

FALP 2010 - GETAFE

TALKING POINTS:

We live at a time when the world is witnessing a global crisis; much more than a financial crisis, it affects society as a whole, the environment, ideologies, and has upset the balance between people and between territories.

It is the most depressed territories and disadvantaged inhabitants that suffer the most virulent consequences of this crisis.

It is in the metropolis where the interaction of movements occurs, where the different modes of relationship between citizens and between these and Local Government are enacted and the problems of everyday life become more glaring.

The direst consequences of the global situation are suffered in the metropolis.

However, although at first glance it might appear contradictory, it is Local Government, a level of governance much closer to the citizens' daily life, the most adequate and efficient arena in which to develop policies of inclusion and social justice.

This position of Town Councils becomes even more significant and crucial in an economic situation like the present one, because it is precisely in the metropolis where the most satisfactory responses to the questions raised can be delivered.

In a word; **think global, act local.**

But to be more specific, we must necessarily talk about peripheral cities and outlying districts of city centres, where the characteristics of this reality materialize most clearly.



Suburbs mushroom quickly in response to urban centres and very often to the exclusion of the working classes from the city centre due to unbridled urban development. True, the concept of suburb is very different from that of some decades ago, when the dormitory suburb came into being without the necessary services or infrastructure, totally dependent on the large city.

Today, this has given way in most cases to perfectly consolidated town centres equipped with infrastructures, with good options for growth, quality of life, industrial and technological development, in both a town planning and demographic framework, with increased accessibility and connectivity between the outskirts and the centre.

However, these suburbs see, or risk seeing, a manifest weakening and reduction of Public Services. An increase in inequality can be expected in these districts; there is more evidence of segregation and more obstacles to the effective integration of the diverse realities that coexist there.

Fighting for social inclusion, we must aim to improve the balance between districts and develop the community, fostering harmonious development of the territory as a whole in order to satisfy the needs of everyone, regardless of where they live.

We have to recognize the advance of alternative options that lead us to think that another world is possible. Options that are becoming a viable alternative and that are taking shape precisely at local level.

As the Belem Commitment of the Forum of Local Authorities for Social Inclusion and Participatory Democracy states:

“The processes of integration of towns and regions, the new multilateralism, experiences of participatory democracy, active policies of social inclusion, the resurgence of politics and public spaces, the defence of human, cultural or linguistic rights, respect for diversity, the raised value of solidarity, the proposals for North-South co-operation, the idea of the Alliance of Civilizations, the promotion of peace culture and non-violence, the building of the supportive metropolis, as well as



overcoming economic models based on the systematic unsustainable exploitation of natural resources to satisfy uncontrolled consumer demand, positive experiences that demonstrate that a socially and environmentally just economy is possible, new proposals for economic models based on the sustainable use of resources and a fair distribution of these; all these are some expressions of the new world we want to build”.

Working from a local base, networking makes absolute sense for re-inventing democracy and makes possible a social transformation based on justice, solidarity, and sustainable development.

This transformation must start locally and then transcend to the national and international spheres.

The networks of Town Councils will become the basic tool and have priority to address the challenges presented by this crisis, due to their capacity to undertake global and coordinated political action founded on a new culture defined by the values mentioned above.

In this context, **the FALP network** can contribute to the construction of other urban spaces, other models for living together based on social inclusion and the real and effective development of human rights and the increase in future opportunities for the city’s inhabitants.

In order to achieve all this it will be necessary to:

- **Defend and develop public services** so that they are accessible to all citizens on an everyday basis. From a clear viewpoint:

Public services are the best instrument for the construction of more sustainable, supportive and democratic cities as they guarantee access to goods and services that are essential for everyday life and for the exercise of fundamental rights. Local Governments must guarantee the extension of this access to the entire territory, without discrimination, to everyone alike.



- Work towards **decentralization**, which brings power closer to the citizens. Decentralization must bring more financial resources and areas of decision to municipalities, since they are in closest contact with the population and are those whose job it is to help solve problems by implementing the pertinent public policies.
- From the principle of commitment to the public interest, the advance of decentralization makes good sense, in order to **increase citizens' participation and thereby further participatory democracy** (reinventing democracy) which upgrades representative democracy in our cities, as the local level is the best one for fostering effective participation. This means opting for models of involvement for everyone, bar none, in town planning, setting up development tools such as participative strategic town planning, participative public budgeting... etc.

In this way we will be able to make local management a paradigm of transparency, effectiveness and efficiency of the public policies carried out.

- These urban spaces are to contribute to the development of a **new culture** based on a liberating political education which empowers the citizens and democracy itself. It will be very difficult to implement public services conceived by and for the population or an effective and transforming participation by citizens if they are not backed up by real educational processes.

In short, we propose working on really important concepts which are fundamental for the future of our cities, such as citizenship, involvement in municipal development and an education in values.

- The metropolis, and especially the outlying districts constitute the best arena to exercise **recently recognized rights, such as the right to freedom of movement** of persons, the right to choose a place to live, to choose where to develop personally and to travel to the city centre or to other suburbs. Or, for example, the **right to a sustainable urban development**, in agreeable cities with good environmental and



residential quality, inclusive of all men and women, without ghettos or exclusion.

- **Proximity** can thus be understood not only as a physical space but a place of relationship where people, groups, institutions can meet and where nearness is the key requirement to address and resolve the problems that arise in our neighbourhoods and cities.

The meeting in Getafe in 2010 of the Forum of Peripheral Local Authorities (FALP) will be an opportunity to consider these central ideas, which constitute the challenges we are about to face and to give shape to the actions we need to coordinate to meet them globally.

We want this to be a meeting at which we can legitimately exercise the right to discuss the metropolis and particularly the periphery; its identity, its importance, what model to use to relate to the major city and to other suburban areas, its problems, but fundamentally the possibilities it offers as a hub for solidarity and social cohesion.

The way ahead is to create the necessary networks between different cities, involving players from the social movements, in order to look for responses to all the questions, from our logically different viewpoints, and to explore in depth the potential and the alternatives that our municipalities can offer.





PROGRAM

THURSDAY JUNE 10th

17:30 – 18:45

OFFICIAL OPENING

19 h – 21 h

Plenary meeting I

Another world is possible: the need to construct the Democratic, Supportive and Sustainable Metropolis in the face of the threat to the climate, the risk of social and territorial fragmentation and exclusion. The importance of committing to fostering social inclusion, exercising rights and citizenship.

Experiences and opinions from working class outlying neighbourhoods.

FRIDAY JUNE 11th

9:30 – 11:30

First session of Round Tables:

1. The metropolis for gender equality and the empowerment of women. Experiences and good practice by local authorities. Women's networks as a tool for equality.

2. The recognition of peripheral districts as sources of cultural production and innovation, promoters of social identity.

3. Networks and citizens' initiatives (urban agriculture, a supportive Economy, volunteer programmes...) as tools for local community development and for building a supportive, sustainable and culturally diverse metropolis.

12:00 – 14:00

Second session of Round Tables:

1. The challenge to local governance: boosting public services and new rights in order to consolidate the welfare state, quality of life and supportive coexistence in the metropolis.



2. *Town planning: a participatory, equalitarian and sustainable model. Access to housing, to public spaces and towards a metropolis with several centres. (Thinking Multicentral).*
3. *The participation and implication of adolescents and young people as leading players in the present and future of our cities. A challenge to Town Councils looking for solidarity in the city.*

16:00 – 18:00

Third session of Round Tables:

1. *Peace Culture as a basis for living together. The importance of preventive policies.*
2. *Committing to decentralized cooperation between suburban districts, a must for the supportive metropolis.*
3. *Backing the multi-cultural and diversity in the metropolis as a foundation for prosperity and social progress. The Alliance of Civilizations in the local context.*

18:30 – 20:30

Plenary meeting 2

The experiences of working class outlying neighbourhoods as opposed to the idea of “global cities”. Commitment to the right to the city for everyone.
Comments from Madrid –Getafe; Sao Paulo – Guarulhos; Paris – Nanterre; Dakar –Rufisque.

SATURDAY JUNE 12th

9:30 – 11:30

Plenary meeting 3:

The contribution that local peripheral authorities can make to achieving new forms of democratic governance in the metropolis.
Participatory democracy, decentralization, cooperation between local Councils and the community for effective and efficient public policies.

12 - 13:30

Conclusions



Registration form

Personal data

Name:		Last name:	
Phone number:			
E-Mail:			

Institution represented

Name of institution:					
Position:					
Address:		City:		Postal code:	
Province/ State:		Country:			

Private address

Phone number:					
E-Mail:					
Address:		City:		Postal code:	
Province/ State:		Country:			

Attendance to the Conference

Number of participants to the II Seminar:

(Only if there is more than one participant)

Name:	Last Name:	Position in the organization:

Number of people travelling with you (spouse, friend, etc):

(Only if there is more than one person travelling with you)

Name:	Last Name:

Language:	
(Official Languages of the Conference: Spanish, English, French and Portuguese)	

Flights/Train information (arrivals and departures)	
Date of arrival:	
Date of departure:	
Time of arrival:	
Time of departure:	
Arrival flight number:	
Departure flight number:	
Do you need transportation from the airport/station to your hotel?	
Do you need transportation from your hotel to the airport/station?	

Lodging information	
Hotel:	
Number of double rooms	
Number of single rooms	
Date of arrival:	
Date of departure:	

PS: Once we receive your registration form, we will send you information about hotel reservations and transportation.

Privacy policy

In compliance with the Spanish Law for the Protection of Personal Data, we hereby certify that the data you provide us will be protected against unauthorised access. Your personal data will only be used for the purpose of this Conference.