Global Cities Dialogue on the Information Society

**A framework proposal to all cities of the world
and to the European Commission**

**by
the Telecities Network
and the Stockholm Challenge Award**

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Executive Summary

This document presents a framework proposal for *a Global Cities Dialogue* to all the cities of the World and to the European Commission. It is the result of work by the Telecities Network and the Stockholm Challenge Award in the context of The Joint Political Platform Telecities- Stockholm Challenge Award (SCA).

Global Dialogues are an expression of the "European way" to help realise the potential of information-society technologies for the benefit of all countries, regions, cities and individuals. Europe is promoting international dialogues in the belief that the demands of globalisation and convergence of technologies and industries truly requires government, regulators and industry to work together for the benefit of all.

The Global Cities Dialogue
The *Global Cities Dialogue* (along with the *Global Business Dialogue*) is a timely and innovative response to both: (a) the challenge of globalisation, and (b) the importance of cities' sharing and transferring experiences in order to stimulate a global process of information-society learning and development.

Cities are the geographical, political, socio-economic and cultural entities where millions live, work and directly exercise their rights as citizens and consumers. The information society is a massive challenge and presents cities with a barrage of issues, changes and opportunities from democracy to more cost-effective services, including electronic commerce and others. Most cities are only at the beginnings of the learning process and this situation makes a Global Cities Dialogue a most relevant initiative to advance the information society across the globe, helping to reduce the gap between information-rich and information-poor societies. It will also provide a mechanism for an informed interaction with the private sector at local, European and global levels.

Sound Existing Foundations

Europe has sound foundations to be the driving force behind the Global Cities Dialogue. Along with its leading role in globalisation and harmonisation policy processes, Europe possesses:

(1) Pioneering experiences of city's implementation of information society technologies to improve access and services for citizens, customers communities and businesses;
(2) The Telecities network of over 100 European cities; and other complementary initiatives such as ERIS@, TeleRegions Network and Eurocities;
(3) The most important global award for existing information society experiences in the form of the Global Bangemann Challenge and its successor: the Stockholm Challenge Award;
(4) The important role of the private sector both as contributors to, and beneficiaries of, cities' development

Most importantly, there are clear synergies between these activities, making it the right time for the launch of a strategic framework and action in the form of the Global Cities Dialogue.

Tensions to compatibilise

The success of a Global Cities Dialogue is not an easy task. There will be no short-term large impact. The Dialogue must be seen as an evolutionary process taking realistic steps and gradually spreading its influence along with other global initiatives. Among the various tensions to compatibilise, the following are immediately visible:

?? Balancing resources between City, European and global activities.
?? Balancing the role of the private sector in a context of predominance by local governments.
?? Balancing and fostering collaboration and competition.
?? Balancing short-term economic and political cycles v/s long-term requirements.
?? Balancing ambitious long-term goals with available resources.

It may not be possible to accommodate all these tensions all the time, but awareness of their existence is important to try to anticipate them in the design of specific actions for the Global Cities Dialogue.

The Framework for the Global Cities Dialogue

A Global Cities Dialogue on the information society can be bi-lateral as much as multi-lateral and it can involve cities' relations inside countries, Europe and the world in a wide variety of combinations. It can also use many possible activities for its realisation. The document identifies key "ingredients" for the Dialogue, including *Interlocutors, Content* and *Mechanisms* for the overall Dialogue.

Interlocutors: The key interlocutors and drivers at city level are the political authorities representing the cities and acting as conduit for the participation of service, civic and private sector organisations involved in information society experiences.

Content: The Dialogue is about inter-cities flows of knowledge, experiences, best practices, policies and even investment of resources in information society developments. These factors involve specific technologies, processes, standards as well as their integration into new or improved services such as education, health, care and so on. The content of the Dialogue also includes policy initiatives and programmes (e.g., social inclusion, lifelong learning, democracy)

Mechanisms: There are many mechanisms from simple virtual and physical meetings to an Award as the Global Stockholm Challenge Award . The document identifies a "menu" that in combination provides the basis for a rich multi-layer, multi-form process of dialogue.

Resources: The investment of resource will depend very much on the type and number of elements a dialogue will seek to combine and, also, on the transaction costs implied in the number of cities and interlocutors involved in it. A simple exchange of e-mails between two cities' representatives will carry minimal cost, in contrast to technology transfer which is much more gradual and costly.

Start-Up Actions Lines

On the basis of the existing foundations the following major Action Lines are suggested to take the Cities Dialogue forward:

Action line 1: Collection, Networking & Brokering: This will continue gathering information about existing and planned information society projects and initiatives in cities in Europe and the world. It will also maintain and develop further the European and global networks already created through Telecities and the Global Bangemann Challenge, including theJury which will continue in the Stockholm Challenge Award.

Action line 2: Analysis and Creation of Best-practice Models: This action selects leading edge experiences from the databases of Telecities and GBC in order to conduct best practice studies for wide global dissemination.

Action line 3: General Dissemination and Knowledge Sharing: This action gets people together, physically or virtually, to witness, discuss and establish fruitful working relations. A minimum target includes an annual Global Cities Conference with Global Best Practice Exhibit and possibly 3-4 workshops / seminars each year focussing on specific geographical / thematic issues.

Action line 4: Know-How Transfer Mechanisms: This action seeks to create a systematic and sustainable instrument for promoting and fostering transfer of know-how, experience and technological applications between local and regional public administrations. This instrument would enable the involvement of European industry in the process.

The Steering Structure

The paper proposes the formation of a Cities *Steering Committee* with global representation of cities. This Committee will be composed by the Mayors or political representatives of 22 cities, plus one observer from each of the following organisations: the Global Business Dialogue, the Information Society Forum, the European Commission, the Committee of the Regions, and the European Parliament. The Committee will be entrusted with defining and refining the strategic direction of the Global Cities Dialogue. An important criteria for cities to be members of the Steering Committee is that they should match the honour with a clear commitment to offer and implement actions that will help build the Dialogue into an exciting enterprise. The work of the Steering Committee will be supported by a Secretariat provided by the Information Society Activities Centre (ISAC) of the European Commission. The Telecities network will continue to be the promoter of the Dialogue and will act as the European operational arm of the initiatives emanating from the Steering Committee.

Immediate Steps

For the official launch of the Global Cities Dialogue with the signature of the Helsinki Declaration, already three actions are on its agenda. These are:

- ?? Stockholm Challenge Award, committed by the City of Stockholm as follow-on to the Global Bangemann Challenge;
- ?? First thematic conference/single-award on Education and the Information Society, The Global Junior Challenge, committed by the City of Rome and to take place in Rome in November 2000;
- ?? Conference on Electronic Democracy to be held in Issy-Les-Moulineaux, France, in March 2000

Contact Points

- ?? ISAC (Brussels) for the Secretariat of the Cities Steering Committee
- ?? Telecities Coordination Office (Brussels) for general issues of the Global Cities Dialogue

A Global Cities Dialogue on the Information Society.
A framework proposal to all cities of the world and to the European
Commission by

1 Introduction

On March 23rd 1999 The Joint Political Platform Telecities-Global Bangemann Challenge (GBC) met for the first time in Barcelona[1] to discuss and take forward:

?? the growing co-operation between the Telecities/GBC programmes and activities; and

?? the Global Cities Dialogue, first proposed by European Commissioner Martin Bangemann.

The meeting re-asserted the major role of cities in the information society and identified a number of aspects of relevance to the Global Cities Dialogue:

?? the centrality of globalisation and convergence of technologies and industries for the global spread of the information society; and the importance of providing policy responses and mechanisms to encourage harmonisation and the elimination of barriers. Various initiatives are relevant, particularly, the Global Business Dialogue and the Information Society Forum.

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[1]The meeting was convened by joint invitation from European Commissioner Martin Bangemann, the Mayor of Barcelona, Joan Clos, the Mayor of Stockholm, Carl Cederschiold, and the Mayor of Rome, Francesco Rutelli.

?? the existence in Europe of a number of initiatives of relevance for cities and the information society - at city, European and global levels; these include Major Cities of Europe, European Regional Information Society Association (ERIS@) and Teleregions Network.[2]

?? the importance of exploring synergies and stimulating strategic collaboration inside the context of the Global Cities Dialogue;

?? the start of this process with the increasing synergies between Telecities, the GBC and a know-how transfer initiative under consideration in the EU's Information Society Activity Centre (ISAC);

?? the importance of Europe taking a leading and effective role in promoting and implementing the Global Cities Dialogue; this will be a channel to communicate the 'European way' to the world;

?? The importance of the role of the private sector both as contributors to, and beneficiaries of, cities' development

?? the need to integrate the aspects above into a framework that provides both a path for concrete actions and a structure for their implementation.

The aim of this document is to integrate these aspects and present a base "Global Cities Dialogue" framework and scenario for discussion, first, by The Joint Political Platform Telecities-GBC, and immediately after by all players key to the challenge of making the Dialogue a fruitful reality.

With this in mind, the paper is structured as follows. First a brief discussion on the demands of globalisation and convergence for the information society, highlighting the importance of the concept of "global dialogues" and the contribution of the *European way*. This sets the scene for the discussion on the relevance of *The Global Cities Dialogue* in Section 3. Then, section 4 and 5 examine the existing European foundations as well as
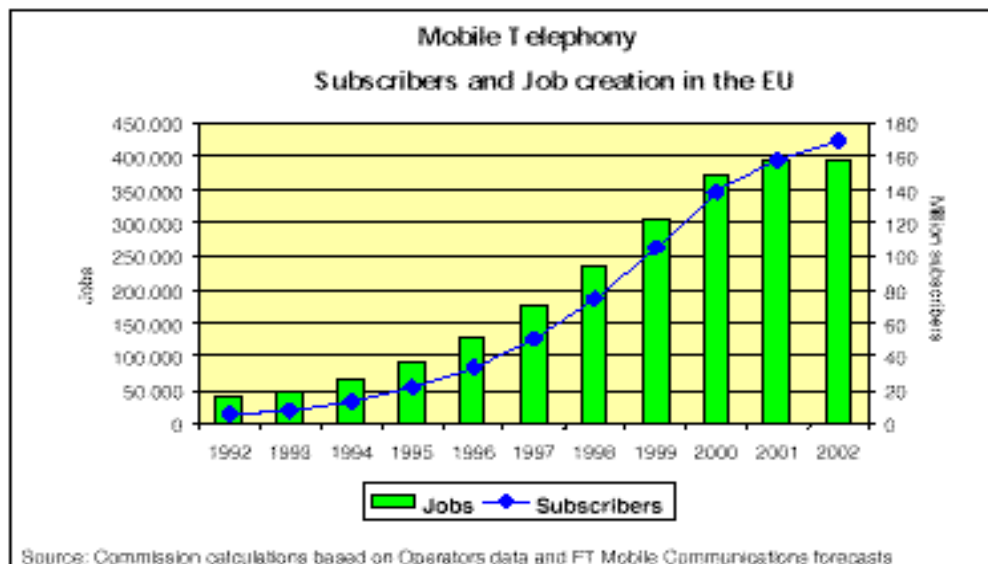
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[2] NOMISMA, *Strategic Study on the Future of Telecities – Final Report*, Telecities, Brussels, December 1998. This study contains summary profiles of organisations relevant to the development of the information society in cities.

the tensions to be compatibilised for a successful Global Cities Dialogue.
Section 6 outlines an open framework with key "ingredients" for the
Dialogue, including *Interlocutors, Content*, *Mechanisms* and *Resources.*
The discussion in Section 7 defines the basis of a workprogramme,
identifying four major *Actions Lines*.Section 8 deals with the organisation of
the Global Cities Dialogue, proposing a Steering Structure.. The final
section outlines the immediate steps.

2   Globalisation and the Information Society

The information society is dawning upon regions, countries and cities. It is
now accepted that the development and implementation of convergent
information and communications technologies (ICTs) will have a major
impact on all types and sizes of organisational entities across the globe -
globalisation.   It is customary to reinforce this point with some of the
staggering statistics of mobile phones, Internet, electronic commerce growth
(see Figures 1, 2 and 3)[3], and the shortening of the time between invention
and diffusion of new technologies. Examples are also sighted of the benefits
accruing to those leading the way in innovation and implementation.
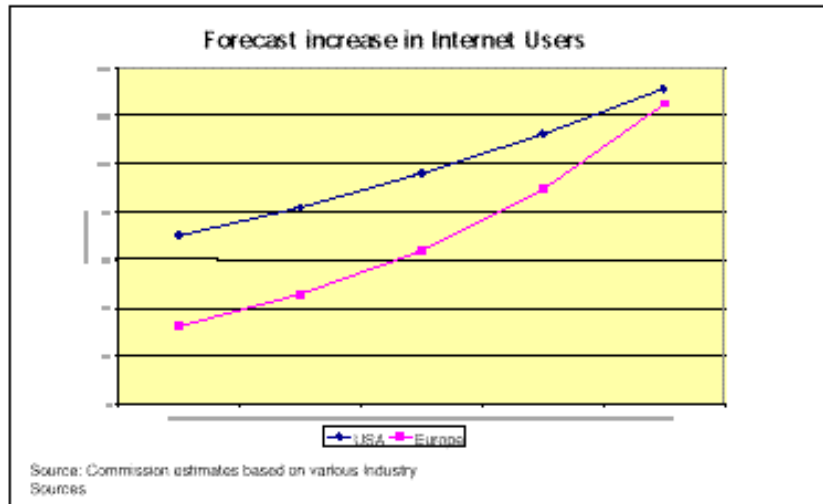

Figure 1. Growth of Mobile Telephony

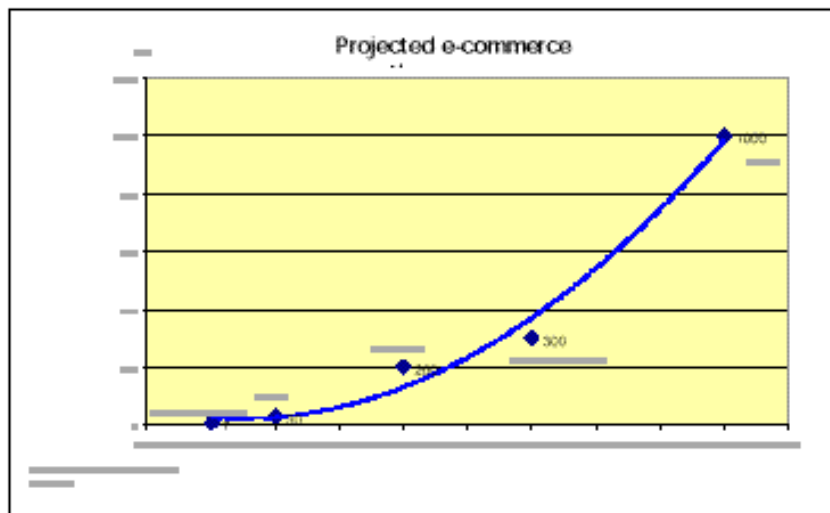Figure 2. Forecast Growth of Internet

Figure 3. Forecast Growth of E-Commerce

2.1   Problems Facing Globalisation and Convergence

The impressive statistics tell only a partial story. There are many complex issues and processes to tackle before information society technologies truly spread across the globe bringing benefits to all. For instance, "the content of some form of network communication could be in conflict with the laws, habits, and culture of certain countries. Secondly, the development of electronic business depend on measures to provide legal security and build up trust and confidence in the medium."[4] Critical global business issues also include taxation, tariffs, IPRs, cryptography, authentication, data protection, liability. On these issues, global consensus is yet to emerge and the primary shaper has so far been the market. It is recognised however that the market or business world alone cannot deal effectively with global areas of governance, let alone with societal issues such the divide between the "information rich" and the "information poor," low technological literacy, poor public access and a shortage of skilled people. Nor can the market deal effectively with essentially political issues such as electronic government, democratic participation, freedom of speech and privacy in the information society.[5] All these areas demand the involvement and dialogue of governments on a global scale.

2.2   *Europe is Leading the Way*

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[4] Martin Bangemann, A New World Order for Global Communications, Speech to Telecom Inter@ctive '97 International Communication Union, Geneva, 8th September 1997. Also CEC, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, The Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of Regions, The Need for Strengthened International Co-ordination, COM (98) 50, Adopted by the Commission on 4 February 1998.

[5] See Censis (Eds.) *Policy for the Information Society: A Global Overview of Political Initiatives, Documents and Proposals*, Rome, 19-20 March 1999.

Europe is at the moment driving the agenda of harmonisation on a wide range of issues of critical importance for the globalisation of the information society. They include legal recognition of digital signatures, encryption, privacy, protection against illegal and harmful content, customs and data protection.[6] In particular, the recent emergence of the concept and mechanisms of *Global Dialogues* is a clear expression of Europe's determination in facilitating the spread of the information society for the benefit of all.

This effort is also clear expression of what is sometimes referred to as the European way - or a third way. This third way is an alternative to countries (a) going their own way, unilaterally, and (b) trying to harmonise national laws without reference to each other. The third way calls for "some form of international agreement" … and calls upon… "Government, regulators and industry to work together to establish a new global framework for communications for the next millennium."[7]

The third way promotes and foster international dialogues in the belief that these "are essential for the achievement of mutual understanding, information exchange, and the emergence of best practices and can serve as a platform for reaching multi-lateral agreements."[8] In this dialogue the European Union can contribute its own experience in generating multi-lateral frameworks to help set up "international mechanisms for achieving

[6] Martin Bangemann, A New World Order for Global Communications, Speech to Telecom Inter@ctive '97 International Communication Union, Geneva, 8th September 1997. p.6.
[7] Ibid, p.5.
[8] Ibid, p.6.

mutual recognition of standards, licensing arrangements, and regulation in general."[9]

In a context of globalisation and convergence, therefore, the European way stresses dialogue and international collaboration in the build up of a global multi-cultural society. It stresses the importance of all nations coming forward with concepts and proposals reflecting their own specific needs. This is vital for developing countries, where such "efforts should be aimed at enabling these countries to use technology to make a leap forward in the development of their economies."[10]

Europe's promotion of *Global Dialogues* definitely offer a way forward and one of such dialogues is the *Global Cities Dialogue*.

3   The Global Cities Dialogue

The information society can only emerge from the evolution of the present society. It is customary to talk about technology legacy as an important factor for implementation. The same is the case for the information society: it can only result from the gradual and dynamic tension between the legacy and the *new*. As such, there are no off-the-shelf recipes to draw upon at this early phase. It is all a learning process and, as a simple criteria, the more complex and large-scale the organisation and the implemented technologies, the greater the difficulties and the longer the time for the transformations to take place.[11]

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[9] Ibid, p.7.

[10] Ibid.

[11] For instance, economists have identified long-waves of 50 years duration for the societal uptake of "techno-economic paradigms" such as ICTs. Freeman, C. (1985) The economics of innovation. *IEE Proceedings* **132**(A-4), 213-221. Also Perez, C. (1985) Microelectronics, long-waves, and world structural change. *World Development* **13** (3), 441-463.

One of the most critical organisational settings for the success of the information society is *the city*. They are the geographical, political, socio-economic and cultural entities where millions live, work and directly exercise their rights as citizens and consumers. And, as other organisations, they also face a barrage of issues, challenges and opportunities from democracy to electronic commerce and many others. The Telecities' Declaration of Manchester contains a summary list of some of the key issues commonly raised by cities:

> … the emerging Information Society should bring real economic and social benefits to all generations of our citizens by:
>
> > •taking into account Information Society Technologies in our urban development policy
> > •promoting a safe use of Information Society Technologies in public services and raise awareness among our citizens and local businesses
> > •guaranteeing equal access for all
> > •launching joint innovative activities to analyse their impact on urban development
>
> … it is essential that these technologies are used and exploited in ways that will bring more training and employment opportunities, strengthen democracy at all levels and improve social cohesion throughout Europe.[12]

It is accepted that ICTs offer a clear mechanism for public authorities to deliver better and more cost-effective services as well as re-invigorating the

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[12] Telecities Declaration of Manchester, *Improving Employment, Democracy and Social Inclusion' through the deployment of information society technologies*, Manchester, June 22nd 1998.

democratic process and regional economic development.[13] Thus, "effective transparency, accessibility, participation and simplification are on the agenda of Municipalities across Europe, and this can only be implemented efficiently through the use of new information and communications technologies and associated re-engineering practices."[14]

Furthermore, national and local governments have a major role to play in stimulating the wide uptake of electronic commerce. After all, the 'public sector in Europe is responsible for over 40% of GDP and is therefore central to creating critical mass of users, educating users, raising awareness and spreading effective demands.[15] Two roles are distinguished for public authoritie s:[16]

?? *facilitators of the e-commerce learning process* - through awareness raising and creation of favourable business environment; and
?? *learners on their own right* – through evolutionary e-commercialisation of PAs' traditional services and transactions,[17] gradually leading to multi-service integration both in the form of online one-stop-shops and smart card schemes.

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[13] Telecities Steering Committee, Telecities Beyond 2000: *A Strategic Action Plan for the Millennium* (Internal Working Document), Telecities, Brussels, 19-20 January 1999.

[14] Ibid., p.1.

[15] C.E.C, Final Report on Public Administration and Government into the Information Society, Strategic Requirements Board for the Fifth Framework Programme, C.E.C./DGXIII, Brussels, 1997, p.1.

[16] Molina, A., Electronic Commerce and Public Administrations: Issues, Opportunities and Realities, in P. Timmers, P., B. Stanford-Smith and P. Kidd. (eds.), *Electronic Commerce: Opening up New Opportunities for Business*, Cheschire Henbury, Macclesfield (UK), 1998, pp.189-200.

[17] See for instance, Michilli, M., and Loriga, F., Using Electronic Commerce to Speed Up and Rationalise Transactions on Digging by Utilities in Rome, in P. Timmers, et al, *op. cit.,* 1998, footnote 16, pp.201-211.

In this context, a common call is for public authorities to "lead by example by both investing in new applications and integrating the use of ICT in internal and external operations."[18] The reasons for this leadership are powerful. The fact is however that most cities are only at the beginnings of the learning process and only a few are leading by example.

This situation makes a Global Cities Dialogue a most relevant initiative to advance the development of the information society. The essence of current processes is, on the one hand, *globalisation and the need for harmonisation*; on the other, *"learning by both experimenting ('learning by doing') and sharing experiences."*[19]

A Global Cities Dialogue would contribute to both of these processes by:

?? giving expression and encouragement to the learning process on a local, European and global scale; enabling cities to learn from each other's experiences of success and failure; and providing a mechanism for a more informed interaction with the private sector.

?? providing a mechanism to involve local government in the overall dialogue on globalisation and convergence. The Global Cities Dialogue would be the organic voice in what may become the "dialogue of dialogues" vis-à-vis the Global Business Dialogue[20] and the Information Society Forum.

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[18] *European Commission* COM (1998) 590, *op. cit.*, footnote 3, p.11.
[19] Telecities Steering Committee (1999), *op. cit.*, footnote 13, p.1. See also, Molina A. and Eurolaboratorio]. *Strategic Telematics Developments in the City of Rome*, Eurolaboratorio, Comune di Roma, 1997.
[20] See European Commission (eds), Summary of Discussion – Business Round Table on Global Communications, Brussels, 29th June 1998. Business Round Table on Global Communications, Annex 2 - Conclusions Drawn up by Industry, Brussels, 29th June 1998.

4   The European Foundations of the Global Cities Dialogue

Europe is in prime position to be the driving force behind an initiative such as the Global Cities Dialogue. The combination of at least four ingredients make up for a sound and currently unique foundation. These are:

1)   Leading role in the policy processes aimed at responding to the requirements of globalisation and convergence;

2)   Some strong pioneering experiences of city's implementation of information society technologies to improve access and services for citizens, customers communities and businesses;3)   The Telecities network of over 100 European cities; and other complementary initiatives such as ERIS@ and Eurocities;

4)   The most important global award for existing information society experiences in the Global Bangemann Challenge and its successor: the Stockholm Challenge Award;

4.1   European Role in Globalisation and Convergence Policy Processes

As indicated earlier in Section 2.2, Europe is at the moment driving the agenda of harmonisation on a wide range of issues of critical importance for globalisation of the information society (e.g., legal recognition of digital signatures, encryption, customs and data protection).

In this process, Europe seeks to promote and foster international dialogues in the belief that the development of the information society truly requires government, regulators and industry to work together for the benefit of all.

This European way is the foundation of the concept and mechanisms of *Global Dialogues*.

4.2   Pioneering Cities' Information Society Experiences

The European Union also possesses revealing experiences of the benefits of implementing information society technologies in cities, often in partnership with the private sector. These may offer important lessons of best practice and can certainly make a useful contribution to the learning processes of other cities. This is clearly recognised in the vision of a technology transfer initiative currently under consideration in the Information Society Activities Centre (ISAC) of the European Commission:

> A growing number of European local administrations have obtained very good and practical results in the telematics field. The know-how accumulated can be transferred to other less advanced and/or smaller cities… Unfortunately, adequate, easily usable and affordable technology, experience as well as know-how transfer mechanisms are not in place[21].

Such initiative has been propounded by the Vice-Mayor of Antwerp, Bruno Peeters,[22] and later by the INFOSOND Consortium co-ordinated by the City of Antwerp. It was also discussed at the EISCO Conference, organised by ELANET in October 1998 and the recommendation is the same: "to create a specific European instrument to provide timely assistance to local and regional governments with regard to know-how transfer in the field of the Information Society."[23]

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[21] Jose Cotta, Information Society Know-how, Technology, Experiences and Best Practices Transfer Mechanisms for Local Administrations, CEC/DGXIII, Brussels, 26 April 1999, p.1

[22] See City of Antwerp, *D.I.C.E.: Towards a Digital Infoport for Cities in Europe*, City of Antwerp, 1999.

[23] Jose Cotta (26 April 1999), *op. cit.,* footnote 21, p.2.

4.3   Telecities and the Global Bangemann Challenge

Similar visions and complementary pursuits are part of the Telecities Network and the Global Bangemann Challenge. In particular, the document *Telecities Beyond 2000* underlines the important role of Telecities by pointing out that there is:

> a need for a European organisation capable to catalyse and stimulate widespread awareness, knowledge and experience sharing, and capabilities to use telematics inside cities and among their citizens. Lack of vision and catalytic actions carry a high risk of Europe and their citizens becoming divided into information-rich and information-poor, with the potential exclusion of a large proportion of the population from mainstream socio-economic activities. Certainly, this challenge is long-term and can only be faced by all players pulling together.[24]

In turn, the Global Bangemann Challenge saw the competition, not as a battle for a prize, but as the creation of a "resource for networking, sharing and learning." In the Global Bangemann Challenge there were no losers. Thus,

> The spirit of the Challenge is to stimulate networking, sharing and emulation of knowledge and experiences to enrich and inform the practice of those individuals and organisations driving the dawn of the information society. The Challenge is fundamentally about 'building the future together' rather than a simple competition of one project against another. In the vision of the Challenge every participant is intended to be a winner by joining a constituency of pioneers who offer a rich 'reservoir' of lessons and learning experiences. In addition, participants are on a prestigious world's stage with enhanced opportunities for interactions and potential partnerships with projects in other cities and countries from all continents of the globe.

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[24] Telecities Steering Committee (1999), *op. cit.,* footnote 13, p1.

It is clear that the foundations exist and the time is ripe to make a concerted effort to bring these pieces together into a strategic global city initiative for the Information Society. The framework for such an initiative is the Global Cities Dialogue.

5   Some Visible Tensions in Making the Global Cities Dialogue Work

The success of any framework of action depends on the effectiveness with which it harmonises existing and potential tensions, particularly, aligning ambitions and actions to resources. Crucial to this alignment will be the understanding that the Global Cities Dialogue is not a process that will produce global benefits in the short term. It must be seen in time and space as an evolutionary process taking realistic steps and gradually spreading its influence along with other global initiatives.

There are a number of tensions that a Global Cities Dialogue must recognise and seek to accommodate in its programmatic framework. The following are amongst the most visible:

?? *The City – Europe - the world*. There is a need to balance a Dialogue's activities and resources in a way that effectively and fruitfully integrates these three dimensions of the Information Society. An immediate question is who will pay for it?

?? *Private - public sector*. There is a need to balance the role of the private sector with the predominant role of local governments.

?? *Collaboration – competition*. There is a need to balance and, indeed, foster the role of both collaboration and competition in the processes leading to the information society;

?? *Short-term economic and political cycles v/s long-term requirements.* There is a need to accommodate the long-term requirements of the Global Cities Dialogue with the short term pressures of politics and business cycles;

?? *Resource - ambitions.* There is a need to balance the long-term goal with realistic short- to medium-term objectives in accordance with available resources.

It may not be possible to accommodate the results of all these tensions all the time at the same time. It is however important to have them in mind to anticipate both possible sources of imbalances and, above all, to try to design Framework processes and mechanisms that may flexibly absorb and even benefit from their effects.

6   Building Global Cities Dialogue on Existing Foundations

Section 4 above revealed a core set of actions providing sound foundations to start the process of building the Global Cities Dialogue. Undoubtedly, these will be enriched in the course of the consultation that will follow the enlarged circulation of this discussion document. For the time being, however, the following initial scenario makes an effort to accommodate both the "visible tensions" and the European strengths (Sections 5 and 6 above).

Figure 4 and Table 1 illustrate the wide range of layers and possible ingredients available to realise a Global Cities Dialogue that contributes fruitfully to advance the information society in cities. In particular, Figure 1 stresses that inter-cities dialogue can be bi-lateral as much as multi-lateral

and it can involve relations inside countries, Europe and the world in a wide variety of combinations. An ambitious Dialogue would aim to foster relevant information-society relations among as many cities as possible at all layers in a gradual long-term process. The questions are:

?? Who are the interlocutors?

?? What is the content of the dialogue?

?? What are the mechanisms of the dialogue? And what will they produce?

?? Who pays for the dialogue?

?? What initial core of activities could set the dialogue in motion?

?? What would be the shape and representation of a Steering Organisation?

?? How will it relate to other Global Dialogues?

Table 1 provides a menu of ingredients to build answer to these questions. The first two top rows stress the concepts already illustrated in Figure 4. In turn, the first column from left to right contains the *Interlocutors* in the dialogue, the second and third the *Content* of the Dialogue, and the fourth the *Mechanisms* of the Dialogue. The bottom row contains a possible *Steering Structure* for the overall Dialogue.
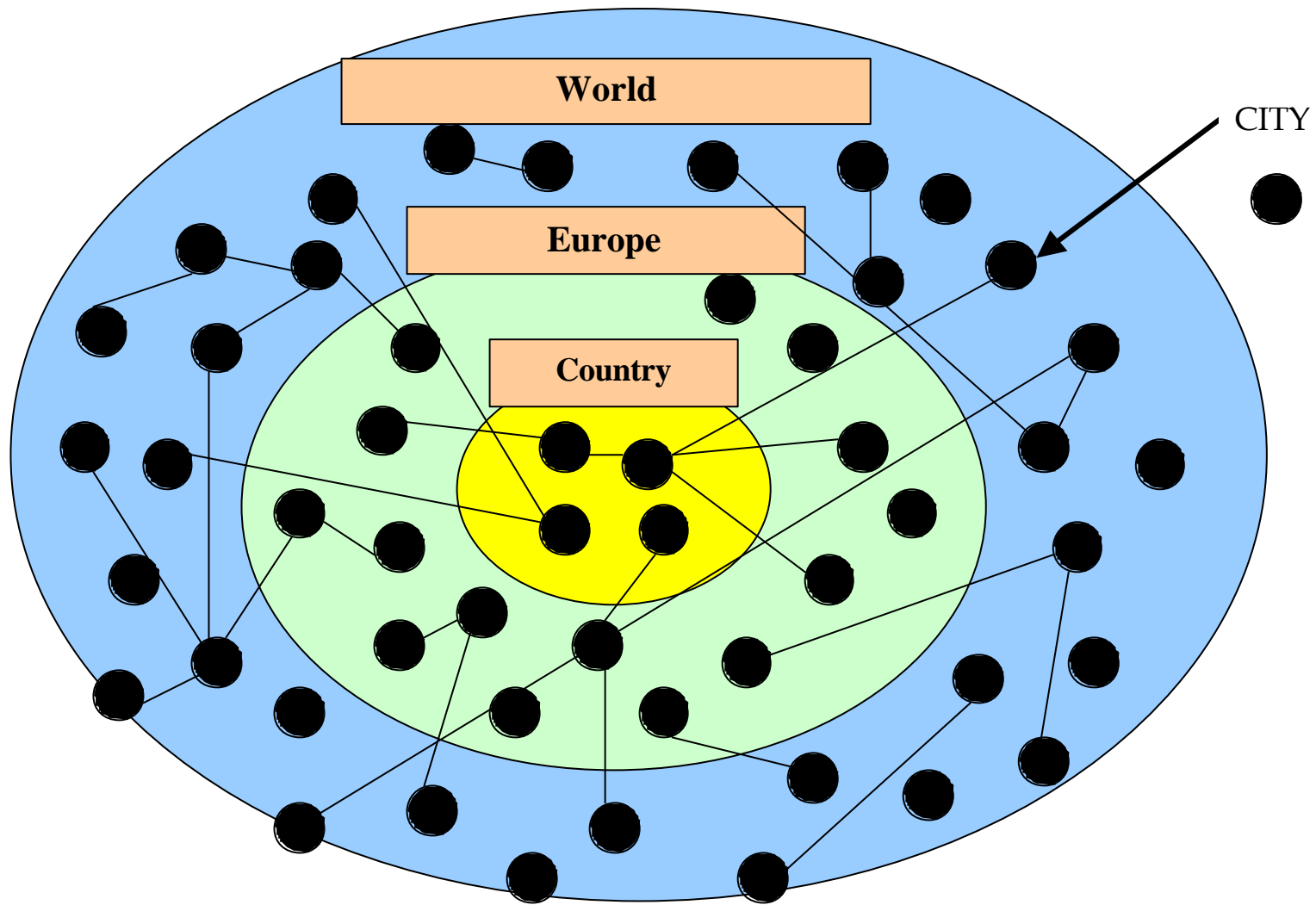
Figure 4. Illustration Of Levels Of Possible Inter-Cities Dialogue In A Global Cities Dialogue

Table 1		
Example of Ingredients for Bilateral or Multilateral Information Society Global Cities Dialogue		
City ——▶ Country ——▶ Europe ——▶ World		
Interlocutors	**Content of Dialogue**	**Mechanisms of Dialogue**
Political Authorities - **(Local Governments)** + **Private Sector** + **Civic Organisations**	Knowledge Experiences Best Practices Policies Resource Investment	Technologies and standards (e.g., new components, systems, processes and standards) New or Improved Services (e.g., education, care, health, etc.) Initiatives and programmes (e.g., social inclusion, lifelong learning, democracy)	Database Best practice studies Award Conference (virtual or physical) Meetings (v or p) Exhibition (v or p) Web Working Groups Workshops & seminars (v or p) Brokering Know-how transfer
Possible Steering Structure of the Global Cities Dialogue **Steering Committee with Global Representation (22 Cities members + Observer Members from Global Business Dialogue, Information Society Forum, European Commission, Committee of the Regions, and European Parliament)**		

6.1   Interlocutors

The key interlocutors and drivers at city level are the political authorities of Local Governments. The Dialogue must have strong backing of political authority that will represent the cities and act as a conduit for the participation of service, civic and private sector organisations involved in information society experiences. The private sector has a clear role and an opportunity to benefit from the potential expansion of business from one city to another. Indeed, an effective Global Cities Dialogue will generate enhanced awareness about new practices and solutions and, consequently, enhanced opportunities for businesses. The tension public - private sectors is thus resolved through the dominant role of local government authorities in driving the Dialogue, and the participation of the private sector through the enhanced business opportunities to be generated by the Dialogue.

6.2   Content of Dialogue

In the last analysis the substance of the Dialogue is about the inter-cities flow of knowledge, experiences, best practices, policies and even investment of resources (2nd column). In turn, these factors manifest themselves through technologies, processes and standards and their integration into new or improved services such as education, health, care and so on. Policy initiatives and programmes are also included such as concrete programmes to promote social inclusion, lifelong learning, democracy and, generally, an information society for all.

6.3   Mechanisms of Dialogue

There are many mechanisms to make the Content flow among cities at country, European and global levels, from simple virtual and physical meetings to an Award as the Global Bangemann Challenge or its successor the Stockholm Challenge Award. In a piecemeal fashion, some will be more effective for certain objectives than for others. In combination, they provide the elements for a really rich multi-layer, multi-form process of dialogue.

6.4   Paying for the Dialogue

The realisation of any type of Dialogue requires investment of resource (e.g., financial, human, time resources). The cost will depend very much on the type and number of elements a dialogue will seek to combine (see Table 1) and, also, on the transaction costs implied in the number of cities and interlocutors involved in it. At the bottom line, a simple exchange of e-mails between two cities' representatives can be construed as a dialogue at minimal costs. However if technology transfer is involved, this process is much more gradual and costly and will require probably significant investment. Political authorities of a "best-practice" city are unlikely to want to invest resource in order to help transfer this best practice to another city, unless there is some form of *quid pro quo*. Political accountability means value-for-money justifications for the use of taxpayer funds.[25] In principle, beneficiary cities (along with the private sector) are most likely to carry the responsibility for the investment since the value-for-money of any transfer will accrue to them. However, political, cultural, "twinning" ties may prompt a transferring city to want to contribute to such investment.

It is not the purpose of this report to specify any mechanism/s at this level. This can only be the result of cities' interacting in the course of the dialogue. In this respect the report provides an "open framework" with a "menu" of ingredients to be combined as deemed appropriate by the interlocutors. This open framework is the key to balancing a Dialogue's activities and resources at the three layers of *The City – Europe - the world*.

6.5   Europe's Driving Role - Catalytic Actions and Steering Structure

Within the "open framework," the real role of the Global Cities Dialogue is to stimulate and implement a selected number of catalytic actions and Steering Structure to help:

?? cities to discover and learn about each other's information society experiences,

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[25] See City of Antwerp (1999), *op. cit.,* footnote 22.

?? cities to establish the types of bi-lateral and/or multi-lateral relations choosing the most appropriate blends of ingredients (see Table 1) to advance the development of the information society,

?? cities to participate in a "dialogue of dialogues" along with the Global Business Dialogue and the Information Society Forum,

?? cities to contribute to the solution of the problems slowing down the globalisation of the information society for the benefit of all.

These are the areas where the European cities and the European Commission should consolidate their driving and leading role by building on the considerable strength already accumulated (see Section 4) and by simultaneously inviting other cities of the world to join and contribute.

7 Catalytic Actions to Start the Global Cities Dialogue

The complementary and synergistic programmes of the Telecities network and the Global Bangemann Challenge/Stockholm Challenge Award already implement a range of mechanisms that can be used as a foundation to catalyse a Global Cities Dialogue. These include primarily, conferences, workshops, brokering, databases of experts and projects and the most important global award for existing information society experiences. Some of these activities are at European level such as those of Telecities, others are already at global level such as those of the Award.

Telecities in particular is a pioneer in the creation of a collaborative learning environment for city public administrations. It is the first organisation of its kind anywhere in the world and a true expression of the European way forward into the information society. Telecities' membership is made of cities' direct senior representation, making it an acknowledged instrument and channel for cities to exchange experiences and above all working together in common problems.

It can be said that Telecities has implemented the fundamentals of a *European Cities Dialogue* and many European cities have benefited from a wide range of activities and opportunities to build together - from specific technology projects to broader policy issues. This gives the Telecities network the natural role of promoter of the Global Cities Dialogue, something already reflected in the presentation and promotion of this framework proposal.

At policy level, for instance, Telecities has helped the diffusion of policy practices among different cities, by identifying and creating awareness of their existence and by responding to cities' requests for information or contacts. Telecities has also supported the European Commission in the elaboration of European policy for public administrations and the information society.

In parallel, at the level of practical information society problems and solutions, many cities have benefited from Telecities' dynamic programme of activities aimed at stimulating learning through exchanges of knowledge and best practice. Thus Telecities run four well-attended conferences a year, and these rotate across European cities in an effort to disseminate as widely as possible the accumulated experiences of European cities. In addition Telecities Working Groups meet four times a year focusing discussion on areas of critical importance for local authorities. The nine themes are:

Public Administration
Electronic Democracy
Quality of life for Disadvantaged People
Healthcare
Environment
Economic Development
Employment and Teleworking
Education and Training
Standards

On the basis of these activities, exchanges and sharing, local authorities have been able to work together to define concrete project proposals aimed at solving common information society problems. Here European funding has been extremely important and Telecities has undoubtedly been the critical catalyser organisation. The value of this role has been recognised by its membership of over 100 cities and by the European Commission. Thus, an important part of Telecities funding actually comes from members' subscriptions.

Like Telecities, the Bangemann Challenge also stands in the category of pioneering information society experiences. Indeed, it is pertinent here to pay tribute to the vision and generosity of the City of Stockholm for having given the world the two Bangemann Challenges. These two "contests" have demonstrated the enormous value and appeal of the concept of Global Award at this early stage of the information society. It has created a resource for pioneering projects, experiences and individuals to become visible, to network, and to learn from each other. It has also offered those who are battling day to day to build the information society in their cities and countries, often in poorly resource conditions, the possibility to dream of global recognition for the fruits of their labours. It has created the possibility of a fleeting but highly energising event for the less glamorous days of most of the year. Not surprisingly, the last Global Challenge followed a first already highly successful European Challenge, with a quantum leap reflected in a fourfold increase of projects assessed by the International Jury.

Now, the time is for a qualitative leap by making the Award a central piece of the Global Cities Dialogue. The created resource should lead to further brokering, contacts and initiatives as those which have already taken place during the Challenge. Thus, cities have established relationships and the Stockholm Challenge Award Office is now receiving / requests for comments that can help improve projects. During the contest, a global virtual seminar attracted hundreds of people to discuss a few selected projects from the Challenge. Many point to the inspirational role of the Challenge and, indeed, some are already submitting their projects to the new contest. The database now possesses an unparalleled collection of information from projects from all over the world. It is a prime resource for learning about best practices and for promoting them through

studies, conferences and web interactions. These are all manifestations bearing witness to the opportunity to take a qualitative step in promoting brokering, sharing and learning in the context of the Global Cities Dialogue.

Many lessons have been learnt from the running of the two Challenges. A new contest would have to apply these and be refined to accommodate possible new requirements of the Global Cities Dialogue. For instance, it is proposed that a major multiple Award ceremony, conference and exhibition will continue to be run by Stockholm; whereas a thematic conference/single award could be rotated among cities around the world. These cities would bid to the Steering Structure of the Global Cities Dialogue (see below) to run the conference/ single-theme award at their cost.

The Award would underpin and give a sounder reality to the following Action Lines for the Global Cities Dialogue, proposed and accepted during the Barcelona Meeting of The Joint Political Platform Telecities-Global Bangemann Challenge.[26]

7.1 Action line 1: Collection, Networking & Brokering

The purpose is twofold:

?? To continue gathering information about existing and planned information society projects and initiatives in cities in Europe and the world. It uses the www, publications, conferences and the pull of the Award to maintain a database of IS projects. This action may explore the opportunities for synergies with the database of the Global Inventory Project (GIP).

?? To maintain and develop further the European and global networks already created through Telecities and the Global Bangemann Challenge, including the, including theJury which will continue in the Stockholm Challenge Award.. Proactive information society brokering among members of the network is an essential task of this activity. For instance, the GIP has excellent information but seems to lack the proactiveness exhibited by Telecities and the GBC.

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[26] Telecities-GBC, *Global Cities Dialogue on the Information Society*, draft document 3, March 1999.

Main Dialogue Mechanisms: Award, database, Internet, brokering

Main players: The Telecities Co-ordination office in Brussels together with the Stockholm Challenge Award Office in Stockholm and the European Commission.

Cost: Depend on depth and breath of action

Likely Funding Sources: Cities, EU projects and potential private sector contribution through sponsorship of Award

7.2 Action line 2: Analysis and Creation of Best-practice Models

Most information in the databases of Telecities, GBC and GIP is analytically un-processed for purposes of knowledge and best-practice generation, transfer and learning. This is a fundamental weakness of Content for a Global Cities Dialogue that Action line 2 seeks to eliminate.

The leading IS experiences of cities in the Telecities network, the Global Bangemann Challenge, and other complementary initiatives such as Major Cities of Europe, ERIS@ and Teleregions provide rich sources for identifying and articulating the best technical-business practices implemented in the processes of successful cities. It requires selecting leading edge experiences from the information collected in the databases; and researching them further through interviews with the key individuals involved in these projects. The Award offers a sophisticated mechanism for selection of best practice experiences. To encourage knowledge accumulation and comparison, it is desirable to specify broadly what constitutes a best-practice study.

These actions are likely to be carried out by the national networks of Telecities members in co-operation with research institutions in their EU member states. They may also be carried out through international collaboration involving cities and research institutes from different countries. The results of the studies are reported back to the Telecities Office to be entered into the Best Practice database.

Main Dialogue Mechanisms: Best-practice studies, Award, database, Internet, meetings.

Main players: Telecities Co-ordination Office in Brussels, the Stockholm Challenge Award Office in Stockholm, the national networks of Telecities members, public and private R&D institutions and the European Commission.

Cost: Depend on quantity and quality of action

Likely Funding Sources: Cities, EU and national projects and potential private sector contribution.

7.3   Action line 3: General Dissemination and Knowledge Sharing

General dissemination and sharing of IS best-practice knowledge requires getting people together, physically or virtually, to witness, discuss and establish fruitful working relations. This action creates a meeting and "marketplace" for best practice projects and "clients."

A variety of physical or virtual mechanisms is available, including major annual conferences with associated "Best Practice Exhibition", or workshops and seminars subject to geographical as well as thematic differentiation of interests. Global virtual seminars as demonstrated by the GBC are also possible and, of course, the highlight event of the Award ceremony.

These actions can be blended to create an effective agenda within the confines of available resources. A minimum target includes an annual Global Cities Conference with Global Best Practice Exhibit and possibly 3-4 workshops / seminars each year focussing on specific geographical / thematic issues, (e.g., Electronic Commerce in the EuroMed Region etc.). Telecities will arrange these seminars and conferences, promoting also the participation of cities outside Europe. Collaboration with organisations interested in similar activities such as ITU and InfoDev/World Bank will be pursued.

<u>Main Dialogue Mechanisms</u>: Conference, exhibition, workshop, seminars, award, best-practice studies, Internet.

<u>Main players</u>: All Global Cities Dialogue partners, including Telecities, the GBC and the European Commission. Potentially, organisations such as InfoDev/World Bank may play an important role.

<u>Cost</u>: Depend on quantity and quality of actions.

<u>Likely Funding Sources</u>: Cities, EU and national projects, potential private sector sponsorships and contrib utions from other international organisations.

7.4   Action line 4: Know-How Transfer Mechanisms[27]

This Action line seeks to create a systematic and sustainable instrument for promoting and fostering transfer of know-how, experience and technological applications between local and regional Public Administrations. It is under consideration by the European Commission for application primarily inside Europe. The transfer is conceived not in a mechanistic fashion, but rather as an innovation process involving a deep dialogue between the parties. A pre-condition is that the "transferring" PA possesses the understanding, experience and adaptable solutions to the beneficiaries' problems. Simultaneously, the beneficiary cities must demonstrate the strongest possible commitment to adopting and adapting the "transferred" applications. Indeed, to be successful, these applications must respond to the needs of citizens, enhancing quality of services and living conditions.

The sustainable transfer instrument could take the shape of an autonomous body, enabling the involvement of European industry in the process. One modality could be a European network of "advanced cities" directly working on information society solutions and supported by both political authorities and private partners. At the same time, "the creativity of the know-how providers as well as of the beneficiaries in the definition of the most suitable instrument should be stimulated."

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[27] Based on the document written by Jose Cotta (26 April 1999), *op. cit.,* footnote 21, p.2.

This fits the spirit of the Global Cities Dialogue of creating awareness of the existence of practical solutions implemented by advanced cities; of bringing cities together to learn from each other out of their own interest and determination, and of establishing mechanisms to stimulate processes of transfer of solutions chosen by "less-advanced cities."

8   The Steering Structure of the Global Cities Dialogue

The bottom row of Table 1 suggested a possible *Cities Steering Committee* with global representation of cities. The representatives would be Mayors or their delegated political representatives. The Cities Steering Committee could be entrusted with defining and refining the strategic direction of the Global Cities Dialogue as well as with supporting the fund-raising activities for the Dialogue's programme (including the Committee's own operation). It should define its own governance, working structure, meeting schedules and it will also have to maintain a careful record of the deliberations.[28]

Members of the Steering Committee would be nominated by cities in the regions they represent and half of the member cities could rotate every year in order to ensure change as well as continuity. This means that, at the beginning, half of the represented cities would stay for only one year and every other city would serve for a period of two years.

However, to give immediate reality to the Dialogue, a first group of founder cities meets in Helsinki on the 23rd of November during the IST Conference to formally launch the initiative. This group of cities will then work on setting up a first Steering Committee that will be in charge of the Dialogue for the first two years.

Telecities, the Stockholm Challenge Award and the European Commission strongly believe that <u>an important criteria for cities to be members of the Steering Committee is that they should match the honour with a clear commitment to offer and implement actions that will help build the Dialogue into an exciting enterprise</u>. Therefore all cities

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[28] There are parallels with the Global Business Dialogue. See Global Business Dialogue Brief, DGXIII/TF/19/04/99.

aspiring to be part of the Steering Committee should demonstrate such a commitment. Cities representing regions, for instance, should be prepared to organise meetings in their respective regions to promote the "sharing' spirit of the Dialogue and to nominate the next representative of the region.

The Cities Steering Committee is also the level at which the Global Cities Dialogue formally engages other global initiatives such as the Global Business Dialogue and the Information Society Forum's emerging Global People's or Societal Dialogue. This "dialogue of dialogues" would provide an appropriate setting for encouraging agreements on the many global matters at present slowing down the globalisation of the information society for the benefit of all.

Finally, the work of the Steering Committee will be supported by a Secretariat provided by the Information Society Activities Centre (ISAC) of the European Commission. In turn, the Telecities network will continue to be the promoter of the Dialogue and will act as the European operational arm of the initiatives emanating from the Steering Committee.

8.1   Proposed Composition of First Cities Steering Committee

The proposed global composition of the Cities Steering Committee includes 22 member cities spread as follows:

Africa – 2 cities
Asia – 3 cities
Europe – 8 cities
The Americas – 6 cities
Middle East – 2 cities
Oceania – 1 city

Plus one observer from each of the following organisations: the Global Business Dialogue, the Information Society Forum, the European Commission, the Committee of the Regions, and the European Parliament. This would make a total Committee of 27 members.

Immediate Actions

Three actions are already on the agenda of the Global Cities Dialogue, following the signature of the Helsinki Declaration. These are:

?? *The Stockholm Challenge Award*, committed by the City of Stockholm as follow on to the Global Bangemann Challenge;
?? First thematic conference/single-award on Education and the Information Society, *The Global Junior Challenge*, committed by the City of Rome and to take place in Rome in November 2000;
?? Conference on Electronic Democracy to be held in Issy Les Moulineaux, France March 2000

Other members of the Cities Steering Committee are expected to make concrete proposals to host specific events or activities of the Dialogue.

For further information, the following contact points are available:

?? ISAC (Brussels) for the Secretariat of the Cities Steering Committee (Luis Lozano, Ph: +32-2-296.8213, luis.lozano@dg13.cec.be)

?? Telecities Coordination Office (Brussels) for general issues of the Global Cities Dialogue (Ph:+32-2-5520868, telecities@mcr1.poptel.org.uk)