
The Perspectives and Challenges of European Cities in the global context in 2050

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Abstract

Recently the share of global urban population exceeded the share of rural population, and according to the official forecasts, by 2050, two-third of the total population will reside in cities. The most dynamic growth has been, and will be registered in the Global South, in Africa and Asia, since the urban population in this regions is still below 50%. Europe is traditionally a highly urbanised continent, the share of urban citizens is above 70%.

However, the continent has proceeded a serious shift in weight since the second half of the 20th century, their cities continuously lose significance in a global context. This shift is projected to be following in the future, at the moment none of the largest metropolises takes place in Europe and the economic-political role of the Asian megacities becomes increasingly important.

Our presentation will introduce the main global and European demographic and urban trends of the 21st century, providing a forward look for 2050, particularly focusing on the most challenging issues, also presenting some potential solutions and the possible future targets.

One of the most striking urban challenges in Europe is related to the demographic change of the continent, the shrinking of its population, since the majority of the population concentrates in cities. The change in the demographic patterns have to be followed by the change in the institutional system and in the structure of general services.

Another serious challenges are the environmental issues. The European cities manage environmental and sustainability issues already as key priorities, these kind of innovations will have to be supported in the future together with strong policy regulations.

The sense of urban processes continuously changes due to the latest ICT technologies. The urban technological innovations will gradually affect the operation of our cities in the future, and these tools, the so-called ‘smart city’ applications might offer solutions for several challenges.

The presentation shows examples of already existing good practices and long-term urban development strategies and visions as well.

Keywords: urbanisation, futurology, urban trends, global urbanisation, urban innovation, demographic change, urban sustainability

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