

# Making dense and growing urban areas more sustainable and liveable

## GRAND CHALLENGES :

C4. Smart, green and integrated transport

C5. Climate action, environment, resource efficiency and raw materials



## CHALLENGE

Highly dense and growing big cities, which have more cultural services, better health care, more education possibilities, should become more liveable for everybody. This can happen through different actions, implemented not only within the city but also across the whole Functional Urban Area (FUA). Actions include: making big parks from urban neglected areas; architecturally integrate more green in buildings and interstitial public/private shared

spaces; reactivating public spaces and inventing new use of urban infrastructures; renovating public/private housing and encouraging environmentally positive externalities; creating traffic limited zones and cycling mobility. The city should not really stop at the border - the mayor's responsibility stops there, but we know otherwise the city does not stop there - so, think in the functional urban area.

## SCOPE

Research should answer to the challenges of density, diversity, ecology, populations development, and financial sustainability of dense and growing cities, by addressing the following areas in combination, not on their own, using different forms of citizen consultation in every area:

- The mixed/integrated urban fabric: distribute common services in time and space in order to avoid centralization and crowding and reduce tension between centres and suburbs
- Facilitating the adoption of new efficient sustainable practices (i.e. behaviour change; sustainable lifestyles)
- Identification of innovative practices and social innovation, including from outside Europe, that can be scaled up
- The diffusion/dissemination of "promising/good" practices (i.e. advanced urban sustainability; urban agriculture; urban regeneration...)
- The creation of an integrated system of public (macro) and private (micro) transportation

## EXPECTED IMPACT

- Land and people flows analysed and mapped
- A strategy to identify places and services to integrate with view to governance solutions for the FUA, including citizen participation
- Increased sustainability, e.g., by reducing the need for cars. This will foster vibrant cities both in terms of economic and cultural activities
- Links with local SMEs and the development of potential business plans (that can be picked up and adopted once projects finish)
- Citizens' increased understanding of science/policy interface as well as science.
- More empowered citizens

# 14 Making dense and growing urban areas more sustainable and liveable

Research Topic:

Making dense and growing urban areas more sustainable and liveable #10c.

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More empowered citizens.

**Online consultation rating:** average importance: 3,6/5

**Countries prioritising this research area:** France, Italy

## CITIZENS' VISIONS

[FR] **Vision 5:** Living in a balanced society

"Proximity businesses are developed and offer essentially local products. Spaces dedicated to goods and services exchange and sharing do also exist, along with collective cultural spaces self-managed."

[DK] **Vision 4:** The nature city of the future

"The city is car-free: the transportation system should completely replace the use of private cars. The system could be electrical, magnetic highspeed trains. The city is green."

[ITA] **Vision 2:** A simply special city

"The places thus become sharing spaces that encourage the development of active and participating citizens."

[NOR] **Vision 4:** The environmental citizen in a "short travelled" and "mega local" city in 2040

"Good collective solutions, a strong multi-use mode of thought and high population density will contribute to a lower aggregated environmental burden and higher well-being."

# Policy recommendations on sustainable consumption, urban and rural development

1. The European Commission, for example DG Regio, should consider **making accessibility and affordability of green spaces in urban development a stronger and more explicit priority in the Structural Funds programmes** for the 2021-2028 period.

This policy recommendation could also be coordinated together with other EU policy instruments more specifically the LIFE programmes, the climate KIC programmes for climate change mitigation and adaptation objectives, and the rural development programmes. Current and planned research activities with regard to sustainable energy, manufacturing practices, sustainable planning and building, and resource efficiency could also be integrated.

2. When **communicating information to change consumption behaviour, psychological and social effects need to be studied** in addition to the dominant economic factors.

3. When making research, legislation and policy recommendations, the EU should also consider the **responsibilities and resources of industry, government and other public interests in addition to disseminating information to citizens.**

This responds to current changes in society and research where the paradigm has switched from thinking of consumers and citizens as rational actors and integrating emotional and affective factors that influence the market place and consumer behaviour.

National consumer protection agencies should be very interested in this research and policy recommendation in developing their own frameworks.