FOUNDATION FOR THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

2nd INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON "SMART AND SUSTAINABLE PLANNING FOR CITIES AND REGIONS – SSPCR 2017"

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SMART AND SUSTAINABLE CITIES: WHAT IS SMART? – WHAT IS SUSTAINABLE?

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ABSTRACT

Smart cities are a buzzword supported by a variety of interests including, among others, the new market for knowledge-based consulting making use of Big Data, the market for new urban technologies including human engineering, the potential for integrated urban planning and transportation, the potential for saving resources and fossil energy, and optimising the use of energy and telecommunication networks. Smart cities services can either enhance citizen participation or ignore it. Transnational service suppliers to cities directly involved include, among others, IBM, Siemens, Microsoft, Cisco, Deutsche Telecom, Hitachi and Panasonic.

The large customers of smart cities services include a number of pioneers combining several interests such as Smart City Wien, New Urban Mechanics Boston and Ciudad Inteligente Medellin, plus a number of smaller cities. They enjoy access to international funding.

Sustainable cities are, according to the Bruntland report, those that meet the needs of their present citizens without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This requires the reconciliation of the environmental, social and economic 'pillars' of sustainability, and the political will to finance investments required by voters not yet born. Sustainability applies at the level of the individual buildings, the neighbourhoods, the entire city, its periphery and its region. Benchmarking allows systematic comparisons at each of these levels, focusing on assessment criteria selected according to political orientations. Assessment of best practice requires a clear view of each of the levels of observation, taking into account the policy conflicts between global and local concerns. Global concerns focus on global warming and threats at planetary level, while local concerns focus on the needs and aspirations of citizens "here and now".

The challenge of the Conference will be to combine these different levels of analysis and of action, in favour of cities that are both smart and sustainable.