again, with a view to developing a city-region structure, is growing (e.g. van Winden and van den Berg, 2004; METREX, 2005; OECD, 2005; Marshall and Finch, 2006).

Inter-communal co-operation around large cities requires special attention in the European context, as countries are very different in their political, institutional, historic, cultural circumstances and set-ups. For example, in 1966 the French law (parliamentary act) created the level of "communauté urbaine", prescribing the compulsory cooperation of communities around some large cities (Lille, Bordeaux, Strasbourg, Lyon, Nantes). This looks like an attempt to create city-regions – however, as municipalities in France are much smaller than in most other countries of Europe, the communauté urbaines merely replicated the size of "normal" cities. Elsewhere in Europe, where municipalities are of larger size, for example in Scandinavia, similar compulsory cooperation around large cities would mean a genuine step towards city-regions.

There are other factors where substantial differences exist between European countries. While the main reasons behind the movement towards functional urban areas are the same across Europe, there are also significant differences such as the opposing tendencies in urban development between Western Europe, usually with growing cities, and East-Central Europe, mostly with shrinking cities.

It is also important to distinguish the city-region issue from regionalisation. The establishment of regions is very important, especially in centralised countries such as the UK or Ireland. One of the main supporters of regionalisation is the European Union, supporting their increased importance relative to that of nation-states. The EU transformed some decades ago its cohesion policy from the national to the regional level, creating the system of NUTS 2 regions as the level of financial allocation within the Structural Funds. Consequently, in the last decade or so, the role of regions has grown. However, these regions are usually much larger than the functional urban areas around large cities, so the establishment of NUTS 2 regions usually does not solve the problem of the absence of city-region level governance. Moreover, the newly established and politically strong NUTS 2 regions may seek to block the emergence of functional metropolitan regions, perceiving them as potential competitors for scarce resources.

1.2. Basic tasks to be tackled by city-regions

There are different tasks city-regions should be able to perform. On the one hand, there are *positive* issues, e.g. improving competitiveness and strategic planning, on which it is arguably easier for partners to collaborate, as all partners might win if the collaboration works. On the other hand there are *regulatory* tasks in which interests of the settlements might differ and it can become zero sum game, at least in the short run (for example waste disposal). The 'positive' issues are mainly economic, and the regulatory issues mainly social and environmental. In general the 'positive' economic issues are easier to build co-operation around than the 'regulatory' ones.

The distinction between the relatively easier to perform, positive 'win-win' tasks and the regulatory tasks is somewhat new. In other works on city-regions (se e.g. Heinz, 2000:540) the strengths of the city-region cooperation is measured on the number of tasks which are controlled by the city-region level, regardless on the types of these tasks.

The positive issues: city-regions and competitiveness

There is a long-lasting debate about 'location competitiveness', as some economists doubt that the notion of economic competitiveness can be applied to territorial units. However, it seems to be increasingly acknowledged that the "competitiveness of cities" makes sense and that this should refer to the whole functional area, instead of narrowly only to the city itself (Tosics, 2005b:79).

There are a growing number of studies that indicate the critical success factors of competitiveness, all of which draw upon this more inclusive approach. Two examples are Begg's (1999) 'urban competitiveness maze' and the 'Parkinson principles', coming from Parkinson's (2004) report. Both emphasize employment, diversity, quality of life, innovation, skills, strategic capacity, connectivity as key factors. Whilst these give an important indication of the required direction of travel cities need to embark on, others (e.g. Jones et al., 2006) indicate that more specific ambitions will need a greater focus. For example, cities need to focus on distinctiveness as a means of attracting knowledge workers and businesses; they need a vibrant university that is closely integrated with the planning around the knowledge economy as well as the more generic goals such as improving skills and connectivity. Hickman and Hall (2005) have been even more specific in prioritising the aspects of the urban environment central to boosting competitiveness: 'Integrated transport planning and urban design are....critical to the successful functioning (and continued competitiveness) of our urban areas' (p. 91).

It is clear that cities are the drivers of regional change – 'the most competitive regions [in Europe] also had the most competitive cities - we found no examples of successful regions which had unsuccessful cities at their core' (Parkinson, 2004: 53). Whilst regions are seen as important, there is a growing consensus that they are too large an area to tackle economic competitiveness, whilst the administrative city is too small. Rather the city-region is seen as providing the right critical mass and expertise in order to improve economic performance.

In addition to increased freedoms and flexibilities, strong civic leadership is seen as central to success (e.g. Parkinson, 2004, 2006; Marshall and Finch, 2006; Jones et al., 2006). This leadership needs to be innovative, transformational, visionary and engaged with other city-regional partners. Continuity is seen as a key for achieving success where long-term relationships give businesses confidence in investing in the city-region (e.g. Parkinson, 2006). Leadership can have an important role in building the necessary relationships amongst the different stakeholders critical to delivering on competitiveness (e.g. universities and the private sector).

The OECD has noted a paradigm shift in urban policy from a 'remedial' or passive approach towards urban management to a proactive approach where more dynamic policies have been put in place to improve competitiveness (Kim, 2006). Cities are beginning to strengthen cluster connections, mobilise innovative capacity and human capital; and, invest in their attractiveness and quality of life with the aim of improving economic performance, although there may still be a long way to go in shaking off negative images and addressing social exclusion and high unemployment (Jones et al, 2006).

City-regions and the Regulatory Agenda

Besides striving for more competitiveness, successful city-regions also need to address the challenges of sustainable development. According to the recently adopted European Commission document Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment (EC, 2006):

"Most cities are confronted with a common core set of environmental problems such as poor air quality, high levels of traffic and congestion, high levels of ambient noise, poor-quality built environment, derelict land, greenhouse gas emissions, urban sprawl, generation of waste and waste-water. The causes of the problems include changes in lifestyle (growing

dependence on the private car, increase in one-person households, increasing resource use per capita) and demographic changes, which have to be taken into account in developing solutions.

... the most successful local authorities use integrated approaches to manage the urban environment by adopting long-term and strategic action plans, in which links between different policies and obligations, including at different administrative levels, are analysed in detail ... Obligations imposed at local, regional, national or European level (e.g. land-use, noise, air quality) can be more effectively implemented at the local level when integrated into a local strategic management framework."

From city-region point of view, there are two important statements in the quoted text: as well as policies, obligations are also needed; and not only on the city, but also on higher administrative levels. These should include the city-region level, which in many cases provides the most appropriate level at which to develop a strategic response to problems such as waste water, air pollution and carbon emissions caused by transport, etc.

The least discussed issue on the city-region level is the social agenda. Policies against social exclusion also belong to the "zero-sum game" category, which need strong political power on a higher political level than local governments.

Both agendas are needed for success

City-regions basically need to fulfil both agendas for lasting success. Circumstances for that are very different across countries. While the establishment of competitiveness agreements depends in most countries on the municipalities (and other stakeholders) of the city-regions, the conditions for the regulatory agenda are very different, ranging from total independence of the local municipalities to compulsory, higher level, coordinated organization of some of the public services.

Cities face particular difficulties in establishing 'regulatory' agreements in those countries where decentralisation and devolution of power was extensive, and local governments became very independent. When combined with the lack of culture of cooperation, almost hopeless situations might develop from the point of view of city-region cooperation – as it can be seen in some of the east-central European new member states of the European Union (Tosics, 2005a).

1.3 Defining city-regions in economic, social and cultural terms

As already told, city-regions are an economic and social reality, even though it may be difficult to define them precisely in physical or political terms. Whilst there is widespread acceptance that city-regionalism could be the most appropriate layer of governance to deal with important urban challenges, there remains the question of how city-regions might be defined. For example, a recent report for the UK's Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (SURF, 2006) provides the following potential definitions:

- 'We have defined 'city-region' to refer to: a strategic and political level of administration and policy-making, extending beyond the administrative boundaries of single urban local government authorities to include urban and/or semi-urban hinterlands' (Tewdwr-Jones and McNeill, 2000: 131).

- 'The city-region transcends the local level (as the basic administrative unit) and also goes beyond the city level. In a spatial sense, the City-Region is very much like a

conurbation or metropolitan area. Most importantly, the City-Region is far more of a complex system than a monolithic entity. The evolving City-Region constitutes a political and economic power field comprised of a variety of cultures and societies' (Ache, 2000: 704-705).

- 'The concept of [the] City-Region covers not only the commuting hinterland of the city but also the whole area which is economically, socially and culturally dominated by the city' (Davoudi, 2003: 986).

- 'The concept of the City-Region can be understood as a functionally inter-related geographical area comprising a central, or Core City, as part of a network of centres and rural hinterlands.' (ODPM, 2005).

- 'From a geographic point of view, global City-Regions constitute dense polarised masses of capital, labour and social life that are bound up in intricate ways in intensifying and far-flung extra-national relationships. As such, they represent an outgrowth of large metropolitan areas – or contiguous sets of metropolitan areas – together with surrounding hinterlands of variable extent which may themselves be sites of scattered urban settlements' (Scott, 2001: 814).

Whilst the literature shows a wide variety of views of what a city-region is, some common strands emerge:

- City-regions exist where the city's economic, social and cultural footprint exceeds that of its administrative boundary.

- City-regions are fluid and are likely to keep growing. They have 'fuzzy edges' at their extremities.

- The size of the city-region will be issue dependent, e.g. the economic footprint might be bigger than the social footprint.

- They are complex systems with a plethora of internal and external relationships.

There is also a debate surrounding nomenclature: different terms have different implications, and carry different political sensitivities, in the various EU member states. Examples of terminology (other than 'city-region') include: functional urban zone/ area; metropolitan area; and larger urban zone. A new study on the topic (van den Berg et al, 2007) uses the term "metropolitan region". There are also those terms that are specific to particular member states: for example, the communauté urbaine (and, more recently, the aire métropolitaine - metropolitan area) in France. As such, it is important to note that whilst the term 'city-region' has been used in this paper, it is not necessarily appropriate in every context.

Cities working with their surrounding authorities as a city-region need to support their partnerships with a robust evidence base. However, understanding the extent of the city-region is a complex issue and requires a multidisciplinary overview of economic, social, cultural and historical geographies; further, the size of the city-region boundary is likely to fluctuate depending on which issue is being considered (Parr, 2005). The process might also be fraught with political tensions and sensitivities whether it is top-down (e.g. a designation from central government) or bottom-up, decided on the basis of empirical evidence (e.g. Balducci et al, 2004).

Although recent literature shows that the labour market catchment (measured through travel-to-work) is the most widely used method of definition, there is a range of data that might be used in defining city-regions. According to the SURF (2006) study parameters for definition may be grouped as follows:

- Labour-market definitions. Predominantly focused on TTW.

- Economic activity-based definitions. Access to labour markets is key for the private sector, but other factors might also be important (e.g. the supply chain)

- Housing-market definitions. 'City-regions can….be defined as those areas in which households search for residential locations (SURF, 2006: 4).

- Service-district definitions. For example retail catchments, access to hospitals, theatres, international airports etc.

- Administrative definitions.

However, data is not always readily available, or of the right quality, and developing an evidence base at the city-region level may have resource implications.

According to ESPON 1.1.1 there are in the wider Europe some 120 metropolitan areas with 500,000 or more population in contiguous urban areas. They contain 280 million (60%) of the 470 million population of the European Union. ESPON has identified 1595 Functional Urban Areas (FUAs) with over 50,000 population, of which 64 Metropolitan Growth Areas (MEGAs) seem to be the most important. The latter consist of the following:

- Global nodes: 2 (Paris and London)

- European engines: 13 (Munich … Stuttgart)

- Strong MEGA's: 10 (Stockholm … Gothenburg)

- Potential MEGA's: 23 (Lyon … Bratislava)

- Weak MEGA's: 16 (Naples … Valetta)

The most recent ESPON 1.4.3 study brought an important methodological innovation over the 'classic' ESPON 1.1.1 study, which established for first time the map of European FUA-s. The new study takes no account of administrative boundaries at either settlement, regional or national level. From a city-region perspective especially the definitions of the Morphological Urban Areas (MUA) and Functional Urban Areas (FUA) are important.

- The Morphological Urban Area (MUA) contains the densely populated city core and the contiguous urban landscape (continuity of the urban fabric).

- The Functional Urban Area (FUA) is the "labour basin" of the Morphological Urban Area.

By the exclusion of the administrative criteria and the novelty of using homogenous research method for all countries, the ESPON 1.4.3 study showed the number and importance of cross-border MEGAs, and called the attention to the importance of the core within the city-region. "… with identical populations, it clearly appears that FUAs which have better opportunities are those having a strong MUA in their centre, especially if the latter has some good quality historical and cultural heritage. This is an important element in the new forms of cross-city competitiveness." (ESPON 1.4.3:7)

2.   Empirical results on city-region cooperation in European metropolitan areas

The following analysis is based on the one hand on METROGOV, a recently finished URBACT project surveying the administrative set-ups and territorial policies within eight European metropolitan areas, and, on the other hand, on the recent ESPON 1.4.3 analysis on urban functions for all EU metropolitan areas, exploring the morphological and functional urban areas around cities.

2.1   City-region relationships in the METROGOV cities

The eight METROGOV cities are situated in seven countries which represent all the different types of national regional systems of Europe:

- federal countries (German cities: Cologne, Frankfurt, partly Belgian city-region around Lille),

- regionalised countries (Italian city: Milan),

- decentralised countries (Swedish city: Malmö),

- unitary countries (UK cities: Birmingham, Glasgow, French city: Lille, Hungarian city: Budapest).

The different national systems in Europe provide different regional contexts within which city-regions might be discussed. The political and administrative strength of regions is greatest in the federal states and reduces in the other types, with the weakest examples being in the unitary countries.

The work in the METROGOV project concentrated on:

- city-regions around larger cities, where the core city's economic, social and cultural footprints exceed substantially those of its administrative boundary. From European competitiveness and sustainable development perspectives the most important opportunities and the most severe problems arise around large cities where the majority of Europe's population lives.

- the case of mono-centric city-regions. However, some of the METROGOV cities (Lille and to some extent Cologne, Frankfurt and Malmö) are parts of polycentric regions, and their special problems and opportunities are also discussed.

- urban areas that remain within the borders of the country. However, Lille (and to a lesser extent Malmö and Frankfurt) allows us to analyse special problems with cross-border regions.

Comparative data on the METROGOV cities

In the following table, which is based on data from the Urban Audit (2005), the most important characteristics of the eight cities are summarized.

Table 1. The eight METROGOV cities according to key urban indicators

(data from around 2001)	Cologne	Frankfurt	Birming-ham	Glasgow	Milan	Malmö	Lille	Budapest
Average price per m2 for an apartment (€)	1841	1790	1650	1301	-	-	1300	789
Average living area in m2 per person	39	38	-	-	38	42	36	33
Unemployment rate (%)	7	5	10	11	6	9	14	6
Activity rate (%)	69	70	65	63	67	60	64	64
GDP per head (€)	40303	68548	14571	17683	27988	30120	-	6600*
Median disposable annual household income (€)	17300	19400	-	-	-	-	13183	4639
Households receiving less than half of the national average household income (%)	17	11	-	-	-	35	16	16
Children aged 0-4 in day care (%)	43	45	-	-	56	58	-	86
Resident population with secondary education (%)	39	38	28	26	27	37	10	41
Resident population with tertiary education (%)	16	20	12	18	9	11	16	18
Number of daysPM10 concentration exceed 50 µg/m3	17	0	10	36	-	-	8	166
Green space to which the public has access (m2/capita)	10	23	-	-	11	-	-	43
Percentage of journeys to work by car	55	46	76	56	42	58	77*	21
Sub-city districts (ratio highest /lowest)								
Unemployment rate	3,83	2,64	6,81	7,16	-	5,63	5,91	24,81
Resident population with only primary education (%)	-	-	-	-	-	2,5	5,62	2,3
Resident population with tertiary education (%)	-	-	7,68	10,96	-	4,49	8,15	27,32

*: Data from 1996.

Source: Urban Audit, 2005. European Commission

Although the data in Table 1 is incomplete, comparison is not always totally relevant, and some data should be approached with care, some conclusions can be drawn about the differences between the METROGOV cities:

- There is a clear difference between the cities regarding their economic strengths, ranging from rich German cities through "average" Swedish, French and Italian cities and slightly below-average British cities to the relatively poor Hungarian capital.

- Some indicators reflect this 'prosperity' pattern quite well, such as the real-estate values, while others do not, such as the living area per capita.

- There are indicators which show 'better' values in the less developed cities, either because of a direct effect of less investments (e.g. percentage of journeys to work by car), or as a consequence of different philosophies to public services (e.g. day care and education indicators).

Defining city-regions

There are numerous ways in which city-regions may be defined, and their functional reach assessed. This functional reach may also vary according to the issue - for example, the size of the 'commuting city-region' might be different from that of the 'cultural city-region'. In some cases, two neighbouring city-regions can even overlap each other. A political decision has to be made as to which criteria will be used to designate a city-region partnership and how to accommodate the administrations at the 'fuzzy edges' of this area. This process can lead to tensions - both with surrounding authorities who may feel they have been left out of a partnership, and with authorities who are included but perhaps do not see the city-region as their priority partnership.

The issue of definition is not as straightforward as it might first appear. It can be seen as easy for observers outside the political process to draw boundaries and demarcate the spatial extent of city-regions, but political realities within the city-regions themselves are often the main drivers. Whatever the socio-economic evidence shows, historical alliances often end up driving the reality of partnerships on the ground. This may result in confusion and hostility from those outside the partnership who cannot understand why a particular combination of partners has become involved.

Establishing tight definitions of the city-region, and subsequently building a formal partnership around this, might also cause problems when growth in the functional urban area occurs. This has been demonstrated in France, where the 'communauté urbaine' no longer represents the physical (economic) reality, and a new layer of governance arrangements have now been put in place - the 'aires métropolitaine', which are informal and based on voluntary political arrangements. However, this might result later in a further level of administration and governance structure. The need for flexibility is one reason why no formal metropolitan institution has been set up in Malmö.

A further problem with definition is that the economic reality may indicate the need for only a partial inclusion of an administration surrounding the core city, particularly if that authority covers a large area or is predominantly rural with one or two key towns with strong commuting flows. This can particularly be a problem in Scandinavian countries and the UK where the local authority areas are larger than in countries such as France or Italy. There are advantages and disadvantages in both situations. While in France the definition may be made easier, the number of partners can make decision-making harder.

In the course of the Metrogov project it became obvious that there is a need to deal with two different city-region definitions for the same urban area: the *narrow* definition of the commuting hinterland of the city might be very different from the *wider* economic, social and cultural footprint of the city. This differentiation between the narrower and broader definitions of city-regions will later lead to the assumption that these may require different public interventions.

Existing multi-level governance structures and the city-region

The establishment of a 'city-region' tier of governance is highly complex because of the number and range of organisations involved. As with definition, it is often the case that historical working arrangements influence the present shape of any new partnerships. Where

historical alliances exist, sub-regional partnerships that involve one or two city-region partners may also extend beyond the city-region, making geographically bounded decision-making difficult.

It is also important that any new level in multi-level governance structures adds value to existing arrangements. Careful dialogue and planning is necessary in order to find a 'niche' for the city-region, particularly where there is call for devolution of policy-making downwards, i.e. where partners are calling for new areas of responsibility that are currently the remit of regional/ national organisations.

Further, appropriate partnership and governance arrangements need to be put in place to ensure that effective communication takes place with the spheres above and below that of the city-region, as well as to ensure as inclusive an approach as possible.

However challenging the development of a city-region approach might be, it is clear from the METROGOV case studies that a city-region partnership is a highly valued and necessary mechanism for addressing particular issues where the region is seen as too big, and the local authority area as too small, for effective delivery.

Annex 1 gives an overview of the existing multi-level governance structures and the city-region level in the METROGOV cities. The table in Annex 1 suggests that all cities are different in terms of the relative position of the city, the city-region and the next administrative level. This is, however, not the case, as it can be seen from the following table, which shows the ratios of the population size between the different levels.

Table 2. The size of city-regions and administrative regions compared to the size of the core city in the eight METROGOV cities

	City population	Ratio in size compared to city population		
	(In thousand)	Small city-region area	Broad city-region area	Next administrative level
Cologne	986,0	3,0	8,1	18,3
Frankfurt	647,0	3,4 – 5,9	8,2	9,4
Birmingham	977,0	2,8	3,6	5,4
Glasgow	580,0	3,0	5,2	8,6
Milan	1.260,0	2,9	4,8	7,2
Malmö	270,0	2,2	3,6 - 13,3	4,3
Lille	227,0	6,2	15,9	17,6
Lille*	1.090,0	1,7	3,3	3.6
Budapest	1.700,0	1,4	2,4	1,7

*Considering the Communauté Urbaine as the city

Five of the METROGOV cities (except for Lille, Malmö and Budapest) show a similar picture when comparing the ratio between the population of the city-region areas and the city itself: the narrow city-region (functional urban area) is 3-3.5 times the population of the core city,

while the wide city-region (area of economic influence) is 4-8 times larger. The population of the wide definition of the city-region usually remains below the size of the next (regional) administrative level.

The exceptional values of Lille and Malmö can be explained by cross-boarder linkages and by the polycentric character of their areas, and of Budapest by the fact that the city is in itself very large, compared to the country, as 17% of Hungarians live in the capital city.

In all METROGOV cities, city-regions are the newest level of governance that needs to 'slot into' often already overcrowded structures. In all cases, there are at least four existing levels: the city, the region, the nation state and Europe, all of which have different policies and strategies that need aligning with a city-region approach. Further, as discussed above, it can be difficult to replace existing structures, and this may require changes to legislation. Careful thought needs to be given as to how the city-region is incorporated without duplicating strategies elsewhere and upsetting a delicate political balance.

It is also important to consider other partnerships that may exist across some or all of the city-region. Some of these partnerships may just include one of the city-region authorities and a number of other administrations, private and community sector organisations outside the 'boundary'. Depending on the strategic priorities of the city-region, serious consideration may need to be given as to how some of these partnerships become integrated into realising city-region aims and objectives

2.2   City-region definitions and administrative arrangements compared with geographic and economic realities

In the following we compare the geographic-economic approach of the ESPON 1.4.3 study to the dimensions of the recent METROGOV project, which focuses on administrative arrangements and territorial policies.

Table 3. Existing governance arrangements and potential city-region areas in the eight METROGOV cities (ratios)

Population in '000, compared to city	City (municip ality)	*Morpholo gic urban are, MUA (ESPON)*	Potential narrow city-region area	*Functional urban area FUA (ESPON)*	Broader economic area	NUTS 3 proxy	Next existing administrat ive level
Cologne	986	*1,42*	3,04	*3,11*	8,11	2,74	18,26
Frankfurt	647	*2,26*	3,40	*6,34*	8,19	6,49	9,43
Birmingh.	977	*2,42*	2,76	*3,77*	3,58	3,17	5,42
Glasgow	580	*2,12*	3,02	*2,41*		2,62	8,62
Milan	1260	*2,93*	2,94	*4,73*	4,76	5,92	7,22
Malmö	270	*1,03*	2,19	*2,47*	3,59	3,05	4,44
Lille	1090	*0,87*	1,74	*2,86*	3,30	3,16	3,67
Budapest	1700	*1,25*	1,41	*1,48*	2,35	1,67	1,71

The table compares the data of the ESPON 1.4.3 analysis with those elaborated by the experts of the METROGOV cities. The term FUA has been used differently in the two analyses: in ESPON it refers to the labour basin of the morphological urban area, while in METROGOV to that of the administrative city.

As it can be seen, there are large differences between the cities regarding the size of the morphological urban area (MUA) compared to the administratively defined core city. This relationship shows two basic patterns:

- "Normal": MUA is slightly larger than the administrative city, while FUA is close to the narrow definition of city-region. Cologne, Malmö, Budapest

- "Shifted": MUA is much larger than the administrative city, being close to the narrow definition of city-region, FUA is close to the larger economic area. Birmingham, Milan.

The larger this difference, the more pressing the need is for the city to solve the city-region issue, i.e. to gain some type of influence over the continuous urban area around the city core. According to the data this is the case with the cities of Milan, Birmingham, Frankfurt and Glasgow, where the continuous urban area has more than twice the population of that of the administrative territory of the city.

The ratio between the population size of the functional urban area and the administratively defined core city can be considered as a second type of "push-factor" for city-region initiatives. This ratio is especially large in the case of Frankfurt and Milan, it is large for Birmingham and Cologne, a little less so for Lille, Malmö and Glasgow, and relatively small for Budapest.

Finally, the third type of "push-factor" for city-region initiatives is the ratio between the population size of the larger economic area and the administratively defined core. This ratio is especially large for Cologne, Frankfurt, and Milan, it is large for Birmingham, Malmö and Lille, while relatively moderate for Budapest (and presumably for Glasgow).

These ratios describe different aspects of the territorial structure around the city. Provided, that the ESPON definition of the morphological urban area (densely populated city core and the contiguous urban landscape around, determined on settlement level density figures and satellite images) is correct, the large ratio of this area compared to the administrative city sheds light on the potential problem of the administrative city borders. In the case of Milan, Birmingham and Frankfurt the possibilities of amalgamation of the surrounding area should be explored, as the development of the continuous urban area seems to be too large compared to the size of the core city itself. If the extension of the city border through the very direct and strong method of amalgamation is not feasible (which is likely be the case in most European cities nowadays), as a more politically acceptable solution the creation of strong city-region relationships should be considered with the potential use of joint public services and regulatory tools.

Another aspect of the problem is the existence of the next administrative level above the city (usually the region). The larger the ratio between this level and the city, the less the region is able to take over the functions of an eventual city-region. In this regard Cologne, Frankfurt, Glasgow, Milan and Birmingham are those cities, where the regional level is way too large to be able to exercise city-region type roles. The other extreme is Budapest, where the regional level is very "close" in size to the city-region. (It is another, although very important question, how "strong" the administrative region is, whether it would be able to exert the control functions considered to be necessary on the city-region level.)

The analysis of the geographic-economic 'realities' of the urban areas has shed light to the fact that from this point of view the city-region issue, as potential provider of the needed administrative-political framework, is the most pressing for the German, British and Italian (METROGOV) cities, while is least important for Budapest. The cases of Lille and Malmö are to be considered as special, as both cities are part of cross-border, multi-nodal, polycentric regions.

3.   The role of positive and regulatory functions to enhance cooperation in the city-regions

As already mentioned, in the city-regions in general the 'positive' issues are easier to build co-operation around than the 'regulatory' ones. The latter can be illustrated with the example of sustainable urban development in large urban areas, which is only possible on the basis of overarching public policies, related to different aspects of urban development, either directly, through sectoral policies (waste, water, etc.) or indirectly, through financial equalization and taxation (Tosics, 2004:71). To achieve area-wide agreements on a joint waste-treatment policy or on tax-equalization are amongst the most difficult and highly politicised issues, much more difficult than signing agreements on joint future policies towards economic competitiveness. While positive functions, such as competitiveness, are most often a "win-win" agenda, 'regulatory' policies are usually not. To achieve such "regulatory" agreements top-down power is needed, or very wise, forward looking behaviour of municipalities, some of which have to bear short-term burdens in order to get long-term advantages.

3.1   Analysis of selected city-region functions

In order to get a more systematic overview about the capabilities of the city-region level, three different functions (strategic planning, public transport and waste disposal) were selected and METROGOV cities were compared, to what extent these functions are performed in their city-region area.

- *Strategic planning* is considered to be one of the most important win-win functions, as without a basic agreement on the present position and future directions of development no area can systematically co-operate and become competitive. On the other hand, strategic plans usually mean only loose agreements on future actions without too much constraint on present decision making at municipal level.

- *Public transport* has win-win elements, as a well-developed public transport system is an important 'location factor', ensuring for the local residents of the whole area the needed links to places of work, commerce, culture, etc. On the other hand, public transport has also regulatory elements, as an effective transport system requires formalized structure because of financing (and the huge coordination tasks between different providers) and close co-operation of the municipalities, with the taking over of many binding elements.

- *Waste disposal* is clearly a regulatory function, as an area-wide agreement on waste disposal requires strong leadership at the area level, and acceptance of the rules and regulations by the municipalities. In order to join such an area the municipality has to accept either the establishment of a non-wanted function (incinerator, landfill) on its territory or the obligation to pay those other municipalities that take on these functions[1].

For each of the three functions the following points were examined for the METROGOV cities:

- Is the co-operation in the given function in an area smaller, the same or larger than the (narrower definition of) the city-region?

---

[1] In some countries waste is not such a non-wanted function: in Germany, for example, waste burning and energy making is a very profitable business for private and public bodies, thus more the problem of overcapacity exists than that of obligations.

- Can co-operation in this function become a driving force for city-region relationships?

- What is needed to be done (by whom?) to fulfil this role?

In the following the results are briefly summarized for strategic planning and waste disposal, while a bit more detailed for public transport.

Strategic planning has been understood very differently across the cities. In some cases an overall strategic plan might exist at city-region level, provided that the collaboration is formalised (such a plan must be elaborated, discussed and formally approved by some organisation). In other cases, plans of strategic importance for some sectors (economy, environment, etc.) exist. A very broad range of strategic documents (from binding and permanently monitored and revised to loose and voluntary) might exist, depending on the character of city-region co-operation. Surprisingly, strategic planning, which is the "easiest" function of the three functions under investigation, is performed in a serious manner only in 2-3 city-region areas of the 8 METROGOV cities. Even so, it is a unanimous view among the cities that strategic planning, either 'allowed' from above or 'achieved' from below could be an important contribution to strengthen the city-region level.

Waste disposal is, in all METROGOV cities, basically a local, municipal function and, if territorial co-operation exists, this is below the city-region level. In countries where this communal function is well developed, this function has lost its potential to act as driver for wider territorial co-operation. Waste disposal seems to be a less suitable function for creating joint working: only those cities, where this function is not solved satisfactorily yet, see some opportunities in territorial co-operation, but even they do not consider waste disposal as the driving force for city-region co-operation.

3.2 The role of public transport in city-region cooperation

Public transport co-operation in the METROGOV city-regions shows the following picture:

- *Cologne:* the area of public transport co-operation is slightly larger than the Cologne-Bonn city-region. This co-operation is functioning very well, with uniform tickets and tariffs, coordinated time-table for a huge area (except for HST). This would have not been possible if transport companies were privatized first. There are 469 lines, 6700 stops, 1.4 million passengers each day in an area of 3.2 million inhabitants. Even so, the well functioning public transport co-operation is not a driving force for integration of the Cologne-Bonn city-region, which was formed in response to economic challenges.

- *Frankfurt:* the public transport co-operation is functioning very well, in a much larger area than the city-region. For this reason this can not be a driving force for city-region co-operation, as too many settlements are included. Public transport is subsidized by other public services (especially gas) which are profitable.

- *Birmingham:* public transport co-operation roughly covers the city-region area (7 of the 8 authorities). The Transport Board arrangements are the most advanced of all city-region working. However, long after the deregulation of transport by the previous government it is difficult to re-establish integration, as companies became interested in profit. Public transport definitively becomes a driver for city-region collaboration, even in the view of the political leaders of the municipalities beyond the 8 core authorities, as traffic jams are serious. The Joint Investment Plan process in the city-region contains transport, skills and marketing as first priority areas.

- *Glasgow:* the public transport area is larger than the city-region area. There is a compulsory partnership formed, obliged to develop transport strategy. But there are

no financial means for development, rail is not included (rail operators do not want to cooperate, they do not like that their passengers go to subway...), there are no transfer tickets, all changes need new tickets. Even so, transport is already a driving force for city-region collaboration.

- *Milan:* transport policies are planned at the regional (rail network, trunk road network), the provincial (road network, some public transport lines), and the municipal (urban road network, local public transport) level. With the exception of trunk roads and rail network, strategies are planned at a smaller scale than the city region. An intermodal (rail, road, public transport) strategy for the whole area is needed and public funds for new infrastructures should be linked to this new strategic framework, otherwise municipalities will not join forces in planning. Most of the money is given by the ministry, allocation is done by the region. There is an integrated ticket system but without competition – agreements are made with not efficient local companies. There is fragmentation between Milan, other municipalities, province and region – especially road development is difficult, in public transport all partners are more willing to cooperate.

- *Malmö:* regional public transport is the monopoly of the region since 1989 when the 33 municipalities handed over local transport to the regional authority. The 1989 establishment was easy as this was the time when two regions were put together into Region Skane and public transport was considered as first joint activity. The Region covers an area larger than the city-region which is an advantage as the functional urban area is expanding. The Region also is co-ordinating infrastructure investments with the Regional Development Program. At present public transport is the main driving force for the development of the region, and smaller cities are successively becoming linked to the expanding train network.

- *Lille:* railway is on national level. Suburban transport, the regional trains, are serving the whole city-region, and crossing the border French and Belgian trains cover a wider area than the Communauté Urbaine, even wider than the metropolitan area. All other forms of public transport are organized as a co-operation on the Communauté Urbaine level, which is smaller than the city-region. Public transport belongs to a special public body, based on agreement between Lille Communauté Urbaine and the department. This body owns the rolling stock, the network, etc. The system is run on a competitive level, selecting the private company with the best offer for 5 years. All the conditions are set (timetable, etc.), and within these limits of the contract the private company can make profit. This system can only work well if the public hand has very good lawyers, economists, etc. becoming able to sign very detailed contract with the private provider. Public transport is a driving force for city-region co-operation. Co-operation partners and the regional council take the lead. The public transport authority should be changed to be able to deal with the larger area.

- *Budapest:* urban public transport covers recently a smaller area than the agglomeration, which is the city-region. Although a Budapest Transport Association has been established 10 years ago, it starts only recently to function, having still only a small office with 4-5 persons. If the BTA is really to work, this could cover the city-region area, with rails going beyond. Public transport cooperation could become a driving force for the city-region but only if established from above, as partner municipalities have no responsibilities in public transport and the binding agreement is missing between the major operators: the state-owned railway company, the ministry-owned long distance bus company, and the municipality-owned public transport company are unable to agree on the terms of close association.

From this overview it can be seen that all cities have some form of metropolitan cooperation in public transport. This ranges from very well organized (Cologne, Frankfurt, Malmo, Lille) through developing (Birmingham, Glasgow, Milan) to initial efforts (Budapest). Public transport associations usually cover the city-region area or even larger territories, with the exceptions of Lille and Milan, where the area is smaller than the city-region (and Budapest, where such an association hardly exists yet).

For strong, lasting public transport partnerships based on integrated system (with unified ticket and time-table) both political power and resources are needed. Among the METROGOV cities there are cases where the political will is there but not the resources (Budapest), where money is there but not the political will (UK cities), and also where both are present (German cities). Although within an integrated public transport system competition is also an important aim, the order of things has to be chosen carefully: the city-region partnership in public transport should be established before the privatization of transport providers.

Control over public transport might become one of the strongest roles of city-regions (besides practical advantages also enhancing the identity of the city-region). All cities consider public transport as crucial for efficient city-region working and even suburban settlements are more open for cooperation in this topic than in others (e.g. to create joint plans for road development). Paradoxically, in those countries where public transport has been well developed and covers large metropolitan areas (for example Germany, Sweden), this function can not play any more active role in strengthening the city-region level, as the co-operation in public transport is already functioning, the problem is solved.

3.3 What brings city-regions forward?

The analysis of the METROGOV cities aimed to test the initial hypothesis that it is easiest to achieve city-region wide agreement in strategic planning (which is visionary, not binding), more difficult in public transport (which is advantageous for everyone but needs binding solutions), and most difficult in waste disposal (where strong regulations are needed, the unwanted function has to be put somewhere, despite the NIMBY effect).

The experience of the METROGOV cities, however, did not underpin totally this view. For many of the cities, public transport co-operation is more developed on the city-region level than joint strategic planning. This is especially the case in cities from those countries where public transport co-operation is initiated and organised 'from above' by the regional (or national) level, on a very broad territorial base. In such cities the co-operation in strategic planning, which should be more a bottom-up initiative, is less developed as it needs more efforts and orientation towards cooperation by the municipalities themselves.

Apart from this remark, in general it is clear that strategic planning and public transport seem to constitute the minimum content of any feasible city-region relationships. While public transport requires formalized structure because of financing and the huge coordination tasks between different providers, strategic planning might range from voluntary, not-binding form to permanently monitored, binding plans.

Waste disposal (similarly to other infrastructure services, such as sewage), being a very technical function, might be performed in one-function partnerships of municipalities, which do not necessarily correspond to the city-region area. However, territorial co-operation agreements in such infrastructure services, although not as visible as strategic planning or public transport, are also important, mainly from the point of view of sustainable urban development. For this reason the co-operation between municipalities in infrastructure services should also be considered as an important contribution – although not the driving force – to the city-region partnership.

According to the evaluation of the METROGOV cities, in an "optimal" scenario regulatory functions are to some extent controlled at the city-region level (but not necessarily organised exactly on this territorial basis), while the positive, win-win functions are performed at least on this level, or even in the broader city-region area, covering the whole area of economic influence of the city.

4. Conclusion

The METROGOV project has shown on the empirical basis of the eight participating cities the large differences between EU countries and regions towards city-region cooperation. Dominated on the one hand by local conflicts between settlements of the same area and, on the other hand, by the challenge of international competition between metropolitan areas, there are substantially different cases observable, how metropolitan-wide policies are built up (top-down or bottom-up) in relation of planning, economic and regulatory functions. From the analysis it becomes clear that in the European context the boundaries of national states and administrative-political regions constitute very strong barriers against policies which would aim to optimize the position of the metropolitan areas around large cities.

It was a general agreement in the METROGOV cities that despite all the difficulties, city-region cooperation is of key importance from all aspects towards better development in urban areas. An important outcome of the joint work was the recognition that the city-region level need not to be as formalized as the municipality or the regional government. In some countries there are already too many government levels and it would be difficult to 'squeeze in' one more. There are, however, functions to be performed on the city-region level (classic regulatory functions and also public transport, strategic planning) which would need some types of formalized structures.

In an optimal scenario voluntary, bottom-up cooperation should become the basis for later formalized structures. It is a lesson learnt from the past that the too quick top-down enforcement of formal structures usually leads to the death of the starting voluntary bottom-up cooperation.

Public transport (besides strategic planning) is one of the key functions to perform on city-region level. There are many examples on well developing city-region cooperation which were initially based on public transport associations (Stuttgart might be the most famous case for that). Public transport is a very much 'wanted' city-region function, having strong win-win elements: if well organized, the participating settlements gain more than they have to give up. On the other hand, the running of a city-region level public transport association needs well established formal structures with binding agreements. Thus public transport cooperation, if once established, can become the basis for cooperation in other functions, as well (except for if it was established top-down for very large areas, as the examples of Cologne and Frankfurt have shown).

As already mentioned, in ideal case city-region cooperation should start from the bottom, it should be based on voluntary cooperation between the municipalities in the urban area. Higher levels of government should initiate and support such types of cooperation, not with the enforcement of rigid structures but with policy and economic initiatives (e.g. framework policies and the way how public funds are allocated). It is also very much needed that already existing higher sub-national government levels support city-region level cooperation and not consider this as a rivalry. Of course the cooperative approach and organizational efforts of the core city towards the smaller municipalities in the urban area is a prerequisite for all city regions.

City-regions can easily fit to the recently very fashionable multi-level governance approach, especially if the aim is not the creation of a stable new level of administration (government) but a new level and new method of cooperation.

The city-region or metropolitan agenda is an important step forward for the development of urban areas, both from competitiveness and sustainability point of views. The establishment of the city-region cooperation needs patience and caution and a longer term view of cooperation and co-existence with the regional level, instead of efforts to replace it.

References

Ache, P. (2000) 'Cities in old industrial regions between local innovative milieu and urban governance: reflections on city-region governance', *European Planning Studies*, 8(6), pp. 693-709.

Balducci, A., Kunzmann, K.R. and Sartorio, F.S. (2004) 'Towards creative city-region governance in Italy and Germany', *DISP*, 158, pp. 2-4.

Begg, I. (1999) 'Urban competitiveness: policies for dynamic cities', Policy Press, Bristol.

Davoudi, S. (2003) 'Polycentricity in European spatial planning: from an analytical tool to a normative agenda', *European Planning Studies* 11(8), pp. 979-999.

ESPON 1.1.1: ESPON Project 1.1.1 Urban areas as nodes in a polycentric development. Lead partner: Nordregio, Stockholm, 2005. ESPON website www.espon.eu

ESPON 1.4.3: ESPON Project 1.4.3 Study on Urban Functions. Lead partner: IGEAT, Brussels, 2006. ESPON website www.espon.eu

European Commission, 2006: 'Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment'. Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament. COM(2005)718 final. Brussesl, January 2006.

Heinz, W 'Wesentliche Merkmale interkommunaler Kooperation in Stadtregionen'. In Heinz, W (ed) *Stadt & Region: Kooperation oder Koordination? Ein internationaler Vergleich*. Schriften des Deutshen Instituts für Urbanistik, Band 93. Kohlhammer, Stuttgart, 2000. (pp.497-562).

Hickman, R. and Hall, P. (2005) 'Integrated urban transport and urban planning as the maker and breaker of cities', *Structural change in Europe 4 (Entrepreneurial spirit in cities and regions)*, Hagbarth Publications, Germany, pp. 86-92.

Homan, J – Howl, D – Tosics, I. 2007: Urbact METROGOV Final Report. Birmingham, 2007.

Jones, A, Williams, L, Lee, N., Coats, D. and Cowling, M. (2006) 'Ideopolis: Knowledge City-Regions', The Work Foundation, London.

Kim, S.J. (2006) 'OECD Territorial Reviews: Why Co-operation Between Cities and Regions', *presentation given at the Eurocities Economic Development Forum*, Budapest, 22-25 March, 2006.

Kreukels, A.M.J, 2000 'Interkommunale Kooperation in den Niederlanden'. In Heinz, W (ed): *Stadt & Region: Kooperation oder Koordination? Ein internationaler Vergleich*. Schriften des Deutshen Instituts für Urbanistik, Band 93. Kohlhammer, Stuttgart, 2000. (pp.423-496).

Marshall, A. and Finch, D. (2006) 'City leadership: giving city-regions the power to grow', Centre for Cities, London.

ODPM (2005) 'Planning Glossary 2005. A Public Guide to Land-Use Planning Terms and Phrases', ODPM, London.

OECD (2005) 'Governance of innovation systems (Vol II): case studies in innovation policy', OECD Publishing, Paris.

OECD, 2000 'The reform of metropolitan governance'. OECD Policy Brief, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Paris, October 2000.

Parkinson, M. (2006) 'State of the English Cities', ODPM, London.

Parkinson, M. (2005) 'Urban policy in Europe: where have we been and where are we going?' In Anatlovsky, E., Dangschat, J.S. and Parkinson, M. (eds) (2005) *Cities in Europe – Europe in the Cities*, Part 1 (1.1), pp. 17-68.

Parkinson, M. (2004) 'Competitive European cities: where do the Core Cities stand?', ODPM, London.

Parr, J.B. (2005) 'Perspectives on the city-region', *Regional Studies*, 39(5), pp. 555-566.

Scott, A.J. (2001) 'Globalization and the rise of city-regions', *European Planning Studies*, 9(7), pp. 813-826.

SURF (2006) 'A framework for city-regions', ODPM, London.

Tewdwr-Jones, M. and McNeill, D. (2000) 'The politics of city-region planning and governance. Reconciling the national, regional and urban in the competing voices of institutional restructuring', *European Urban and Regional Studies*, 7(2), pp. 119-134.

Tosics, I, 2005a 'City Development in Central and Eastern Europe Since 1990: the Impact of Internal Forces'. In Hamilton, F.E.I. – Dimitrowska-Andrews, K. – Pichler-Milanovic, N. (eds) *Transformation of Cities in Central and Eastern Europe. Towards Globalization*. United Nations University Press, Tokyo, 2005, pp 44-78.

Tosics, I, 2005b: 'Metropolitan co-operation as a precondition for international competitiveness. Special difficulties in preparing post-socialist cities for international competition: The case of Budapest' In Giffinger, R (ed) *Competition between Cities in Central Europe: Opportunities and Risks of Cooperation*. Road, Bratislava, 2005, pp.78-88'.

Tosics, I, 2004: 'European urban development: Sustainability and the role of housing'. In *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment* 19: 67-90, 2004.

Urban Audit (2005): European Commission, www.urbanaudit.org

van den Berg, L – van der Merr, J – Otgaar, A.H.J – Speller, C:J.M, 2007 'Empowering metropolitan regions through new forms of co-operation'. *New perspectives on metropolitan governance*. EURICUR, 2007.

van Winden, W. and van den Berg, L. (2004) 'Cities in the knowledge economy: new governance challenges' (Discussion Paper), European Institute for Comparative Urban Research (Euricur), Netherlands.

ANNEX 1.

The following table gives an overview of the existing multi-level governance structures and the city-region level in the METROGOV cities. The first column describes the city itself, and the last column the next administrative level, above the city (province, region, etc.). The middle two columns contain information on alternative definitions of the city-region: the second column refers to the Functional Urban Area (narrower definition), while the third column to the area of economic cooperation and/or influence (broader definition). In many cases there is more than one governance arrangement to be found in the cell, which means that there are alternative options for the definition of the given area/level.

Table 4. Summary of the existing governance arrangements and potential city-region areas in the eight METROGOV cities

	The city (municipality) level	Potential city-region area (narrow definition)	Economic area (broad definition)	Next existing administrative level
Cologne	Municipality of Cologne Status: elected local government. Size: 986 thousand	Region Cologne-Bonn, Cologne + 50 munic Status: voluntary Size: 3 million	European Metropolitan Region Rhine-Ruhr Status: non-existing Size: 8 million	North-Rhine-Westphalia Elected regional government Size: 18 million
Frankfurt	Municipality of Frankfurt Status: elected local government. Size: 647 thousand	a) Planungsverband Frankfurt Rhein-Main Frankfurt + 74 munic Status: legally based for regional planning Size: 2.2 million b) Regierungsbezirk Südhessen Frankfurt + 186 munic Status: administrative functions Size: 3.8 million	Metropolitan Region Frankfurt Rhein-Main Frankfurt + 444 munic Status: informal, no budget Size: 5.3 million	State of Hesse Elected regional government Size: 6.1 million
Birmingham	Municipality of Birmingham Status: elected local government. Size: 977 thousand	Birmingham and 7 municipalities Status: informal partnership Size: 2.7 million	Birmingham and 20 municipalities ("optimal" city-region) Status: non-existing yet Size: 3.5 million	West Midlands Region Status: admin. region. Size: 5.3 million
Glasgow	Municipality of Glasgow Status: elected local government. Size: 580 thousand	a) CVCPP: Glasgow and 7 municipalities Status: voluntary planning partnership Size: 1.75 million b) Glasgow Metropolitan Area: Gla + 11 municip. Status: former regional council area Size: 2.2 million	???	Scotland Elected parliament Size: 5 million
Milan	Municipality of Milan Status: elected local government.	a) legal definition Milan + 138 municipal. Status: not functioning	Economic area Milan + 1000 municipal. Status: not functioning	a) Province of Milan (Milan + 188 munic.) Status:

	Size: 1.26 million	Size: ??? b) Province of Milan (Milan + 188 munic.) Status: administrative Size: 3.7 million	Size: 6 million	administrative Size: 3.7 million b) Lombardy Status: elected regional government Size: 9.1 million
Malmö	Municipality of Malmö Status: elected local government. Size: 270 thousand	voluntary cooperatio SSSV: Malmő + 10 munic Status: voluntary association Size: 590 thousand	a) labour market area Malmö + 24 munic. Size: 970 thousand b) Öresund region Malmö + 79 munic, cross-boarder. Informal co-operation Size: 3.6 million	Region Skane Malmö + 32 munic. Status: elected regional parliament Size: 1.2 million
Lille	a) Municipality of Lille Status: elected local government. Size: 227 thousand b) Communauté Urbaine: Lille + 84 municiplaities Status: statutory local government Size: 1.09 million people c) arrondissment : Lille + 125 municipalities status : statutory admin statistical size : 1.18	a) Communauté Urbaine: Lille + 84 municiplaities Status: statutory local government Size: 1.09 million people b) Cross-boarder area: Lille + 150 munic. Formal Lille Eurodistrict 1.9 million	Metropolitan Area Lille + 620 munic, cross-boarder Voluntary; informal arrangement 3.6 million	Nord – Pas de Calais (F) Status: elected regional council Size: 4 million Flanders (B) Elected regional council Size 6 million Wallonie(B) Elected regional council Size 3.5 million And French departements and Belgian provinces
Budapest	Municipality of Budapest: Status: elected local government. Size: 1.7 million people	Budapest Agglomeration Status: administrative-statistical unit Size: 2.4 million people	Economic area Budapest and larger towns around Status: non-existing Size: 4 million	Central Hungarian Region Status: admin-statistical region Size: 2.9 million people

City-regions in Europe: the potentials and the realities

Iván Tosics

Metropolitan Research Institute, Budapest

The aim of the paper is to analyse the recently very fashionable 'city-region' (metropolitan area) issue. Two very different sources of information will be taken into account for the same group of cities. One of these is a very fresh ESPON analysis on urban functions for all EU metropolitan areas, which differentiates between morphological and functional urban areas. The other is a recent URBACT project, which focuses on exploring administrative set-ups and territorial policies within eight European metropolitan areas (Birmingham, Budapest, Cologne, Frankfurt, Glasgow, Lille, Malmö, Milan). The combination of these two empirical sources allows the comparison between geographic-economic 'realities' and administratively-politically dominated 'actions' for the eight case study urban areas.

On this empirical basis it is interesting to explore the large differences between EU countries and regions towards city-region cooperation. Dominated one the one hand by local conflicts between settlements of the same area and on the other hand by the challenge for international competition between metropolitan areas, there are substantially different cases observable, how metropolitan-wide policies are built up (top-down or bottom-up) in relation of planning, economic and regulatory functions. From the analysis it becomes clear that in the European context the boundaries of national states and administrative-political regions (and settlements) constitute very strong barriers against policies which would aim to optimize the position of the metropolitan areas.

Within the general topic the paper aims to have a special outlook on public transport solutions on city-region level.