

DEBATE

Marie Deketelaere

I come from the City of Paris. I would like to quickly correct what was said about dispersion. In fact, metropolitan areas are hybrid entities with undefined borders, regions with no defined administration foundation. They comprise several communities of conurbations which contribute far more than the local districts to the dispersion referred to. In 2014, the metropolitan regions will only comprise communities of conurbations. This will not resolve the governance question but will make it more complicated.

Proposals submitted by Paris-Métropole elected officials to reform the Ile de France region's Solidarity Fund include participation in readjustment measures at national and inter-regional levels. Everyone included the city of Paris, have accepted a mechanism that redistributes more resources to districts with the greatest difficulties. In other words, regional egoism is superseded by the general good of the community at large to do away with our two-speed regions and metropolises with their social divides. This is one small example but a major success story. We hope to include this reform of the Ile de France regional solidarity fund in the next Finance Law. This shows that Paris as a capital city, region and metropolis has valid solutions to offer.

Philippe Matheron

Among the factors needed to make conurbation planning a success, France, it must be said, was a trailblazer with little money. It implemented metropolitan policies that engaged and mobilised elected officials. Overall, this worked well. The second phase in this financial incentive initiative is covered by the law which allows the regions who wish to create an institutional structure through metropolitan hubs. My question is: why not try to reproduce this process on a European scale? Why not first introduce financial incentives among the 27 Member-States of the EU? European tools and community initiative exist. Without stretching to a community programme, couldn't we undertake a community initiative by drawing on individual experience?.

Joost Van Iersel

The CES has published its opinion on this question and has proposed precisely the same thing.

Ivan Tosics

On 5 October, we will discover the Commission's proposals. Some people already have an inkling of what they will be and it is already fairly clear that five percent of their budget will have to be spent on urban areas and that national governments will have to have to select the urban areas where this

money must be spent. Why not functional urban areas? Why not metropolitan regions? Why only cities? So this could be an opportunity in the national level to come forward with this idea; not to keep the money to ex-cities but to the city plus its functional urban area. Maybe a tender should be raised that cities should apply with their functional urban areas. Cities do not want, no problem, but they do not keep money then.

Thierry Baert

Our fields of research, including those that I did not have time to mention earlier, converge.