



# Culture - A symbolic or economic success factor for urban development planning?

Case study - Brussels

## Analysis of cultural development initiatives for the metropolitan city of Brussels

| Summary of the major points of the “ <i>Business Route 2018 for Metropolitan Brussels</i> ” initiative |  |                                     |                                       |                                     |        |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |        |      |      |       |      |      |        |      |      |           |      |      |            |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |      |        |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |       |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------|------|------|------|------|------|-----------|------|------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|-----------|------|------|--------|------|------|-------|------|------|--------|------|------|-----------|------|------|------------|------|------|--------|------|------|----------|------|------|--------|------|------|--------|------|------|----------|------|-------|
| Main Objective   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extensive <b>multidisciplinary</b> project for <b>economic development</b>, in which culture is not the overriding focal point of the strategy but is nevertheless one feature of the overall action plan.</li> <li>Objective of the initiative: to further develop the metropolitan city of Brussels’ major assets with a view to stimulating <b>growth and creating more jobs</b>.</li> </ul>   |                                     |                                       |                                     |        |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |        |      |      |       |      |      |        |      |      |           |      |      |            |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |      |        |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |       |
| Population   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>2 million inhabitants</b>, just below 20% of the population of Belgium.</li> </ul>   |                                     |                                       |                                     |        |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |        |      |      |       |      |      |        |      |      |           |      |      |            |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |      |        |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |       |
| Area covered   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>The Brussels-Capital Region, Brussels Halle-Vilvoorde Region and the Walloon Brabant Region.</b> (35 municipalities)</li> </ul>  |                                     |                                       |                                     |        |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |        |      |      |       |      |      |        |      |      |           |      |      |            |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |      |        |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |       |
| Context and history  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>A high performing region in economic terms, whose growth is tailing off:</b> one of Europe’s most productive regions, but yielding ground to other European metropolitan cities, in particular in relation to average growth rates (ranked 8<sup>th</sup> of out the 14 urban regions in Europe) and with regard to creating jobs (ranked 8<sup>th</sup> out of 14).</li> <li><b>A weak point:</b> the administrative and political dissection of the region hinders the development of an integrated vision of the area as a whole.</li> <li><b>Brussels and its economic hinterland boast strong potential</b> as a great cultural metropolis. Its trump cards:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Country’s economic driving force (30% of the country’s economic activity): a development which stems mainly from knowledge-intensive sectors</li> <li>International recognition which makes it one of the world’s top cities for hosting conferences</li> <li>Powerful internationalisation due to the presence of European and International institutions ( which generate between 13 to 14% of employment and of GDP)</li> <li>An attractive region which is becoming increasingly heavily populated</li> </ul> </li> </ul>   |                                     |                                       |                                     |        |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |        |      |      |       |      |      |        |      |      |           |      |      |            |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |      |        |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |       |
| Development Stakes   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Concern: struggling to attract and retain a qualified workforce</b> due to crippling fiscal pressure and a very stringently regulated labour force</li> <li><b>Urgent need for a new growth dynamic</b>, based on the desire to draw in new talent to secure long term socio-economic growth.</li> </ul> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 60%;"> <table border="1"> <caption>Approximate data from the bubble chart</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>City</th> <th>Average share in nom. GDP (1995-2006)</th> <th>Growth of real GVA (1995-2006 p.a.)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>Dublin</td><td>6.5%</td><td>6.5%</td></tr> <tr><td>Lyon</td><td>3.5%</td><td>3.5%</td></tr> <tr><td>Randsstad</td><td>3.5%</td><td>2.5%</td></tr> <tr><td>Milan</td><td>4.5%</td><td>2.5%</td></tr> <tr><td>MEAV</td><td>5.5%</td><td>2.5%</td></tr> <tr><td>Edinburgh</td><td>6.5%</td><td>2.5%</td></tr> <tr><td>London</td><td>7.5%</td><td>2.5%</td></tr> <tr><td>Paris</td><td>7.5%</td><td>2.5%</td></tr> <tr><td>Madrid</td><td>9.5%</td><td>2.5%</td></tr> <tr><td>Frankfurt</td><td>3.5%</td><td>1.5%</td></tr> <tr><td>Luxembourg</td><td>3.5%</td><td>1.5%</td></tr> <tr><td>Berlin</td><td>4.5%</td><td>1.5%</td></tr> <tr><td>Stokholm</td><td>5.5%</td><td>1.5%</td></tr> <tr><td>Vienna</td><td>5.5%</td><td>1.5%</td></tr> <tr><td>Zurich</td><td>3.5%</td><td>0.5%</td></tr> <tr><td>Brussels</td><td>3.5%</td><td>-1.0%</td></tr> </tbody> </table> </div> <div style="width: 35%;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Economic impact of culture:</b> the Belgian Metropolitan Region (BMR) is the only urban region in Europe (along with Zurich) where the leisure and tourism industry makes a <b>negative contribution to the GDP</b> (1995-2006), as illustrated by the diagram.</li> <li><b>Culture</b> has become one of the themes upon which the urban region of Brussels is focused, it is <b>not, however, top of the list of priorities in terms of overall approach</b>.</li> </ul> </div> </div> | City                                | Average share in nom. GDP (1995-2006) | Growth of real GVA (1995-2006 p.a.) | Dublin | 6.5% | 6.5% | Lyon | 3.5% | 3.5% | Randsstad | 3.5% | 2.5% | Milan | 4.5% | 2.5% | MEAV | 5.5% | 2.5% | Edinburgh | 6.5% | 2.5% | London | 7.5% | 2.5% | Paris | 7.5% | 2.5% | Madrid | 9.5% | 2.5% | Frankfurt | 3.5% | 1.5% | Luxembourg | 3.5% | 1.5% | Berlin | 4.5% | 1.5% | Stokholm | 5.5% | 1.5% | Vienna | 5.5% | 1.5% | Zurich | 3.5% | 0.5% | Brussels | 3.5% | -1.0% |
| City   | Average share in nom. GDP (1995-2006)  | Growth of real GVA (1995-2006 p.a.) |                                       |                                     |        |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |        |      |      |       |      |      |        |      |      |           |      |      |            |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |      |        |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |       |
| Dublin   | 6.5%   | 6.5%                                |                                       |                                     |        |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |        |      |      |       |      |      |        |      |      |           |      |      |            |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |      |        |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |       |
| Lyon   | 3.5%   | 3.5%                                |                                       |                                     |        |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |        |      |      |       |      |      |        |      |      |           |      |      |            |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |      |        |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |       |
| Randsstad  | 3.5%   | 2.5%                                |                                       |                                     |        |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |        |      |      |       |      |      |        |      |      |           |      |      |            |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |      |        |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |       |
| Milan  | 4.5%   | 2.5%                                |                                       |                                     |        |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |        |      |      |       |      |      |        |      |      |           |      |      |            |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |      |        |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |       |
| MEAV   | 5.5%   | 2.5%                                |                                       |                                     |        |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |        |      |      |       |      |      |        |      |      |           |      |      |            |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |      |        |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |       |
| Edinburgh  | 6.5%   | 2.5%                                |                                       |                                     |        |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |        |      |      |       |      |      |        |      |      |           |      |      |            |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |      |        |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |       |
| London   | 7.5%   | 2.5%                                |                                       |                                     |        |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |        |      |      |       |      |      |        |      |      |           |      |      |            |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |      |        |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |       |
| Paris  | 7.5%   | 2.5%                                |                                       |                                     |        |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |        |      |      |       |      |      |        |      |      |           |      |      |            |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |      |        |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |       |
| Madrid   | 9.5%   | 2.5%                                |                                       |                                     |        |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |        |      |      |       |      |      |        |      |      |           |      |      |            |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |      |        |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |       |
| Frankfurt  | 3.5%   | 1.5%                                |                                       |                                     |        |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |        |      |      |       |      |      |        |      |      |           |      |      |            |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |      |        |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |       |
| Luxembourg   | 3.5%   | 1.5%                                |                                       |                                     |        |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |        |      |      |       |      |      |        |      |      |           |      |      |            |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |      |        |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |       |
| Berlin   | 4.5%   | 1.5%                                |                                       |                                     |        |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |        |      |      |       |      |      |        |      |      |           |      |      |            |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |      |        |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |       |
| Stokholm   | 5.5%   | 1.5%                                |                                       |                                     |        |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |        |      |      |       |      |      |        |      |      |           |      |      |            |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |      |        |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |       |
| Vienna   | 5.5%   | 1.5%                                |                                       |                                     |        |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |        |      |      |       |      |      |        |      |      |           |      |      |            |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |      |        |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |       |
| Zurich   | 3.5%   | 0.5%                                |                                       |                                     |        |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |        |      |      |       |      |      |        |      |      |           |      |      |            |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |      |        |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |       |
| Brussels   | 3.5%   | -1.0%                               |                                       |                                     |        |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |        |      |      |       |      |      |        |      |      |           |      |      |            |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |      |        |      |      |        |      |      |          |      |       |

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| <p>Summary of the major points of the strategy</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <span style="color: #D9534F;">▶</span> <b>“Business Route 2018 for Metropolitan Brussels”</b>, an <b>economic development</b> project with 3 strategic pillars: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A clear and intelligible vision for the long term</li> <li>▪ Overriding and restructuring the regions’ borders</li> <li>▪ A business world initiative</li> </ul> </li> <li> <span style="color: #D9534F;">▶</span> A project designed and headed up by the <b>areas’ business leaders, launched in early 2008:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mid-2008, 150 directors of enterprise took part in the activities of ten groups each based on a theme (one of which was: “The BMR, Region for tourism, culture and leisure”</li> <li>▪ <b>Objective in 2018:</b> the BMR will more easily attract the talents necessary to deploy the development of the knowledge economy, which in turn will strengthen overall growth and lead to a rise in GDP, and therefore an increase in ways to alleviate fiscal pressure and therefore cultivating and improving the city’s power of attraction.</li> <li>▪ <b>3 approaches designed to sustainably define the BMR’s attractiveness</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) To transform the BMR into the heart and soul and brains behind Europe.</li> <li>2) To develop expertise on expanding worldwide markets.</li> <li>3) To promote Brussels as a thriving, vibrant town bubbling with potential and excitement, a hub for attracting talent and enterprise.</li> </ol> </li> </ul> </li> <li> <span style="color: #D9534F;">▶</span> Other <b>initiatives focusing on cultural development, piloted by the same players, but with a lesser degree of coordination than that of the BMR</b>, have been launched independently to the <b>“Business Route 2018 for Metropolitan Brussels” project:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) VOKA cultural development project</li> <li>2) “Wallonia-Brussels Region Cultural Metropolis” project</li> <li>3) “Cultural plan for Brussels” led by the Réseau des Arts à Bruxelles (RAB), a Brussels based cultural network that aims to bring together cultural institutions to stimulate cultural collaboration.</li> </ol> </li> </ul> |
| <p>Key Players</p>                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <span style="color: #D9534F;">▶</span> <b>“Business Route 2018 for Metropolitan Brussels”:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The three regional employers’ organisations : VOKA (Flanders’ Chamber of Commerce and Industry), the BECI (Brussels’ Enterprises Commerce and Industry), the UWE (Walloon Union of Enterprises) and the FEB (Federation of Belgian Enterprises)</li> </ul> </li> <li> <span style="color: #D9534F;">▶</span> Independent initiatives specifically related to culture, managed independently from each other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ VOKA</li> <li>▪ City of Brussels</li> <li>▪ Wallonia-Brussels Region</li> <li>▪ Réseau des Arts à Bruxelles (RAB)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>   |

Conditions to be implemented: an action plan for socio-economic development over 10 years with 3 strategic approaches for its duration, in which culture does indeed feature but is not a priority

**A- “Business Route Brussels 2018” economic development project:** this project pursues a plan that sets its sights on the future focusing upon the plus points of the metropolis as they are today and lays out a **strategy for growth revolving around the following 3 approaches:**

- 1) To transform the region so that it embodies the dynamic heart of Europe
- 2) To develop expertise for niche areas of international growth
- 3) To cultivate a booming, sparkling city that acts as a magnet to captivate talent and investors.

The plan also advocates **galvanising the region’s advantages in a sustainable way**, with a view to securing the success of the strategy for growth (developing talent, plan for the mobility and development of the region, development of a competitive fiscal pressure and a flexible job market).

- ▶ This plan makes provision for a **set of actions and projects organised to address all jobs, where the business world is prepared to commit**. These projects are numerous and diverse. They play a role in all spheres of socio-economic development. **One of the focal points relates to the cultural development** of the metropolis: cultural investment, preservation and development of heritage, promotion of creative industries.
- ▶ **The four employers’ organisations have created a body** responsible for specifying and carrying out the actions proposed as part of the economic development project “Business Route Brussels 2018” framework, in collaboration with the authorities concerned. It is a non-profit association with a budget of EUR 600,000.

**B- Less-supported initiatives specifically related to culture:** Parallel to this project other **more targeted actions are being pursued towards developing culture**. These are **independent from “Business Route Brussels 2018” and are not coordinated between each other**. The funding and governance models of these projects have not yet been decided.

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**A- The “Business Route Brussels 2018” economic development project**

Exploiting great modern architecture projects and organising international events: improving Brussels’ visibility as a European meeting point

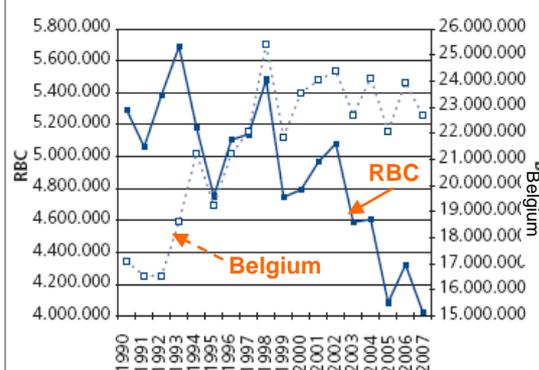
- ▶ A major initiative of “Business Route Brussels 2018”, this action forms part of the strategic plan aiming to **transform this administrative region into the dynamic heart of Europe**. Historically, the presence of European and international institutions has been decisive for the economic growth of the BMR. Current prosperity is, for the large part, due to this privileged position. Nevertheless, the expansion of the European Union and the development of modern means of communication have provoked growing competition amongst other urban regions in Europe. Between now and 2018, the BMR has set itself the objective of becoming an **essential crossroads for Europe**, in both cultural and economic terms. In order to reach that point, the metropolis must do everything it can to ensure that its European character is clearly visible and identifiable.

- ▶ “*Business Route 2018*” favours modern architecture projects, such as an **architecturally bold museum of modern art** located close to the European district, with European culture as its central theme, or the **transformation of the buildings housing European institutions** and other public services into genuine symbols of European culture and architecture.
- ▶ Moreover, **international events** bring with them the opportunity for the BMR to become the European centre of business, culture and leisure activities. “*Business Route 2018*” has studied the possibility of the award of an **international sporting or cultural event** (for example, the 2018 Football World Cup would be a major coup in this respect), and aims to reap the benefits of the Belgian EU Presidency in 2010 in order to organise various cultural events, political and economic summits. These projects demonstrate that culture is on the periphery of the development strategy giving way to major media events such as football.

**To develop a modern and innovative offer to boost international influence: to attract and retain talent and businesses by creating innovative clusters**

The goal of this “*Business Route Brussels 2018*” campaign **is to boost the international influence**, the business networks, but also the culture, nightlife and leisure activities of the metropolitan region of Brussels.

Changing trend in the number of visitors to the RBC and Belgium 1990-2007



- ▶ The graph opposite illustrates the changing trend of the number of visitors to the Brussels-Capital Region (RBC) and to Belgium, and shows the significant drop in this number for the RBC, particularly since 2002.
- ▶ The purpose of this initiative **is to develop a modern and innovative offer in relation to culture, leisure and local, community-based services**, in order to create a BMR that will attract international talent. Jobs, essential for stimulating growth, will therefore be created for the long term.
- ▶ To this end, the project proposes a series of specific objectives for 2018, namely making the BMR into a **popular European destination** (the aim is for average occupancy rates for hotels at weekends to increase from 50% in 2007 to 80% in 2018), and also the main destination in Europe for holding conferences and the business third city after London and Paris, and finally to create a region that is a magnet for attracting highly-qualified international talent.
- ▶ Three initiatives have been deployed to meet these objectives :
  - **To offer higher quality services** for inhabitants, recreational tourists, business travellers and international talent - for example, wireless internet access points to be installed across the whole of the BMR.
  - **To rationalise communication** with investors
  - **A sophisticated partnership between the public and private sectors** to develop the BMR’s public image must be established.

**To create a centre of excellence for European business and a media centre to consolidate, develop and highlight unique areas of expertise**

“*Business Route Brussels 2018*” envisages specific plans with a view to further improving the status of the region’s expertise in international issues.

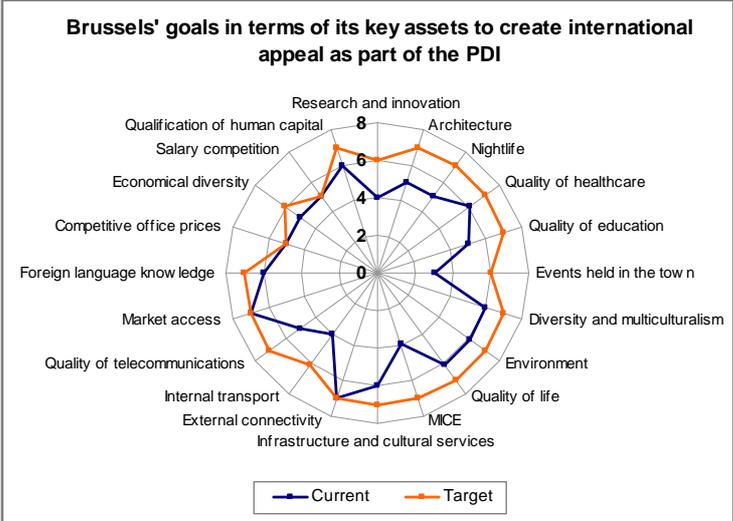
- ▶ Firstly a **Competence Centre for European and NATO Issues** is to be set up. This initiative aims to offer **high level study programmes** on NATO and European affairs and is targeted at students, managers and also high-ranking foreign civil servants. The centre must bring together specialists from across the world to further develop expertise in fields such as European law, European politics, international defence and security.
- ▶ The second objective aims to provide Brussels with an **International Press and Media Centre**. Specialised translation services and multilingual editions will be available. With more than 1500 foreign journalists, the BMR is one of the world’s major press centres. The goal is to continue to develop the existing infrastructure of the *Residence Palace* so that it becomes a first-class venue for hosting press conferences and international media events.

**B- Less supported initiatives specifically related to culture**

**Initiative 1 : VOKA - cultural development project  
→ To build a new symbol for Brussels**

The aim of the VOKA initiative is to exploit prominent visual features in order **to renew the image of the town and to promote its cultural influence**. VOKA highlights the fact that the *Atomium* monument, a symbol that identifies Brussels across the world, was erected more than 50 years ago, for the Worldwide Exhibition held in Brussels in 1958. Therefore a new symbol for Brussels is well overdue.

- ▶ The first and most important stage of the VOKA project is the **Plan for international development or PDI**. This is a new governance tool designed to emphasise and promote Brussels’ international character. It is **an integrated and multi-annual strategy** focused mainly on making progress in the following criteria: developing facilities such as theatres, museums, major sporting stadia, conference centres, internal transport system and modern amenities (hospitals, schools etc), focusing the town’s attention on the events that it is hosting or organising, and plus research and innovation. The



can be consolidated into five key elements:

**priorities and challenges of the PDI and its strategic targets**

- Implementing a **brand image** for the town (an initiative already launched in 1997):
  - ▶ Sculpt this image in a consistent manner through a series of future-oriented actions, based upon effective political governance and firmly based on the local identity of the inhabitants.
  - ▶ Communication on local values
  - ▶ Making the most of the area's historically and culturally rich 'Brussels' identity: spotlight the area's mainstays to showcase the distinctive traits and characteristics of Brussels (way of life, monarchy, comic strips, pralines, music, parks, typical areas, art nouveau, surrealism and events and activities...)
  - ▶ Bring this initiative to priority European markets by running communications campaigns highlighting heritage renewal and international events.

**Description of this initiative's effects:** the 2003 results show a 50 % increase in the number of hotel rooms booked at the weekend to enjoy the events, museums and principal monuments. The distribution of employment by large branches of industry indicates for the decade 1993-2003 an increase of 437% for sectors organising exhibitions and trade fairs and an increase of 65.5% for tourist attractions.

After an initial success between 1993-2003, the number of visitors visiting the region once again suffered a decline (the effects of the initiative can only be measured over the long term). Since 2003, the number of visitors to the Brussels-Capital Region has decreased, falling from 4,600,000 to 4,000,000 (in 2007).

- To create **urban poles of development based on facilities with international dimensions:**
  - ▶ To meet the need for new international and multidisciplinary facilities.
  - ▶ To build a significant number of infrastructures: a multi-purpose stadium (with which Brussels hopes to win the rights to the opening match of the 2018 Football World Cup), a 5000 seat Convention Centre, a 15,000 seat theatre, a 2,000 seat concert hall, four museums, a tourist tramway and a permanent European exposition (European village).
  - ▶ To take advantage of these facilities in order to implement development projects in the areas in which these amenities are located.
- To develop **modern amenities** and promote **quality of life:**
  - ▶ To develop some communal facilities and networks in terms of transport, education, health which are vital to the development of the town for its inhabitants and users.
  - ▶ To champion and sustain the quality of life as a key selling point
- **To Support sustainable economic development:**
  - ▶ To support the *"Business Route Brussels 2018" project.*
- To organise a **more effective form of governance:**
  - ▶ To pursue the priority task of simplifying the way in which the administrative regions are split up, in particular with regard to town planning both at a local and regional level.
  - ▶ At the same time, to acquire adequate funding for developing the federal and European capital whilst restoring the balance of the contributions made by each individual to the expenses and profits of the town-Region.
  - ▶ To implement institutional defragmentation through the systematic development of partnerships with Europe, with the Federal Government and with the Flemish and Walloon Regions, with the municipalities in Brussels and with the private sector through the development of Public-Private partnerships.
- ▶ The second crucial stage is the organisation of an **international architecture and town planning competition** whose results and prizes will be announced in 2009.

- ▶ Finally, the third stage is the financing of this project through support, subsidies or sponsorship, which points to a public-private partnership. To date, the specific terms for financing this project have yet not been defined.

**Initiative 2: “Wallonia-Brussels Community Cultural Metropolis” project**  
 → The long-term development of the heritage and promotion of local, municipal arts

The Wallonia-Brussels Community from 2010 will appoint a "Cultural Metropolis". This title will be awarded every two years to one of the towns or villages in the Wallonia-Brussels Community, selected from their application form. This award will bring with it sustained prestige emphasising their heritage and will enable the inhabitants to rally round a local cultural project.

The objective is to promote the arts, culture and heritage at the heart of the towns and villages whilst recognising and supporting original activities (based on a festival theme).

- ▶ The French Community and the Walloon Region award a budget of EUR 1 million per project, spread over 2 years, as well as one Euro per inhabitant of the town. An initial sum of EUR 200,000 per community will be allocated as from 2009, to get the project up and running.
- ▶ On the 19 March 2009, the Walloon Government, in association with the French Community, awarded the town Liège the title “Wallonia-Brussels Region Cultural Metropolis 2010” and the town La Louvière the title “Wallonia-Brussels Cultural Metropolis 2012”.

**Initiative 3: “Cultural Plan for Brussels” from the Réseau des Arts à Bruxelles (RAB)**

→ To build a consistent future vision for the cultural and artistic sector

The creation of the Cultural Plan for Brussels is one of the key stages in the Action Plan 2007-2008 as part of the Collaborative Agreement signed in February 2007 (through this Agreement, initiated by the Brussels Kunstenoverleg and the Réseau des Arts à Bruxelles, approximately one hundred cultural institutions in Brussels have demonstrated a desire for more collaboration, with more cooperation, dialogue and visibility in the cultural sphere.)

This project is backed financially by the King Baudouin Foundation and will be a priority until mid-2009 of the RAB and the Brussels Kunstenoverleg.

- ▶ The objectives for the Cultural Plan for Brussels are as follows:
  - To define Brussels’ responsibility as capital of Europe and cosmopolitan city;
  - To motivate all cultural parties to implement the plan;
  - To encourage in-depth dialogue and networking;
  - To put forward a consistent, future vision of culture to all those involved.
- ▶ Since March 2008, the coordination office (comprising 4 people) has met once a week to follow the progress of the actions undertaken, in addition to preparing and defining details and the agenda of monthly meetings with the working party. The working party follows through on the tasks and makes decisions on the directions that projects should follow. This working party is made up of people from Brussels’ cultural scene (theatres, theatre companies, Brussels’ Arts festival etc). Other human resources and key players are also consulted or invited depending on the topics addressed.
- ▶ Since autumn 2008 debates have enabled reactions from the recipients of the plan to be collated and these have helped to determine which areas require additional work or specific measures in relation to the cultural sector, the political world or stakeholders, to ensure that they are implemented.

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