



Conference of Strasbourg

PEOPLE-CENTERED SMART CITIES

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French contribution to the flagship program of UN-Habitat



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EUROPÉENNE

An event organized in the frame of the French presidency of the European Union Council *



Préambule

The conference hosted on February 2, 2022 in Strasbourg in the Greater East Region was part of the French contribution to the UN-Habitat “People-focused smart cities” flagship program and of the French Presidency of the European Union.

The EU made digital transformation one of the keys of its policies. It brings together the climate transition and the digital transition very closely. The European Digital Compass aims to develop digital technologies that come as close as possible to citizen realities and build a new kind of digital sovereignty. In this sense, the French Presidency of the European Union has put an emphasis on climatic and digital justice.

FNAU (French network of urban planning agencies) was commissioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to put out propositions and recommendations (together with actors from different fields) that fit within the “people-focused smart cities” program. Workgroups were created and together they gathered visions, experiences and commitments to be shared and exchanged about the stakes of a digital transformation that would be less focused on technicalities and would be more inclusive and would better serve sustainable urban development, based on the principles set the New global Urban Agenda. The workgroups that were organized in 2021 brought together French, European and international

actors working for states, local authorities, the private sectors and NGOs. These workgroups brainstormed on four main directions to identify societal, political, environmental and governance stakes as well as possible instruments to tackle them.

- New practices, or how does the digital world transform societies
- Digital inclusion, or how to make digital technologies a concrete reality for all
- Digital technologies and reasoned use of land and energy, or how can the digital world be an ally for the ecologic transition
- Governance and actor empowerment, or how to give digital technologies a more political stand

Data-related challenges were discussed transversally, within all workgroups.

The workgroups were headed by Luc Belot, General delegated Director for Large Projects of the Réalités Group (group of realization of urban projects and services that place territorial intelligence at the heart of its activity), and former member of the European Parliament; Celine Colucci, General Delegate of “Les Interconnectés” (association of local authorities tackling digital transformation issues); Jean-François Lucas, consultant researcher and expert at Chronos group; Sébastien Maire, General Delegate for France Ville Durable. The Strasbourg Conference used European and international perspectives to challenge and question the propositions made by French actors, part of the workgroups.

Programme

WELCOMING

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Clément BEAUNE, Secretary of State to European Affairs for the Minister of Europe and Foreign Affairs

Rafael TUTS, Director of programs, UN-Habitat

ROUNDTABLE: NEW PRACTICES

Moderated by Marianne MALEZ, Advisor, cabinet of Jean Rottner, President of the Greater East Region

Introduction and presentation of the work: Jean-François LUCAS, Sociologist, Researcher consultant, Chronos Group

Carlos MORENO, Scientific Director, Chair Entrepreneurship Territories Innovation, IAE Paris La Sorbonne University

Pierre-Louis ROLLE, Director Strategy and Innovation, French National agency for territorial cohesion (ANCT)

Philippe FROISSARD, Head of unit of Futur Mobility and Urban Systems, General Direction of Research and Innovation (RTD) and General Director, mission for 100 climate-neutral and smart cities, European Commission

Testimony : [Caroline POROT, Director, School 42, Mulhouse Grand Est](#)

ROUNDTABLE: DIGITAL INCLUSION

Moderated by Céline COLUCCI, General Delegate, association Les Interconnectés

Introduction and presentation of the work: Jacques OBERTI, President, community of agglomerations SICOVAL and member of the association Les Interconnectés

Caroline ZORN, Vice-President delegated to digital and innovative, Eurometropole of Strasbourg

Michael DONALDSON, Commissioner for Digital Innovation, Municipality of Barcelona

Jiri BOUCHAL, Senior consultant, IS-practice and Chief Executive Officer, InnoConnect, Czech Republic

Elkin VELASQUEZ, Regional Director, UN-Habitat for Latin America and Caribbean

Testimony: [Representative, Regional Hub, Greater East Region](#)

ROUNDTABLE: DIGITAL SOBRIETY

Moderated by Jean-Baptiste CUZIN, Director of transfrontier cooperation, european and international, Greater East Region

Introduction and presentation of the work: Sébastien MAIRE, General Delegate, association France Ville Durable

Philippe LEGRAND, President, InfraNum, Federation of the sector's committee of digital infrastructures

Luc GNACADJA, former Minister of Benin, founder of the think-tank GPS-Dev

Amanda FLETY, Coordinator of the commission for social inclusion and human right, United Cities and Local Governments

Pontus WESTERBERG, Program Management Officer, UN-Habitat and Representant, UNITAC Hamburg

ROUNDTABLE: GOVERNANCE AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Moderation, introduction and presentation of the work: Luc BELOT, former French Deputy, General Director, Réalités HUB 5, Réalités Group

Eddy HARTOG, Head of unit, Technologies for smart communities, General Direction Connect, European Commission

Leonardo EBNER, Digital policy advisor, Council of European Municipalities and Region (CCRE-CEMR)

Jacques BELTRAN, Vice-President of public sector, Dassault Systemes

Karine DE FRÉMONT, Director of urban and mobility transition, French Development Agency (AFD)

Testimony: [Jean-François HABEAU, Executive Director, Global Fund for Cities Development \(FMDV\)](#)

ROUNDTABLE: DIGITAL TRANSITION: ACTORS COMMITMENTS

Moderated by Brigitte BARIOL-MATHAIS, General Delegate, French network of urban planning agencies (Fnau)

Hugues AUBIN, President, association Climate Change Lab

Gérard WOLF, President, Task Force Sustainable city, MEDEF international

Franckie TRICHET, Vice-President delegated to innovation, digital and international, Nantes

Metropolis, President of the association Les Interconnectés, member of the International Association of Francophone Mayors (AIMF)

Patrick CHAIZE, Senator of Ain, Senat, Parliament

Eddy HARTOG, Head of unit, Technologies for smart communities, General Direction Connect, European Commission

ROUNDTABLE: WHAT COMMON ROAD?

Moderated by Brigitte BARIOL-MATHAIS, General Delegate, French network of urban planning agencies (Fnau)

Franck RIESTER, Minister delegated to the Minister of Europe and International Affairs, in charge of Foreign Trade and Attractivity

Katja SCHAEFER, Program Manager for the Flagship program People-centered smart cities, UN-Habitat

Carlos MORAIS PIRES, Member of the cabinet of Mariya GABRIEL, European Commissioner for innovation, la research, culture, education and youth, European Commission

Lacina KONÉ, General Director, SMART Africa

Jean ROTTNER, President of the Greater East Region

Jean-Baptiste BUFFET, Head of Global Policy and Advocacy (UCLG)

Jan OLBRYCHT, Member of the European Parliament and Chair of the Urban Intergroup

Maimunah MOHD SHARIF, Executive Director, ONU-Habitat



Introduction

by Brigitte Bariol-Mathais, FNAU General Delegate

Jean Rottner, President of the Greater East Region and President of the French network of urban planning agencies (Fnau)

As President of the Greater East Region and President of FNAU, I'm very happy to welcome you in this hemicycle of the Greater East Region (which amounts to 5 million inhabitants) to share ideas about how to improve access to digital services for all for health, education or the economy, since these are all concerns of a local authority president as I am. From a French point of view, this is an opportunity for us to see where digital innovation is standing. From a European point of view, now under the French Presidency, and from the point of view of Strasbourg, European capital, this gathering is a compass to sustain digital development with an inclusive approach. In a multilateral perspective, this is an opportunity for 360 exchanges.

Clément Beaune, Secretary of State delegate to the Minister of Europe and Foreign Affairs, in charge of European Affairs

The idea of a "French team" was brought forth, to contribute to the initiative started by UN-Habitat during the Abu Dhabi World Urban Forum in 2020. Digital technologies help optimize urban services, but they don't allow for everyone to access them. 50% and sometimes 80% of the populations sometimes do not have access to these technologies. When advocating for inclusion, we must make sure that everyone can access digital technologies. Local authorities and French companies have a lot to contribute and I'm hoping that such work will feed into the French Presidency of the European Union as well as into UN-Habitat brainstorms.

Rafael Tuts, Director of the division of Programs of UN-Habitat

UN-Habitat has its headquarters in Nairobi in Kenya. It focuses on urbanization and has been focusing since 2016 on implementing the New Urban Agenda, which aims to use digital technologies to support sustainability. The concept of smart cities is a futuristic vision that relies on complex technologies and it is now being criticized. Cities are now thinking about how to use technologies to improve life conditions. Digital transformation needs political leadership when it comes to inclusion and to sustainability. For its program, UN-Habitat chose the naming of "intelligent cities", targeting the human component, because we're committed to human rights alongside the UN General Secretary. Only half of the world population is connected, and the digital world isn't just a matter of technology; it is a matter of education and culture, to allow everyone to access services relying on technology and to keep an eye on their environmental impact. We've witnessed a growing interest of member states and of our partners for the concept of "intelligent cities". 2023 will be the moment for us to debate the main lines and challenges of the digital world to implement the New Urban Agenda.



1- New practices, or how does the digital world transform our societies

The “New practices” workgroup was born from the will to understand new realities related to the digital world. Confronting “virtuality” and “reality” shows a misconception of the impact the digital world has on daily usages and practices. If we analyze the stakes behind digital technologies starting from social practices rather than from technical tools, we can build a shared understanding of usages and of the societal and social effects that digital technologies trigger. This is why this topic is very transversal.

The word “practices” has replaced the word “usages”, to include more globally new representations and ways of doing by diverse populations. The choice was also made to narrow down the focus to 4 main sub-themes: digital resilience, data, training actors, and working remote – with the idea to define what exact position the digital world occupies.

The pandemics and its subsequent lockdowns accelerated remote work, as well as long-distance public services and e-commerce. They’ve deeply transformed our ways of life, social and territorial practices, because they’ve blurred the lines between the public and private spheres and triggered the emergence of new spaces, like third places. The question of making individuals more self-sufficient and empowering them is most definitely a transversal topic.

Recommendations

1. Resilience of digital systems

- a. Give the priority to decentralized strategies for digital tools and data storage, to improve their resilience in the face of technical or political crisis.
- b. In case of security risks and of planned obsolescence, encourage a technology mix rather than a single technical solution, to develop “intelligent” territories.

2. Data

- a. Expand the use of the General Data Protection Regulation beyond European borders and make sure it stays didactic and understandable so it can strengthen the rights of inhabitants and improve their trust levels.
- b. Strengthen the rights of users and citizens to delete their personal data and facilitate appeals to use this right.

3. Training actors

- a. Train, grow awareness and empower local decision makers and elected representatives so they can operate strategic choices, avoid dependencies and foster the development of responsible and eco-friendly digital technologies, and so they can, thereby, limit the environmental imprint of infrastructure, equipment and digital services (throughout their life cycles) at territorial and international levels.
- b. Educate kids and the youth about IT languages and foster critical thinking applied to digital technologies (fake news, personal data protection, algorithm culture, etc.)

4. Working remote

- a. Improve access to education and services in isolated areas to foster more local development and more development of economic activities thanks to remote work
- b. Develop local network of third places by better considering the diversity of targeted publics (based on profession, age, etc.), in order to make remote work easier and foster in the meantime social interaction while limiting commutes.



Debate facilitated by Marianne Malez, Counselor at the cabinet of Jean Rottner, President of the Greater East Region

Carlos Moreno, expert and researcher on smart cities, Head of the ETI University Chair, "Entrepreneurship, Territories, Innovation"

Digital technologies play a very important role in the new ways we think and organize usages of our cities and territories. In the concepts of the "15-minute city" and of the "30mn territory" of which I'm the holder, digital technologies are understood in their complementarity with small-distance social interactions, in a form of hybridation. The digital world can play an important role as social glue, in regard to the 6 main social functions: inhabiting, working with less commute thanks to third places, going grocery shopping within short distances, accessing education, culture and hobbies. Digital technologies should serve social interaction and should help us reinvent our ways of life through social inclusion. Inclusion happens when we create economic, ecologic and human values. Digital technologies also help with decarbonization. The digital world brings together science and technics, it can be a trigger of slavery just like it can be a trigger of cohesion to live together better.

Pierre-Louis ROLLE, Director Strategy and Innovation, French National agency for territorial cohesion (ANCT)

The French national agency for territorial cohesion (ANCT) is a newly created government agency that has the mission to develop territorial policy programs. It includes a general direction responsible for digital technologies of which the mission is to deploy infrastructure (100% fiber-based), to foster the creation and development of territorial third places spaces focused on digital activities; to support digital inclusion through funding 4000 digital counselor to train; to support "digital commons" projects through standardizing territorial data, free software uses, cooperative organizations.

The State's role is to create frameworks of governance and of fair cooperation for intelligent cities targeting digital projects and digital inclusion. In France, digital costs don't really have much to do with equipment anymore but with education and with people's capacities (or not) to use technologies.

Philippe Froissard, Delegate Director of the "100 climate-neutral and smart cities" taskforce, European Union

This taskforce supports pilot cities in implementing the transition toward climatic neutrality by 2030. Digital technologies are an obvious tool to reach this objective. This approach wants to be systemic, based on mutual listening and understanding and on using multiple levels of governance: local, regional, national and European, with strong citizen participation.





Digital inclusion, or how to concretize digital technologies for all

Despite practices having evolved and diversify, access to digital technologies remains a strong cause of social and territorial inequalities. In a country like France, 23% of inhabitants are victims of digital illiteracy (“illelectronisme” in French) and they have difficulties using digital technologies due to a lack of knowledge and training. Inequalities of infrastructure access come on top, depending on the territories and on the equipment that households do or do not have based on their income.

In the meantime, access to public services (such as administration), to daily life services (payments, health, consumption, commute, etc.) and to work rely more and more on owning and using digital technologies. In countries from the Southern hemisphere, the digital divide and related inequalities are even more visible.

The workgroup behind this booklet advocated for a “right to digital technologies for all” and for life-long access to digital education. The local scale appears to be the most suited to lead digital inclusion policies. Protecting and managing personal data is also a matter of freedom and of people empowerment.

Recommendations

1. Acknowledge a “right to digital technologies for all” to fight inequalities

Use dematerialization to enable access to public service and to daily life services (basic services, administration, work, education, health, consumption, culture, etc.), while making sure to:

- Keep the possibility open for a human alternative or in-person support
- Develop service design and eco-conception to develop fluid and intuitive digital services
- Provide low-income populations with affordable technology access and equipment (for instance with reclaimed materials or public funds)
- Give the priority to infrastructure that best serves practices

2. Improve and expand actors’ competences though life-long digital education

Through training:

- Initial training on coding tools, on the digital culture and on critical thinking
- Professional training

Through support and digital mediation

- Identification of digital vulnerabilities (competence, access, equipment) with measures set to identify the most fragile populations and territories
- Support people who are the least at ease and the least familiar with digital technologies (elderlies, low-income populations), thanks to sets of tools to develop their skills (digital consultants, digital facilitators – who can be mobile-, digital checks).

3. Make local authorities key proximity actors to federate initiatives and to structure the ecosystem of public, private and citizen actors who work on e-inclusion

4. Strengthen the protection of personal data and of informed consent

- Strengthen the production and use of data by citizens and by civil society. Data appears to be a powerful tool for democracy because it makes challenges and issues visible and understandable to the eyes of decision-makers, following a bottom-up logic.

Debate facilitated by Céline Colucci, General Delegate of “Les Interconnectés”

Jacques Oberti, President of SICOVAL (agglomeration community), France

The French government decided to dematerialize all public services in 2022 but this decision brings about certain difficulties. Lacking access to digital technologies can become a source of exclusion because in France, 1 person out of 5 never goes on the Internet. How to make sure that no one gets left aside? Digital illiteracy is a matter of social equality. We started with measuring our population's fragilities in regard to digital technologies, in direct collaboration with field actors, which made citizens a part of this process. We worked on mapping services on the territory with a local contract of digital inclusion done with town halls, elderly houses, schools, social centers - to implement concrete actions. Local proximity governance is an essential scale to preserve human contact and to build a trustworthy digital world.

Jiri Bouchal, Counselor, Smart City advisor, city of Pilsen in Czech Republic

Our city fosters innovation by involving its citizens, for instance with Digital Twin or robotics. We focus our effort on educating the youth and the elderlies. For young people, we have different programs already from pre-school, with teachers; for the elderlies we have online courses. We also target young entrepreneurs, to help them invest. The COVID-19 crisis is an opportunity we can use to push for more education on digital technologies.

Michael Donaldson, Chief Officer responsible for digital innovation, city of Barcelona

Digital exclusion and inclusion have emerged over past 10 years and they've been amplified by the pandemic. In the hybrid world we live in, we need to fight divides that exist in the digital world. Technology isn't synonym with progress if only a few people can access it. Although only 1% of the people of Barcelona aren't able to access the Internet, those who don't have a phone or a smartphone come in much greater numbers. Our digital inclusion policy and the places that support this policy want to help people who don't know how to use the Internet, since the Internet has become an access condition to a myriad of rights.

Elkin Velasquez, Regional Director, UN-Habit, Latin America and Caribbean

Latin America is a young region, passionate about the digital world. Digital technologies can potentially be one of the answers to inequalities in Latin America. During the pandemic, cities developed digital solutions. But the context there is very unequal: 3 people out of 10 do not have an Internet access; only 1/3 of low-income households has a connection. Digital inequalities reproduce more general inequalities. If we're able to include digital matters to urban policies in a cohesive way, this can become a way to reduce inequalities. Financial investments in Latin-American cities are important and needed but we should also be able to optimize their impact on urban inequalities, also those that happened already in the past. If we focus on the impact such investments have on low-income populations, we can hope for them to have a powerful leverage effect.

Caroline Zorn, vice-President of Strasbourg Metropole, France

The digital divide is profound and very real. We must continue the interoperability effort at the European level for all services to be developed for all. Internet access should be seen as a fundamental right. In Strasbourg, we've been structuring an ecosystem of actors: schools, research-universities, companies, innovation actors. We've also been developing common tools: an index of digital vulnerabilities, a map of digital support points, modalities to help people go through digital processes and for some of them, who are located too far away, the possibility to do it in their place. This implies a strong pro-activity from elected representatives and public officers, and this also requires making public education to digital technologies a political priority with dedicated spaces to do so. Freedom of expression, freedom to do business and the right to education can all be at risk if we don't ensure access to the Internet, and if we don't open up our policies to make the fundamental right to digital technologies a constitutional right.



Digital technologies and reasoned use of land and energy, or how can the digital world be an ally to implement the ecologic transition

Using land and resources in a reasoned way when developing digital technologies is inherently connected to taking into consideration our practices and the planetary and physical boundaries that condition the survival of our systems. Faced with the statement that digital technologies are the only possible way to build sustainable cities, the environmental impact of these technologies (positive or negative) has to be objectivized and measured for us to be able to truly and sustainably support decarbonization.

More and more local authorities are growing aware of the environmental impact of digital technologies. France just equipped itself with an ambitious legislative framework that sets knowledge and monitoring objectives, together with tools to do it and with more sustainable management processes of materials (for companies and individuals). Among other things, this framework requires that starting 2025, local authorities of more than 50 000 inhabitants will have to define a "responsible digital strategy" to limit the ecologic impact of digital systems.

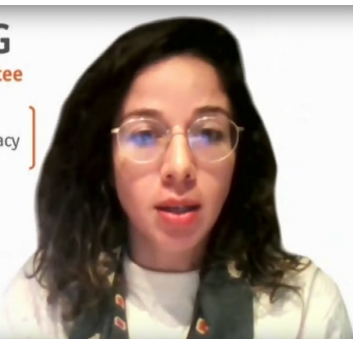
Making digital systems resilient is important for local authority to face potential cyberattacks. We have to anticipate on resilient systems and back-up plans to ensure service continuity.

1. Limit buying habits, encourage reclaim, fight the planned obsolescence of materials

The production of digital material makes for 75 to 80% of the environmental impact of the digital world. This is why we should limit as much as possible buying new material and encourage material reclaim and material reconditioning, fight planned obsolescence and encourage material repairability. Solutions also exist to analyze the life cycles of materials and data and to reduce data-centers carbon impact (more decentralized localization, optimization of their energy balance with energy recovery)

2. Improve surveillance of environmental matters and of digital security, in a perspective of reasoned use of land and energy and of resilience. Training all actors will be necessary to grow a shared culture of responsible digital technologies. The idea is as much to avoid security gaps and identify low-tech back-up plans as it is to develop digital technologies that will serve the ecologic transition. The digital world can be a facilitating vector to decarbonate urban services and the economy.

3. Instore a monitoring and research systems to study the exploitation and recycling of digital matter at the European and international scales. Rare materials and lands are needed by the digital world; but they are limited resources and Europe is dependent on foreign markets to get them. The idea is thus to improve research and development on how to reclaim and recycle these materials, to guarantee more sovereignty and sustainability relating to these materials.



4. Take into account territorial and social justice issues by monitoring segregations triggered by the race for technology, making sure that everyone can access digital technologies. Regarding infrastructure, the idea is to choose for a kind of technologic agility that would guide our choices toward reasoned uses of energy and land and to set priorities based on needs.

Debate facilitated by Jean Baptiste Cuzin, Director of European and International Action, Greater East Region

Philippe Legrand, President of Infranum (French strategic comity of the digital infrastructure sector)

Digital companies are aware of their environmental impact, both positive and negative. A recent study done by Ademe Arcep talks about 2.5% of greenhouse emissions, of which 80% have to do with the fabrication of terminals, but the number could rise to 7%. We have to focus our effort on data centers and on less energy hungry networks and encourage the development of local data centers that use less equipment and prefer less energy-hungry wifi. We also need to embrace positive externalities in how we manage urban services, for instance to optimize public lighting or to set up watering systems of vegetation in public spaces. Measuring positive and negative externalities isn't easy, and carbon footprint reviews and upfront assessment should be done all the time. Companies are becoming more and more proactive about to their environmental and societal impact.

Luc Gnacadja, former Minister of Environment, Housing and Urban Planning in Benin, and Founder of the GPS-Dev think tank (Governance and Politics for Sustainable development)

The African urban population doubles up every 20 years. This population is young and informal, in terms of habitat, economy and governance. These populations are vulnerable and little resilient to climatic and social risks. The pandemic emphasized these vulnerabilities and inequalities because 7% of the urban population doesn't have an Internet access, meaning that these people weren't able to access services that were switched online. The smart African city would be a city that would turn informality into a strength for it to become a powerful trigger of added value and efficient sustainable transformation thanks to digital tools, understood as transversal tools to serve the transition. Reasoned use of energy and land isn't the main topic in Africa, even though recycling is an underlying goal. In Benin, dematerialization is already very much advanced for public services, relying on the Digital Code as an institutional framework which regulates electronic communications, data protection and cyber-protection. Three control agencies were created. A data center was also created to secure national data. Community digital points (like cybercafes) were also set up in collaboration with mayors, to provide people with Internet access and with free Internet services.

Amanda Flety, coordinator of the Comity on social inclusion and human rights, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)

Reasoned uses of energy are a topic within the UCLG network. This conversation has to do with social justice and climatic justice, and it questions the digital world. UCLG advocates for digital rights, for using technologies to serve inhabitants and commons. The ways to articulate the ecologic transition and the digital transition call out to interrogate the smart city concept. Some cities are aware of these challenges: Geneva for instance fights for an eco-friendly digital world, for recycling; Montreal focuses on the circular economy; Paris focuses on the impact of its administration. Many initiatives are bottom-up, started by civil society, to control technology usages and to know when to use or not to use technology. Local authorities can also bring solutions with local contracts.

Pontus Westerberg, UNITAC and UN-Habitat

Unitac is a research groupment based in Hamburg. 75% of emissions come from cities, we're trying to implement exploration systems: on clean energies which digital technologies can help optimize, on energetic efficiency using data, and lastly on mobility. The carbon footprint of the digital world increases by 10% every year, because of block-chains among other things. UN-habitat works with Microsoft to study the ecologic and social impact of data centers, and how to bring them closer to places where they get used.



Governance and actor empowerment, or how to give digital technologies more of a political mission

Today, the needs and wills grow bigger to enable the digital transition with a stronger political vision, in order to face issues relating to inclusion, development, use of energy and land, sovereignty. The idea is for territories to become more empowered, to improve their trust, their economic means, their sovereignty.

The stakes behind governance rely on connecting ecosystems at various scales: at the local level, to implement actions and measures that come as close as possible to local needs; at the national level, to build solid legislative frameworks that ensure the legitimation and the means of local measures; at the international level, to ensure regulation. The digital transition implies to define trustworthy frameworks to be used by public and private actors as well as by citizens.

(Re) Give political meaning to the digital world to address transition challenges

- At the local level, develop modalities of shared governance to federate the various parties involved within local ecosystems, to build digital strategies together and to create solutions that suit local realities of contexts and actors.
- At all scales, connect actors: citizens and communities, private actors of the digital field, local authorities, State and continental confederations including the EU.

Create trust frameworks for the digital transformation, with various tools:

A strengthened digital citizenship, thanks to e-government instruments that would be more flexible and would facilitate democracy, debates, transparency and reliability when building life conditions and democratic actions (participation to urban project, participatory budgets, etc.). The idea is also to fight conspiracies with critical thinking.

Trustworthy frameworks for digital data

- Personal data, implementing instruments like the General Data Protection Regulation in Europe.
- Data of general interest, like territorial data.
- Creation of trustworthy data third-party organizations.

Solid legal frameworks and regulations,

- to guarantee citizens with fundamental rights: right to digital technologies for all to access basic infrastructure, basic services, and to guarantee the usage of personal data.
- to empower local authorities: legitimize their actions with decentralized competences, using resources in a way that preserves the workings and investment of digital systems.
- to provide and guarantee regulations and to benefit from independent consultation and monitoring means that can work as part of international networks.

Implement inclusive innovation and diversify economic models

- To go from a logic of offer to a logic that bases itself on prototyping and on constantly adapting digital and urban systems to ongoing evolutions, in order to sustain innovation cycles and increase the role of local actors.
- Develop funding capacities for public authorities to ensure the right investments and good workings of digital policies, to limit dependencies created by funding intermediaries, to ensure the digitalization of land management documents, to support social and solidary initiatives started by communities (especially in informal neighborhoods)

Build sovereignty through shared governance, which would reduce costs

Debate facilitated by Luc Belot, General delegated Director for Large Projects of the Réalités Group

Eddy Hartog, Head of Technology for the Smart communities Unit, DG Connect, European Commission

What link needs to be built between a user-center approach and governance? Sovereignty applied to citizens encompasses the need for security, the possibility for citizens to participate and to keep control over their own life. Cities interrogate what digital technologies imply for their citizens.

Why should the EU be involved? The European digital principles were brought to the table by the EU with the Digital Compass. The EU can take action at three levels:

- It can come up with legislative propositions based on European values. We have the General Data Protection Regulation of the digital market act, of the digital service act.
- The EU can bring funding, for instance through cohesion policy, recovery plans, green deal. Funding does exist: we provide support to develop wifi development and to develop the Digital Twin technology.
- The EU can work with any partners and support peer-to-peer projects to identify what the stakes are, to identify what to work on together, what is useful or not for citizens. The EU works on scale shifting, for 300M inhabitants, DG Connect wants to connect with 94 000 European mayors, for instance with the Living EU program part of the New Bauhaus movement.

Leonardo Ebner, digital counselor, Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR-CCRE)

The CEMR took position on digital challenges. We advocate for multilevel governance between actors, because we cannot take isolated action anymore. Local authorities need to interact, and we also need to interact with the private sectors since it plays a key role. One of the challenges is for local authorities not to shut themselves down around some solutions, they should be able to negotiate and discuss projects. Regarding data, we need to have a shared solid framework.

Jacques Beltran, vice-President of Public services, Dassault Systems

We get confused too often between sovereignty and legal protection. We need laws and regulations, but they aren't enough, we also need capacities. Just like with energy supplies, legal protection isn't enough to ensure sovereignty. The European legal framework is perfect, but for instance 70% of European cloud market is American, and European actors only make for 16% of it. The "Alliance sur le cloud" initiative is brainstorming in a global way about legal norms, about standards and capacities. Sovereignty means being able to choose, at all levels: European, national, local. Digital twin is a technology that grant cities a right to mistakes, and with the capacity to test public policies; but we must democratize this technology and Proofs of Concept (POC) are very likely needed, but not sufficient. The Digital Twin concept can be a shared reference to break the walls between separated categories and to transform collaborative practices.

Karine de Fremont, Director of the "Urban and mobility transition" division, AFD (French Development Agency)

Smart cities are an important topic of the "sustainable city" agenda of AFD. The digital world is understood as a leverage tool to transition toward sustainable development. It is difficult for local authorities to formalize their projects and we support their empowerment. AFD created a guideline for local authorities, to drive the digital transition in their territories. The agency also facilitates exchanges between peers with the Aston network, which brings together 12 African cities around common digital issues and draws methodological inspiration from the Urbact European program. The same methods are used by local authorities in the Balkan area. Digital investment can serve money-saving approaches such as what was done with mapping traditional transportation in Accra. Knowing how to use data to serve urban planning is also an important topic.





**Actors committing to the digital transition
Debate facilitated by Brigitte Bariol-Mathais, FNAU General Delegate (French network of national urban planning agencies)**

The debates highlighted the challenges that relate to the new fundamental rights to access digital technologies for all, and they highlighted the ecologic responsibility of the digital transformation. With now great platforms imposing their power more and more, a will arises for a more politically inclined approach of the digital world, a will that public actors have to regain control over the stakes behind the digital transition, to organize their governance.

Hughes Aubin , Founder of the Climate Change Lab, co-Founder of the Fablabs and Makers Nord-Sud network in France

A self-taught man of the digital world who operates in the private and non-profit sectors as well as with local authorities, he talks about the experience of a community of action that got organized during the COVID-19 crisis to produce masks, ventilators, more than 6 million objects, using open licenses, digital common goods and local materials. Based on the fab-city concept promoted by Thomas Diez, relying on cities to produce objects that can be easily re-made, the “Makers Nord-Sud” network enabled a type of open-source based production with frugal technologies and at limited costs, which questioned traditional value chains and created, on top of that, social cohesion.

Gerard Wolf, President of the “sustainable cities” taskforce, Medef (Movement of Enterprises of France)

In inclusive smart cities, the word “inclusive” changes everything in the concept of “smart city, feeding a new approach. Inclusion doesn’t have to do with compassion but with cooperation, with acquiring collective intelligence. With the World Urban Forum coming soon, the smart city is more likely than not the best way to deal with the informal sector, which makes for 50% of habitat in the world and 40% in developing countries. Going from the informal sector to more urban organization implies to ensure populations of basic services access with digital technologies. We need to show the importance of actor coalitions: from the public and private fields, from civil society. We also need to prove the competitive advantage of inclusivity, through the social and environmental responsibility of companies.

Franckie Trichet, vice-President of Nantes Metropole, President of “Les Interconnectés” and member of AIMF (International Association of Francophone Mayors)

The digital world is starting to take shape on our territories: with data governance, with new jobs. Les Interconnectés advocated for a manifesto on responsible digital technologies, for more efficient public policies that would rely on various pillars: accessibility for all through mediation; fight against inequalities; respecting the living through structuring local branches of reuse, repair and reclaim, and lastly, ethical digital technologies, to build more sovereignty and resilience thanks to local authorities bringing together and connecting their experiences: for instance, an artificial intelligence library. Such exchange spaces could be supported by states.

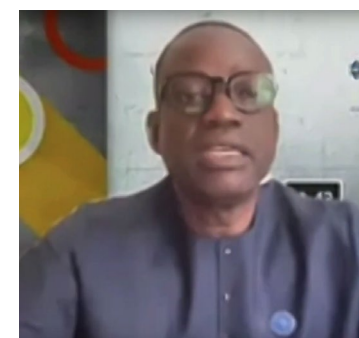
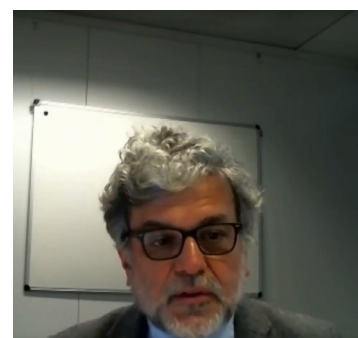


Patrick Chaize, Senator of Ain, France, author of the REEN Act (reduction of the digital environmental footprint)

The digital world makes for 2% of the environmental footprint. If we don't do anything, it will make for 7% of it by 2040. The arrival of 5G sparked debates and rejections. We conceived and adopted the REEN Act based on 5 main directions to make digital technologies more virtuous: actions and trainings to grow awareness; durability of materials; usages; infrastructures (especially data-centers); and making digital issues a part of all public policies. The digital world has to contribute to the environment and the law on the matter intends to be more anticipatory than corrective, to make people aware of the importance there is to control the environmental footprint of these technologies.

Eddy Hartog, Head of Technology for the Smart communities Unit, DG Connect, European Commission

Data is a common good. The more we'll have data governance, the more we'll be efficient. Governance is a determining factor. The EU is the most suited scale, but it doesn't have the right competence in terms of urban and digital matters. So we have to work with member states, with local authorities, and with the CCRE-CEMR, but we should also work with the private sector and with citizens. We should work so that citizens can voice their opinion. At the international level, the G20 focuses on smart cities. So does UN-habitat, and we can find an agreement to make inclusivity a starting point.



Conclusion – what could be the common paths?

Franck Riester, Minister delegated to the Minister of Europe and Foreign Affairs, in charge of Foreign Trade and Attractivity

The UN-Habitat flagship program tackles two issues: access inequalities to digital technologies, and lack of consideration of human rights and of sustainable development in the digital transformation of cities. France made supporting the digital and climatic transitions one of the main priorities of its presidency of the European Union. To build the cities of tomorrow, we have to include digital and environmental challenges: cities must answer their citizens' needs, while optimizing the use of resources and limiting environmental impacts. We have to bridge the gaps that the digital divide creates, by enabling access to fair and affordable digital technologies, by fostering universal access to the Internet and to basic services, and by promoting digital competences, while making sure to respect the rights of the most marginalized populations. Managing data more efficiently, more securely and more transparently is important, in the same way using land and energy sustainably for technology is important. Today's event should be the starting point of a new work process, targeting common goals shared at the global scale. Together, around common values, we will create a driving force by adopting an international normative framework.

Katja Schaeffer, inter-regional advisor at UN-Habitat, in charge of the "People-focused smart cities" program and of UNITAC Hamburg

The "people-focused smart cities" program, a flagship program of UN-Habitat, intends to foster human rights within digitalization. We work together with national and local governments to reduce the digital divide and to make sure that no one gets left aside when developing technologies. Crossing competences, innovation, and opening up to change, all proved to be useful approaches during the pandemic. Interconnectivity isn't a luxury anymore, it is a condition to achieve our human communities resilience. Articulating inclusion and local governance is key, which is why we try to learn from the various digitalization experiences that proved successful at local scales. We need all parties involved to be fully committed to empowering local authorities to implement the digital transformation of their communities, and committed to facilitating funding. Digitalization can reduce social divides, we're just at the beginning.

Carlos Morais Pires, Cabinet Counselor of Mariya Gabriel, European Commissioner in charge of Innovation, research, culture, education and youth

We hope to put humans back at the center of our action. Commissioner Mariya Gabriel has a large delegation, among which the Erasmus European students exchange program. The commissioner is very attached to transforming urban areas to make them more sustainable places, by using digital technologies and actor empowerment to our advantage. The European position on the matter is a collective co-design process between the Commission, the member States and the Regions. We now have European tools and we can put out the first public commissioning offers in the context of our programs.

Lacina Koné, General Director, Smart Africa

Started in 2013 during the Kigali summit, the Smart Africa alliance was born after 7 states adopted a "Manifesto for Smart Africa". The 7 initial states then extended to 30 member states, now representing 800 million inhabitants and joined by international financiers and private actors. The mission of Smart Africa is to turn Africa into a single digital market by 2030: build affordable digital infrastructure to interconnect the continent, facilitate investments, develop a digital society. Each main direction translates into flagship programs. A flagship program is being run by the state of Rwanda and translated into a directing scheme for sustainable and smart cities in Africa and in a support system to attract public and private funding. Smart Africa then helps pilot-projects such as that of "smart village". We work on improving access to energy, water, sanitation, health, and on tax collect tax services for citizens. Today, we should implement more win-win partnerships between Europe and Africa.

Jean Rottner, President of the Greater East Region, President of FNAU

Digital inclusion in the Greater East Region shows through high speed equipment on all territories, starting with rural areas, since providing the least connected areas with such equipment is a kind of social efficiency. The Region also funds a computer for each high school student to enable them to follow their courses and to open them up to the world. The Region and the French State have a common guideline on the development of e-medicine. We emphasize training and education, with about fifty schools for digital training aimed at young people and older ones, and with a network of third places that are spread around the local territory. We work with all actors to be able to anticipate, to put local authorities in the position of real operators of inclusion and environmental matters. Connectivity enables world territories to connect, it enables the development of action capacities, and enables us to live better together: this is what local elected representatives should be committed to. The crisis that came with the pandemic forced us to shift paradigm and, as local authorities, to contribute to transforming our states. Coming together and taking action together among local authority associations would make it possible for us to bring a significant contribution to the digital transformation.

Jean-Baptiste Buffet, Counselor, UCLG

UCLG sees the state members summit in New York in April 2022 as a key moment for the Urban Agenda, but we regret that few states formally pushed its implementation forward. The Urban Agenda of Quito showed some progress, because regions and cities are now being recognized as governments and because the role of networks such as UCLG, ICLEI (Local Governments for Sustainability) and C40 are also recognized. Through actions impelled by local authorities during the COVID-19 crisis, digital technologies enabled the protection of public services and common goods. When we talk about a digital and open transformation, we tackle the question of fundamental rights to the city, as well as the right to participation and to local democracy which lies at the heart of UCLG's interests. Bringing together the topics of digital technologies and inclusion is also an opportunity for urban and rural areas to cooperate and an opportunity to accelerate the

localized application of the Urban Agenda. To push further territorial action, the main challenge remains the matter of local authorities' fiscal self-sufficiency and the political recognition of multi-level governance. UCLG will support all calls from local authorities that relate to inclusion and to the digital world.

Jan Olbrycht, Member of the European Parliament, representative of Poland, President of the Urban Intergroup of the European Parliament

I greet all participants from my office in Katowice. The Urban Intergroup of the European Parliament works a lot with UN-habitat to cooperate and to strengthen European participation to UN-Habitat programs. Digital transformation should be a major topic of the World Urban Forum of Katowice in June. The concept of territorial cohesion is part of European treaties, and the idea behind territorial cohesion is that everyone has to be able to access public services. Today, territorial cohesion happens through and with digital technologies, with health, commerce, education. We cannot have territorial cohesion without a digital revolution, this has been very clearly shown during this forum. We passed the first step to access technology, and technology today should answer the needs of cities and smart-towns. Europe allocates 20% of its recovery plan investment to digital technologies. I am counting on the French Presidency of the European Union to promote a real European urban public policy, which already exists in parts thanks to various programs and to the European Urban Agenda.

Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Executive Director, UN-Habitat

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,
I thank the French government for making this expert group event happen. The General Secretary of the United Nations made the digital transformation one of the corner stones of his program, and inclusive smart cities are the vehicle for it. We came a long way already since we started the "people-focused smart cities" program during the Abu Dhabi World Urban forum. We launched the first technology accelerator program in Hamburg, supported by the German government. We're witnessing a growing interest from governments, local authorities and UN agencies for inclusive smart cities. Our partnership now counts 111 signatories and the city coalition on digital rights has 60 member-cities. As this movement keeps growing, we need international normative directions to define the principles of inclusive smart cities more precisely. The high level gathering in New York, the World Urban Forum in Katowice in June 2022 and the UN-Habitat General Assembly in 2023 are all various steps of one same process, and we are ready to work together to develop inclusive smart cities at the global scale.



Conference of Strasbourg

PEOPLE-CENTERED SMART CITIES



FRANCE22
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