

NEWS



Metropolises take center stage at the Smart City Expo

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8th edition of the Smart City Expo World Congress reaffirms the links between metropolitan governance and the creation of more liveable and equitable smart cities

More than 21,000 visitors attended this year's edition of the Smart City Expo World Congress (SCEWC) in Barcelona and, between last November 13 and 15, had the opportunity to join a wide range of activities focused on how we can **make cities better places to live in**. Metropolis has collaborated with the organization of the event as one of its supporting institutions, and set the discussions about the **importance of metropolitan governance frameworks to boost smarter urban agglomerations** around the world.

As essential actors in the process of building more livable and equitable societies, local and regional governments had a remarkable participation in the event's program. Their political and technical representatives, as well as the chairs of international local government networks were among the more than 400 speakers who enriched the discussions about Digital Transformation, Urban Environment, Mobility, Inclusive & Sharing Cities, and Governance & Finance. **The representation of the major metropolises was made visible in more than 20 sessions**, which featured keynote speeches and presentations from Athens, Barcelona (city and metropolitan area), Berlin, Buenos Aires, Casablanca, Córdoba, Grand Lyon, Guadalajara, La Paz, Madrid, Montevideo, Moscow, Puebla, Santiago de Chile, São Paulo and Toronto.

The *High Level Panel Discussion on How City Leaders Can Better Foster Innovation for More Liveable Cities* was one of the highlights of the opening day of the congress. Representatives from the Barcelona City Council, Maputo, Dubai and the UITP, Metropolis and UCLG networks discussed different strategies to **meet the challenges that the administrations of cities and metropolitan areas are facing in responding to a growing demand of mobility**. They also shared their perspectives in addressing, at the same time, political goals for a healthier, fairer, more integrated, accessible and sustainable urban transportation. At the end of the session, the three networks launched the "Innovation Cluster" of the [Mobility Champions Community](#). This platform seeks to empower city leaders in implementing policies and measures that enable innovation in urban mobility, promoting high-level knowledge sharing and dialogue. The same day of its launch, nine cities had already joined the platform: Barcelona, Dubai, Maputo, Montréal, Quito, Dakar, Natal, Strasbourg and Jakarta.



On the same Tuesday, the closing session of governance and finance was moderated by Octavi de la Varga, Metropolis Secretary General. In *Governance Models for Shared Challenges and Responsibilities* our SG mediated the conversations between Fernando Benegas, Secretary of Planning and Coordination of the City of Buenos Aires, Agustí Serra Monté, Secretary of Urban Habitat and Territory of the Government of Catalonia, and Sigifredo Salazar Osorio. They all agreed that, in order to be able to present concrete results to citizens, **different levels of governments** must foster the collaboration among themselves, in addition to **sharing purposes** and the same **territorial vision**. “Our government’s planning involves applying simple methods to a complex environment”, summarized Mr Benegas.

The second day of the congress allowed representatives from local governments and key actors from the private sector and academia to apply metropolitan perspectives to the field of finances. To debate how financing public policies and services on a metropolitan scale is required to guarantee sustainable growth, equity and quality of life, we organized the side event “**Finances: the backbone of metropolitan governance**”, where representatives from La Paz, Montevideo and Bordeaux shared the mechanisms and challenges encountered in financing the New Urban Agenda on their own territories. The session served as the occasion to present the 6th issue paper of the Metropolis Observatory collection: “[Financing metropolitan public policies and services](#)”.



Metropolis and Fira Barcelona, institution responsible for the organization of SCEWC, have a collaboration agreement that establishes our association as one of the event's supporting institutions until 2020. With this partnership, Metropolis enhances its positioning at the world's leading event for cities, and opens up new opportunities of visibility and leadership for our members. For more information on this agreement and opportunities of collaboration at the next edition of SCEWC (November 19-21, 2019), please contact the Senior Manager for Institutional Relations at the Metropolis Secretariat General, Ms Agnès Bickart [abickart\(at\)metropolis.org](mailto:abickart(at)metropolis.org).