

Can our cities survive 2.0? Migration and integration in the European metropolis

Brussels | 18 December 2014

Greater Birmingham West Midlands Brussels Office | Avenue d'Auderghem 22-28

Speakers

Mashuq Ally, Head of Equalities and Social Cohesion at Birmingham City Council.

Claire Dhéret, Senior Policy Analyst at European Policy Centre

Mustafa Dikec, Professor of Human Geography at Institut français d'urbanisme (IFU)

Ana Feder, Policy Advisor at Eurocities

Hakan Forsell, Urban Historian at Stockholm University

Wouter Vanstiphout, Architectural Historian at Crimson / Professor Design as Politics (TU Delft)

In 1942 the planner Jean Louis Sert published an outcry to act upon the city that was, allegedly, under threat of overpopulation, blight and war. Today, the very same question that informed Sert's book, is at the heart of the conundrum that policy-makers, administrators and politicians are facing at large: '*Can our cities survive?*'

The pressures on today's metropolitan areas in Europa are numerous. The continuous updating of the urban physique, the on-going influx of people with ever more diverse backgrounds and skill levels and the demands of the globalised economy are among the main drivers of the urban question of the 21st century. Likewise, as many authors have argued recently, cities are 'triumphant', 'genius' and the 'best human invention ever'. In general, people are wealthier in cities, have access to more amenities, have myriad work and education opportunities, and some even claim metropolises are, on average, greener and more sustainable than any other scale of settlement.

Thus, the city is a problem and a solution at the same instance. Migration urges cities to accommodate new groups of people and forces it to adapt to the ever-changing characteristics of the foreign influx. At the same time, however, immigration also creates a share of the urban working force and thereby allows for economic expansion, thus compensating for the often-sluggish growth levels outside the urban cores. Spatial expansions – both vertically and horizontally – confront cities with the logics and limitations of finance, space, diversity and sustainability, but also render new economic, social and cultural possibilities. Cities are also the sites where immigrants are integrated in the *demos*, which involves several challenges, ranging from the formal and legal implications of immigrant involvement in local and national democracies, to the inclusion of immigrants in political constituencies.

In a one-day event organised by the *University of Birmingham*, *University of Groningen* and *Radboud University Nijmegen* and sponsored by the *Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)* and the *Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO)*, we aim to revisit Sert's question by bringing together policy makers, opinion leaders and academics and to discuss the present-day challenges and opportunities of migration to the European metropolis.

In three sessions policy makers, policy advisors and scholars will address issues of migration and integration in the European city on three levels:

- *policy* – urgent policy and political challenges and solutions
- *reflection* – good and bad practices based on experiences and histories
- *theory* – capacities and limitations of the European city in coping with migration and integration

Programme

11.00 - 11.15 Introduction by Stefan Couperus

11.15 - 12.30 Keynote address

- **Mustafa Dikeç**, Professor of Human Geography at Institut français d'urbanisme (IFU)

12.30 - 13.30 Lunch

13.30 - 14.30 Panel I: Diversity and Democracy (chaired by Harm Kaal)

- **Ana Feder**, Policy Advisor at Eurocities
- **Mashuq Ally**, Head of Equalities and Social Cohesion at Birmingham City Council

14.30 - 15.00 Tea break

15.00 - 16.00 Panel II: Migration and Employment (chaired by Jelle van Lottum)

- **Claire Dhéret**, Senior Policy Analyst at European Policy Centre
- **Hakan Forsell**, Urban Historian at Stockholm University

16.00 - 16.30 Conclusion

- **Wouter Vanstiphout**, Architectural Historian at Crimson / Professor Design as Politics (TU Delft)

16.30 - 17.30 Drinks

Registration

Free admission (includes lunch) | Please send an email to brusselsevent2014@gmail.com |
Registration closes 1 December | Check our website at canourcityessurvive.weebly.com