

Urban Design



Urban Policy in the Structural Policy of the European Union

Göran Aldskogius

CERUM
Working Paper 21
Gratis internet utgåva
Tryckt utgåva kan köpas från CERUM

*Detta dokument får kopieras, men inte säljas.
Innehållet får inte ändras på något sätt.*

CERUM
Centrum för regionalvetenskap
901 87 Umeå
regional.science@cerum.umu.se
Fax 090-786 51 21
Telefon 090-786 60 79



Umeå University
CERUM
Centre for Regional
Science

Urban Policy in the Structural Policy of the European Union

Göran Aldskogius

CERUM Working Paper Nr 21
ISBN 91-7191-834-5
ISSN 1400-4526

Address: Cerum, Umeå University, SE-901 87 Umeå, Sweden.
Telephone: +46 90 786 60 79, Fax: +46 90 786 51 21.
www.umu.se/cerum
regional.science@cerum.umu.se

Contents

1	Introduction, 5
2	What is Urban Policy?, 6
3	Urban Structures in the European Union, 7
4	Urban Policy in the Structural Funds Policy, 8 <ul style="list-style-type: none">4.1 <i>The Community Initiative URBAN and the Urban Pilot Project, 8</i>4.2 <i>Towards a more comprehensive urban policy in the European Union – a framework for action, 9</i>4.3 <i>Scenarios of urban development discussed in the report on European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP), 11</i>4.4 <i>The Urban Exchange Initiative, 12</i>4.5 <i>Towards an urban programme for the European Union, 12</i>
5	Urban Policy in other European Union Policies, 15 <ul style="list-style-type: none">5.1 <i>Sustainable development in urban areas, 15</i>5.2 <i>Research and technical development – the city of tomorrow and cultural heritage, 15</i>5.3 <i>Trans-European Networks (TEN), 15</i>
6	Urban Policy in some International Organisations, 16 <ul style="list-style-type: none">6.1 <i>Urban policy in the OECD, 16</i>6.2 <i>Urban policy in the Council of Europe, 16</i>6.3 <i>Urban policy in the United Nations, 16</i>
7	Urban Policy in Sweden, 17
8	Structural Funds Programmes 2000–2006, 19
9	Conclusions, 20
	References, 23
	CERUM Working Papers, 25

I Introduction

The objective of this paper is to give a short overview of the actual discussions and actions concerning urban policy in the European Union. No complete picture is given but this survey covers some important actors and activities. The paper is concentrated on how urban policy is implemented within the European Union structural policy during the last ten years, and the period 2000–2006.

A short overview is also given of discussions on urban policy in other international organisations and in Sweden.

At the end of the paper there is an attempt to summarize the effects of the actual discussion about urban policy for the European Union and for Sweden, in the framework of regional development and structural policy.

2 What is Urban Policy?

It is quite clear that it is not easy, if it is even possible, to give a simple definition of a city/town or of urban policy. The urban structures are so different in the Member States of the European Union. In Sweden we define rather small agglomerations as urban. On the other hand in many European countries an agglomeration should have at least 10 000 inhabitants before it is defined as urban.

The definition is also dependant on the policy and planning involved (functional labour market regions, land-use planning, architecture, environment plans, promotion of economic growth and growth poles, investments in technological centres, etc.).

Urban areas can be seen as structures/agglomerations of densely populated cores with blocks of housing, a complex transport system, a whole range of businesses, a variety of services etc. But the definition of the urban area could also include the functional region – urban and rural areas – around the core of the urban centre. People in the rural areas often have their jobs in the centre and are commuting daily, they find the qualified services needed in the centre of the city/town etc. In a swedish context it is perhaps most relevant to define urban areas as functional regions, including both urban and rural areas in commuting distances.

In the following context, urban policy is dealt with as part of regional growth policy and the European Union structural policy.

3 Urban Structures in the European Union

The urban structures differs very much in the Member States of the European Union. Of course, this is due to historical reasons, the function of the city/town in the region, differences of population density in the Member States and so on. In a global perspective there are only two cities in the European Union which could be defined as metropolitan areas – London and Paris. Additional to these metropolitan areas there are a number of big cities – Berlin, Rome, Madrid etc. These are also often considered as metropolitan areas.

The following table gives a very general picture of the distribution of the population in the European Union:

Number of people in urban and rural areas	Percentage of total population
>250 000	20
50 000–250 000	20
10 000–50 000	40
>10 000+rural areas	20

TABLE I

In a swedish perspective the European Union is very urban. In Sweden some 45% of the population lives in urban and rural areas with less than 10 000 inhabitants, compared with an average of 20% in the European Union. Furthermore, the population density is much higher in all Member States (with the exception for Finland), which of course can lead to different conditions for the labour market, for investments in infrastructure etc., and a need for a differentiated definition of urban areas.

4 Urban Policy in the Structural Funds Policy

Urban policy is not a part of the Community Policy of the European Union. Nevertheless, urban matters have been and have become more and more a common concern for the European Commission and the Member States.

4.1 The Community Initiative URBAN and the Urban Pilot Project

The most concrete activities in the European Union structural policy in urban regions during the period 1994–1999 was the Community Initiative URBAN and the Urban Pilot Projects (UPP), both funded from the Structural Funds.

The Community Initiative URBAN funded programmes in more than one hundred urban areas. The Structural Funds contributed with some 900 meuro (millions euro) during the whole period. The total investments (including national funding) in different projects totalled 1800 meuro. All projects targeted more than 3 million people in urban areas. The URBAN programmes were directed to regenerate depressed urban areas, to increase job opportunities, to diminish segregation etc.

Sweden had one URBAN programme which covered the central parts of Malmö with a total population of 22 000. The objectives and strategies were to create a certain number of jobs and SMES, to give a certain number of people education and to strengthen the social and economic infrastructure of the targeted region in Malmö. In line with the objectives and strategies, the measures of this programme were concentrated on job creation, cultural activities and media, the development of the environment and services, to promote the willingness to apply for jobs etc. The total budget for the programme was 12 meuro of which 5 meuro from the Structural Funds. The programme has recently been concluded and it is too early to quantify the results of this programme.

The UPP projects are much smaller than the URBAN programmes. For a ten year period until 1999 164 meuro have been spent in nearly 60 urban projects in the European Union. The UPPs are more small-scale projects of an experimental character in economic, social and environmental matters. They are also a way to promote exchange of experience.

In the last years Falun and Borlänge in Sweden has benefited from an UPP on ecological sustainability as a driving force in a medium-sized urban region.

4.2 Towards a more comprehensive urban policy in the European Union – a framework for action

Although urban policy has been discussed for a long period and programmes (URBAN) and projects (UPP) have been financed through the Structural Funds, these actions have been, more or less, of an experimental character.

Therefore, it is perhaps right to say that the first stage of a wider discussion on urban policies was taken when the Commission in the beginning of 1997 adopted the Communication “Towards an Urban Agenda in the European Union” (COM/97/197). This was followed in 1998 by the report “Sustainable Urban Development in the European Union: a Framework for Action” (COM/98/605), which was discussed in a seminar in Vienna, November 1998, with many participants from the Member States, European Institutions, non governmental organisations (NGOs), etc. The aim of this report was to improve co-ordinated and to support targeted actions in the European community for urban problems. The following four policy aims were focused by the European Commission:

a) Strengthening economic prosperity and employment in towns and cities

The importance to improve the urban dimension in the Structural Policy and to develop an urban dimension in employment policies were stressed. Furthermore, the importance of improving the public transport policy was mentioned.

b) Promoting equality, social inclusion and regeneration of urban areas

The use of the Structural Funds to regenerate deprived urban areas by integrating economic, social, cultural, environmental, transport and security aspects was advocated.

c) Protecting and improving the urban environment: towards local and global sustainability

Environmental actions which will lead to improvements in urban areas are highlighted and a wide range of Community initiatives that affect the environment of urban areas, like energy management, transport, waste, air quality, water, noise, contaminated land, etc., are mentioned.

d) Contributing to good urban governance and local empowerment

Through awareness-raising and capacity-building measures, by strategies to promote good urban governance, through empowerment and security, a stronger policy integration between various levels of government and policy sectors will be the result.

This report and the discussion which followed was of importance for the next step when the report “European Spatial Development Perspective/ESDP: Towards Balanced and Sustainable Development of the Territory of the European Union” was agreed upon in May 1999, at the informal meeting in Potsdam (Germany) of the Council of Ministers responsible for Spatial Planning, Germany. In this report, which covers a wide range of aspects of regional development and spatial planning, different aspects and guidelines of urban policy are discussed. The proc-

ess towards the agreement on ESDP by an informal ministerial meeting in May 1999 started in 1993 by an initiative of the Belgian Government. In an informal ministerial meeting on Regional Policy and Spatial Planning in Liège, the document “For an important step towards a concerted spatial planning” was then presented. This document started a process, which ended by an agreement at the Informal Council of Ministers in Potsdam (May 1999). During this period a number of informal ministerial meetings for Ministers responsible for Regional Development and Spatial Planning has taken place to make progress.

In the ESDP report the following three general guidelines were proposed:

a) Development of a polycentric and balanced urban system and strengthening the partnership between urban and rural areas.

b) Promotion of integrated transport and communication concepts, which support the polycentric development of the European Union territory. Parity of access to infrastructure and knowledge should be realised gradually through regional solutions.

c) Development and conservation of the natural and the cultural heritage through wise management should contribute to the preservation and deepening of regional identities and maintenance of the natural and cultural diversity of the regions and cities of the European Union.

The first guideline (a) is specifically dealing with urban matters and here we find the following policy options outlined in the ESDP:

- ✗ Several larger zones of global economic integration in the European Union should be strengthened with high-quality, global functions and services through transnational strategies.
- ✗ Development of a polycentric and balanced system of regions, city clusters and city networks through closer co-operation between structural policy and the policy on Trans-European Networks (TENs) and improvement of links between international, national, regional and local transport networks.
- ✗ Integrated development strategies for city clusters and small cities and towns and their rural areas in individual Members States should be promoted within the framework of transnational and cross-border co-operation.
- ✗ Expansion of the strategic role of metropolitan regions with particular attention to the development of peripheral regions of the European Union.
- ✗ Improvement of the economic basis, environment and service infrastructure of cities, particularly in less favoured regions, to increase their attractiveness for mobile investments.
- ✗ Promotion of urban development strategies sensitive to social and functional diversity and a wise management of the urban ecosystem.
- ✗ Improve accessibility in cities and metropolitan regions through location policy and land use planning that will stimulate the mix of urban functions and public transport.

- ✗ Promotion of a diversified development in rural areas through education, training and creation of non-agricultural jobs. Support of co-operation and information exchange between rural areas.
- ✗ Strengthen small and medium-sized towns in rural areas as focal points for regional development. Efforts to maintain basic services in small and medium-sized towns.
- ✗ Integration of the countryside around large cities with special attention to the quality of life in the urban surroundings.
- ✗ Improve public transport services and provide a minimum level of service in small and medium-sized towns and cities.

4.3 Scenarios of urban development discussed in the report on European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP)

In the report on European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) not only the present situation of urban areas are described, but scenarios are also presented, outlining the trends of the urban system in Europe.

The European Union is in general terms highly urbanised. A third of the population lives in metropolitan areas and a third in small and medium-sized towns/cities outside the agglomerations. The rest of the population lives in rural areas – often rather densely populated.

The history of Europe has given it a pattern of a polycentric urban structure. In the medium term it is not foreseen that this pattern will change very much. Cities like London, Paris and a few other larger cities – metropolitan regions – will maintain their global importance. On the other hand there seem to be tendencies of changes of the urban patterns, for instance through co-operation between towns and cities in regions characterised by urban agglomerations (for example in the Saar-Lorraine-Luxemburg border region and in that connection even Haparanda-Torneå could be mentioned). Co-operation between urban areas is also meant to be very important in sparsely populated regions.

It is a fact that competition between towns and cities for investments in new job opportunities, services, infrastructure etc., is growing. Therefore, it is necessary for many old and industrialised urban areas, or such areas which are very depending on administration, tourism etc., to widen their economic base. Towns and cities in rural and peripheral locations will experience difficulties to expand. On the other hand towns and cities with “gateway functions” can benefit from that position and attract new investments. In the European Union policy it should be imperative to have this kind of competition between urban areas, regions etc., carried out in socially and environmentally acceptable ways.

The European Union is facing a continuing urban sprawl due to population increase and growing land consumption. Sometimes this has happened in a rather unplanned way, which has led to different negative effects – increased levels of private transport, higher energy consumption, costly investments in infrastructure and so on. This development has led to a need for better planning with for instance “land

recycling projects” (in the Netherlands) and so called “target group projects”.

A serious problem in urban areas is an increasing social segregation. Wealthier people move from the inner parts of the cities to get a possibility to get an own home etc., while poor people, immigrants and others concentrate in inner cities or large housing complexes. This segregation is largely connected with unemployment, environmental problems, social exclusion and ethnic and cultural differences. These problems are rather widespread in towns and cities of the European Union. Therefore, the awareness of the need to address these situations is growing.

The environmental problems in towns and cities – traffic, noise, pollution, waste – are well known and measures to combat these problems have been introduced in many urban areas. Still there is a need for improvement of the environment. Furthermore, the historic fabric of many towns and cities has been destroyed, which can lead to negative effects on the economic development and these areas can lose attractiveness to people and investments.

All the possibilities and problems that has been mentioned, can and should be addressed through ways and means available under the European Union structural policy.

4.4 The Urban Exchange Initiative

Parallel to urban activities and programmes financed through the Structural Funds, the Member States of the European Union has carried through the Urban Exchange Initiative (UEI), which has been a mean to improve the exchange of knowledge in urban policy. The initiative to the UEI was taken in an informal ministerial meeting in Noordwijk, the Netherlands, in 1997. This initiative was followed up during the Presidencies (in the Council of Ministers) of the United Kingdom, Germany and Finland. Three reports have been discussed in informal ministerial meetings under these Presidencies. The subjects were the following:

- ✗ United Kingdom, in June 1998, presented a report which took on board matters concerning good practice in urban development.
- ✗ Germany, in May 1999, concluded on elements of sustainable development, sustainable land use and city-friendly transport policy.
- ✗ Finland, in October 1999, elaborated on urban development through expertise, research and information.

The knowledge selected in UEI will be used in the future work of the European Union.

4.5 Towards an urban programme for the European Union

The interest for urban questions in the structural policy has of course been a big concern for the European Commission and all the work ear-

lier presented in this paper has naturally been done in co-operation between the Member States and the Commission.

The reasons for this interest in urban policy can simply be found in the facts that

- ✗ 80% of the population of the European Union lives in urban areas,
- ✗ in urban areas social problems, structural changes, over-consumption of natural resources, high consumption of energy are found, pollution are more concentrated etc.,
- ✗ resources for economic development are concentrated – competence, creativity, culture etc.,
- ✗ urban areas are seen as driving forces for economic growth and they have a big influence on the development of surrounding rural areas.

Therefore, it has been evident that many of the common policies of the European Union – the internal market, employment, social, environment, transport policies etc. – has to consider the effects on urban areas.

The overall analysis and strategic discussion in the document “European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP)”, has given a platform for a common policy option.

During the Finnish Presidency, in the Council of Ministers (second half of 1999), an Informal Ministerial meeting for Ministers responsible for Regional, Urban and Spatial Planning was held in Tampere (beginning of October 1999). In that meeting an action plan (with twelve actions) was agreed upon. This action plan was the starting point for the concrete implementation of the ESDP. One of the twelve actions – “Urban application and co-operation” – is devoted to urban issues.

In the Tampere Informal Ministerial meeting the Member States concluded how to go forward with urban questions. The main content of the conclusions were to start an operational co-operation process with the following objectives:

a) to produce a joint informal opinion on the report by the Commission “Sustainable Urban Development in the European Union: A Framework for Action” (see above).

b) to identify a set of common priorities for urban development, which takes into account urban diversity in Europe.

c) to assess the need for, and possibly initiate, further exchanges of experience beyond the UEI (see above).

d) to establish a joint opinion on practical steps in urban development co-operation and to produce a proposal for an operational work plan for this co-operation.

e) to inform the European Union institutions about the results to assist their further work on structural policies and urban development.

As a consequence of the decisions in Tampere, the Member States decided to form an expert group for urban policy under the Committee on Spatial Development/CSD (a committee with Member States and Commission representatives). This group (called “The Urban Development Group/CSD”) has started its work and is now in the stage of preparing a work programme and a time-table for that. One of the most important questions for this group will be to formulate the priorities for

an urban policy programme. Input for that is now collected from the Member States.

Urban policy will be on the agenda during the Portuguese Presidency in the European Union Council of Ministers, the first half of the year 2000. France has announced that it during its Presidency (second half of the year 2000), is going to give a high priority to urban development policy in the discussions on structural policy.

In all the preparations of the urban issues under the Presidencies for the coming years the above mentioned group will play an important role.

It must also be mentioned that in the Commission work, the Directorate for regional policy, has an internal working group for urban policy.

The work of this group will primarily be based on the conclusions of the Tampere meeting upon urban policy, the ESDP report and the document "A Sustainable Development of the Urban Areas of the European Union: A Work Programme". Even more important will be the proposals in the Communication by the European Commission, "Sustainable urban development in the European Union: a framework for action", which contains proposals of 24 activities.

5 Urban Policy in other European Union Policies

Although the aim of this paper is to give a concentrated information on what discussions and actions are taken in the structural policy of the European Union, it is of importance to mention, in a very concentrated way, some other activities of the European Union, focusing on urban questions.

5.1 Sustainable development in urban areas

The Commission has presented to the Council of Ministers (November 1999) a proposal for a regulation and economic support for sustainable urban development. The initiative is intended to support co-operation and exchange of good practice to promote a sustainable urban development in the towns and cities of the European Union. The intention is to start this programme in 2001 and it will be concluded in the end of 2004. The proposed budget for this period is 12,4 meuro.

5.2 Research and technical development – the city of tomorrow and cultural heritage

Under the fifth framework for research and technical development of the European Union there is a programme for The City of Tomorrow and Cultural Heritage. This programme is directed to initiate common research in the following fields:

- a) Integrated approaches aiming at sustainable development of cities and rational management of resources.
- b) Protection, conservation and enhancement of European cultural heritage.
- c) Comparative assessment and cost-effective implementation of strategies for sustainable transport systems in urban environment.

5.3 Trans-European Networks (TEN)

The review of the actual plan for the Trans-European Networks (transports, telecom, energy) will, for the overall perspectives of the European Union and its neighbouring countries, take note of the ESDP report.

6 Urban Policy in some International Organisations

6.1 Urban policy in the OECD

In the OECD the OECD Territorial Development Policy Committee runs a programme on urban policy. The current work programme is to review the nature and scale of territorial issues of the Member States of the OECD, to assist Governments to identify appropriate responses and to assess competencies and governance issues.

There is another committee – Local Economic and Employment Development Programme and Committee which studies job creation, entrepreneurship and local partnership.

6.2 Urban policy in the Council of Europe

In the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning (the CEMAT group) preparations are taking place for a ministerial conference in September 2000 on guiding principles for spatial development in Europe.

The Committee on Local and Regional Authorities (CDLR) is a forum for discussions on the legal and institutional framework for local democracy in urban areas.

A third committee to mention is the European Committee on Social Cohesion (CDCS) which deals with questions on social cohesion etc.

6.3 Urban policy in the United Nations

The UN Commission on Human Settlements (the Habitat Initiative) will address requirements for sustainable urban and shelter development, goals of local democracy, equity, efficiency, security and decentralisation.

The UN General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) is going to review the progress of all countries on the progress on the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, which was agreed upon in 1996.

The Economic Commission of Europe (UN/ECE) – a forum for economic co-operation – has a committee on human settlements. This committee work with transfer of experience in spatial planning and development to countries in transition.

7 Urban Policy in Sweden

Sweden has a national policy for the metropolitan areas of Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö. In 1998 the Swedish Government presented a Bill to the Parliament on “Development and justice – A policy for metropolitan area in the 21st century”. This Bill, which the Parliament has decided on, is meant to be a first step towards a process in which the Government, the regions, County Councils and Municipalities will work together to create growth in the three metropolitan areas, where more than a third (about 3 million) of the Swedish population lives.

The background to this decision is an increasing economic and social division in the metropolitan areas during the 1990s.

Two main goals are set up for the metropolitan areas:

a) Provide the foundations for sustainable growth so these areas should be able to create new employment opportunities.

This goal is meant to give the metropolitan areas

- ✗ a possibility to compete with other European metropolitan areas for the establishment of and investments in the business sector,
- ✗ access to a qualified work force,
- ✗ a government business sector adapted to the conditions and requirements of the areas,
- ✗ an increased attractiveness.

b) Measures to stop social, ethnic and discriminating segregation in these areas and to create equal and comparable living conditions for people.

To achieve this goal the following measures should be implemented:

- ✗ employment rates should be raised for people in the socially disadvantaged housing areas,
- ✗ dependency on public benefits should be reduced,
- ✗ the knowledge of the Swedish language should be increased,
- ✗ all school students should be given the opportunity to reach secondary school attainment levels,
- ✗ the educational level of the adult population should be raised,
- ✗ city neighbourhoods should be experienced as attractive and safe,
- ✗ public health should be improved,
- ✗ democratic participation should be increased.

For the implementation of the metropolitan policy about 2 billion SEK (230 meuro) has been allocated for a three year period, starting from mid 1999.

For the time being it is too early to draw any conclusions about the effects of the policy.

There is no national policy in Sweden for the small and medium-sized cities and towns. In regional development policy there existed from the beginning of the 1970th and until 1982 a classification, in an hierarchic system, of all Swedish municipalities in four categories, de-

pending on their size and function in their region. The four categories were the following:

- a) Metropolitan areas,
- b) Primary regional centres,
- c) Regional centres,
- d) Municipal centres.

In the regional development policy this classification was the basis for decisions of the location of public services, infrastructure investments etc. It was also important for the guidance of private investments. This structure was abolished through a decision by the Parliament in 1982.

In the end of the 1980th a Government report with proposals for the future regional development policy, presented a classification system for medium-sized urban centres. The following three different types of urban centres, with different regional functions, were identified:

- a) Urban centres with a specific role in the transport system,
- b) Urban centres with a specific role in public and/or private decision making,
- c) Urban centres combining the roles under a) and b).

The proposals in the report never led to a Government Bill to the Parliament.

For the time being it is very much a concern for the different municipalities to decide upon many important functions and investments to improve growth in urban and rural areas.

Some regional authorities have realized that competition between regions in both a national and international context is a reality. Therefore, we have seen examples of co-operation between regions in an effort to increase their attractiveness for national and international investments. An example of this is the "Mälarsektens samarbete (Regional co-operation of the Mälaren region)" between the Stockholm metropolitan area and a number of medium-sized urban areas around the Lake Mälaren. In this region investments has been made to upgrade the railway system of this vast region. This gives the basis for the integration of the labour market of the region, co-operation between public services like universities etc.

The other example to mention is the co-operation in the "Öresund region", between the metropolitan areas of Copenhagen in Denmark and Malmö in Sweden. When the bridge over the sound between these two regions (Öresund) will be opened in July 2000, the transport conditions for the integration and development of this region will be very good. This region also benefits from an Interreg-programme.

8 Structural Funds Programmes 2000–2006

The European Structural Funds programmes for the period 2000–2006, shall include measures directed to urban areas. The Regulations and Guidelines for the Objective 1 and 2 programmes gives clear guidance in that direction. The implementation of the programmes has not yet started. Therefore, it is not possible to describe what measures will be implemented.

The Community Initiative URBAN has a budget of 700 meuro in total for all Member States, and it will comprise some 50–60 urban areas in the European Union. In Sweden URBAN can be implemented in one city and the allocation from the Regional Fund is 5 meuro. The Government has decided that the city of Göteborg will benefit from this programme. The programme will probably be completed and negotiated with the Commission in May/June.

The transnational co-operation under the Community Initiative Interreg III B, will partly be directed to polycentric urban development. Sweden will participate in programmes in the Baltic Sea region, the North Sea region and in the so called Northern Periphery region (primarily northern Sweden, northern Finland, northern Norway, Scotland and possibly Iceland). The programming for these regions has not started and the implementation of the programmes will probably not start until the end of this year or the beginning of 2001. Therefore, it is not possible to say to what extent and for which cities measures to promote a polycentric development will be implemented.

The Community Initiatives URBAN and Interreg will be supplemented by projects partly financed by the Regional Fund. The intention with these projects will be to promote exchange of experience between cities and towns. Certainly this will give many cities and towns in Sweden a possibility to participate in networking in the European Union.

9 Conclusions

This overview shows very clearly that a lot of work and interest is paid to urban policy in the European Union and its Member States, as well as in other organisations than the European Union. A relevant question must therefore be if there is a need for a broader discussion about urban development and the need for an urban strategy in Sweden?

a) The migration in Sweden has a new pattern since the middle of the 1990s. In earlier periods people often migrated from rural areas to small towns. Now people, to a large extent, migrate primarily from small and medium-sized towns to the metropolitan areas. Medium-sized towns with universities still attracts people. But the pattern is quite clear – small and medium-sized towns have for a number of years had a diminishing population. And it is primarily young people – often women – who move to the bigger cities and towns. This out-migration impoverish services etc. and leads to less attractive cities and towns.

b) Investments in infrastructure (education, communication, culture, entertainment, electric power, telecom etc.) in a local, regional, national and European perspective, which are of crucial importance for economic development, calls for a national framework for the regional and local investment plans.

c) To be attractive for people, and for investments in the business sector, a question to be answered is if that calls for a specialization of the structures, services etc. of the small and medium-sized cities and towns and for a concrete co-operate between them.

These aspects (a-c) of the development and the need for observations on the urban development, calls for deeper studies in and research about the development of urban areas in Sweden. The urban structure must also be seen in an European perspective. It is quite evident that there is a lot of concern in the Member States of the European Union about the development in the urban regions. It also seem to be a common understanding that urban growth is necessary to promote economic growth in general. Therefore, many countries have developed an urban policy which is directed to promote growth in urban areas – especially in small and medium-sized cities and towns. In practice that means very conscious planning for the location of qualified education and research, building of an efficient transport infrastructure etc. The intention is to attract investments from other parts of the country, or even more, to attract investments from abroad. Investors in the business and service sectors certainly carefully studies the possibilities to get qualified services, a well educated labour force, good communications etc. This means that countries, regions and municipalities very often compete with each other in all these respects.

To be successful it is probably necessary to have a very good understanding about the policies in the European Union and the Member

States. Furthermore, it will probably be very important to establish clear national policies and priorities in the sector policies which are most important for the promotion of urban growth.

In the metropolitan policy it is clearly pronounced that the metropolitan regions (Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö) should be able to compete with other European metropolitan regions for business establishment and investments. It is also decided that these metropolitan regions should safeguard and increase their attractiveness.

Against this background a relevant question is if it should not be natural to start a discussion about the need to formulate a policy also for the development of the small and medium-sized cities and towns in Sweden. This is of importance if Sweden wants to take part in the formulation of policy guidelines for an urban policy in the European Union. Even if urban policy is not a Community policy, and probably will not be, it is very evident that the Structural Funds will be directed to measures which will improve the possibilities to promote urban growth. Therefore, in an indirect way Member States must have some kind of national urban policy.

In the work of the earlier mentioned "Urban Development Group/CSD" all Member States of the European Union has been asked to put forward some priorities for the further work of the group. In this connection Sweden has proposed the following questions to be of certain interest:

- a) All Member States of the European Union should present
 - ✗ the definitions used to identify an urban area/urban region (is it just the core of the city/town, or is it the core and a wider geographical area?),
 - ✗ indicators used to define urban areas,
 - ✗ the main features of the national urban policy.

This does not mean any effort to come to a common definition of an urban area/urban region or to implement a common urban policy in an European Union context, but to get an understanding of the definitions, policies etc. in each Member State.

- b) Analysis should be accomplished of urban areas/regions which can lead to a knowledge and an understanding of
 - ✗ the structures and the changes of employment and population in urban areas/regions,
 - ✗ factors which leads to growth or decline of urban areas/regions (job facilities, services, cultural assets, environmental aspects etc.),
 - ✗ what is attracting people, companies, services etc. to develop in and move to certain urban/rural areas/regions,
 - ✗ what measures are used in the Member States to improve a balanced growth of urban areas/regions and to obtain a balanced development between urban and rural areas/regions taking into account a sustainable development perspective,
 - ✗ strategies for the integration of economic, ecological, cultural and social factors in urban development,
 - ✗ the significance of architectural quality for a sustainable urban development.

- c) A description of urban policy as a national framework for and the means to influence investments in different parts of national sectorial policies (infrastructure investments, university structures, etc.).
- d) A description of the most serious problems in urban areas of different population size and the most important priorities in Member States urban policies.
- e) Examples of policies to integrate urban and rural areas/regions.
- f) Examples of policies to regenerate metropolitan areas.
- g) Ways and means of co-operation and integration of urban policy between different political levels (European Union, national, regional and local).

As mentioned before the “Urban Development Group/CSD” has an important task to influence the development of an “Urban Agenda of the European Union” for the years to come. The next Presidencies of the European Union (Portugal and France) have announced that they will give urban matters a very high priority in the structural policy. Urban policy will be on the agenda for informal ministerial meetings during the Presidencies of these Member States.

The European Commission has a work programme for urban matters. This programme will certainly have a big influence on the Commissions proposals for the implementation and use of the structural funds in the European Union and its Member States.

There is a need for a better basis for the discussion and understanding about urban phenomena in Sweden. Therefore, all kinds of studies and research concerning the

- ✗ structural change of urban areas,
- ✗ urban structures,
- ✗ integration of economic, ecological, cultural, social etc. factors and policies,
- ✗ factors behind attractive and non-attractive urban regions,
- ✗ functionality of urban regions,
- ✗ etc.

should be most welcomed.

To conclude: to have a possibility to take an active part in the discussions and decisions about urban development in the European Union, as well as to have competitive urban regions in a European perspective, a question to be answered is if a structured and concise discussion concerning a policy for urban development in Sweden has to start or to be intensified as soon as possible?

For many reasons the answer to this question should be yes.

References

European Commission: Sustainable urban development in the European Union: a framework for action. Brussels, 28.10.1998 (COM/98/605 F).

European Commission: Urban Pilot Projects, Phase II, 1997–99. Project descriptions. Luxemburg, ISBN 92–828–3940–0.

European Commission: European Spatial Development Perspective/ESDP. Towards balanced and sustainable development of the territory of the European Union. Agreed at the informal Council of Ministers responsible for Spatial Planning. Potsdam, May 1999.

Europeiska kommissionen: Operationellt Program URBAN Malmö 1996–1999. Stadskontorets informationsenhet, Malmö stad.

European Commission: Communication from the Commission to the Member States laying down guidelines for the Community Initiative URBAN 2000–2006 (working document 21/112/99).

Europeiska Unionen, Rådet: Rådets beslut om att antaga ett särskilt program för forskning, teknisk utveckling och demonstration om energi, miljö och hållbar utveckling (5058/99).

Proposition 1997/98:165: Utveckling och rättvisa – en politik för storstaden på 2000-talet. Kulturdepartementet, Stockholm.

Näringsdepartementet, Stockholm: Regeringsbeslut 10–02–2000 angående Inbjudan till Göteborgs stad att utarbeta ett förslag till utvecklingsplan för gemenskapsinitiativet URBAN.

UK Presidency of the European Union: Urban Exchange Initiative I. Improving good practice in urban development in the European Union. Informal meeting of Ministers responsible for urban policy of the Member States of the European Union. Glasgow, June 1998.

Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Housing, Germany: Urban Exchange Initiative II. Report on elements of a sustainable urban development in the European Union. Informal meeting of the Ministers responsible for Regional/Spatial Planning of the European Union. Potsdam, May 1999.

Ministry of the Interior, Finland: Urban Exchange Initiative III. Urban development through expertise, research and information. Informal meeting of the Ministers responsible for Spatial Planning and Urban/Regional Policy of the European Union. Tampere, October 1999.

Ministry of the Interior and Ministry of the Environment, Helsinki, Finland: report on the Presidency Conclusions and other documents of the Informal Meeting of the Ministers responsible for Spatial Planning and Urban/

Regional Policy of the European Union on 4–5 October 1999, in Tampere, Finland.

Eurocities Magazine, Summer 1998, No. 8. Agenda 2000: The role of the cities.

Leo van den Berg, Erik Braun and Jan van der Meer. European Institute for Comparative Urban Research, Erasmus University, Rotterdam, the Netherlands: National Urban Policies in the European Union. Responses to urban issues in the fifteen member states.

Rob Atkinson: Europe Needs an Urban Policy. North, the Journal of Nordregio, No 4, September 1999.

- 1 Einar Holm och Ulf Wiberg (Red.), *Samhällseffekter av Umeå universitet*, 1995.
- 2 Örjan Pettersson, Lars Olof Persson och Ulf Wiberg, *Närbilder av västerbottningar – materiella levnadsvillkor och hälsotillstånd i Västerbottens län*, 1996.
- 3 Jeanette Edblad, *The Political Economy of Regional Integration in Developing Countries*, 1996.
- 4 Lena Sahlin och Lars Westin, *Prissättning av subventionerad kultur. Vilka är de internationella erfarenheterna?*, 1996.
- 5 Lars Westin och Mats Forsman, *Regionerna och finansieringen av infrastrukturen: Exemplet Botniabanan*, 1997.
- 6 Erik Bergkvist och Lars Westin, *Estimation of gravity models by OLS estimation, NLS estimation, Poisson, and Neural Network specifications*, 1997.
- 7 Niklas Nordman, *Increasing Returns to Scale and Benefits to Traffic. A Spatial General Equilibrium Analysis in the Case of Two Primary Inputs*, 1998.
- 8 Lars Westin och Niklas Nordman, *The dialogue of universities with their partners: The case of Umeå University, Sweden*, 1998.
- 9 Robert Sörensson, *Systemanalys av godstransporter. Simulering av en uppgraderad Inlandsbana*, 1998.
- 10 Carina Sundgren, *Beräkning av bruttoregionprodukter för Sveriges regioner. En analys av metodvalet och regionindelningens betydelse*, 1998.
- 11 Erik Sondell, *Halvtidsutvärdering av Interreg-projektet Virtual Education Environment MittSkandia*, 1999.
- 12 Erik Sondell, *Det regionala uppdraget: En fjärde uppgift?*, 1999.
- 13 Örjan Pettersson, *Population Changes in Rural Areas in Northern Sweden 1985–1995*, 1999.
- 14 Robert Pettersson, *Foreign Second Home Purchases: The Case of Northern Sweden, 1990–96*, 1999.
- 15 Patrik Asplund och Niklas Nordman, *Attitudes toward the Third Mission: A Selection of Interviews from Seven Universities in Sweden*, 1999.
- 16 Kent Eliasson, Magnus Johansson och Lars Westin, *European Integration: Eastern Europe and the Swedish Regions*, 1999.
- 17 Janerik Gidlund, Sverker Sörlin och Susanne Gidlund, *Ensam hemma. Den norrländska elitens nya syn på regional utveckling*, 2000.
- 18 Christine Hudson, *The University and Regional Reciprocity*, 2000.
- 19 Linda Helgesson, *Why Some Girls Go to School and Others Don't. A study about girls' education on an upper primary level in northern Mozambique*, 2000.
- 20 Hans Åkerlind, *Framtidens stad*, 2000.

21 Göran Aldskogius, *Urban Policy in the Structural Policy of the European Union*, 2000.