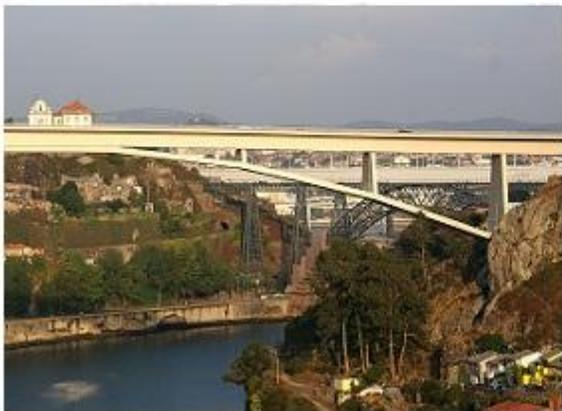


## Case study Porto



### European Metropolitan network Institute

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Case study on polycentric metropolitan areas in Porto

Part of EMI's knowledge- and research agenda

on polycentric metropolitan areas

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Historically Porto is more oriented towards northern Europe, whereas the focus of Lisbon was more on the Portuguese colonies.

The municipality of Porto in itself is not very large. For some decades it faced heavy suburbanization. In 1991, Porto counted over 300.000 inhabitants<sup>1</sup>, but right now the number of inhabitants has dropped to around 238.000. The metropolitan area as a whole is nevertheless growing and counts a large share of relatively young, well educated people. In total it counts around 1,3 million people and consists of a multitude of municipalities. Porto is a very polycentric region for quite some time already: from the industrialization onwards Porto served as the service hub amidst industrial 'new towns'. Currently, the area directly around Porto is strongly urbanized (including the towns of Matosinhos, Maia, Valongo, Vila Nova de Gaia, Gondomar). In fact, the largest municipality of the Porto metropolitan area is not Porto but Vila Nova de Gaia with more than 300.000 inhabitants. Around this urban core lays an outer layer of smaller towns and more rural areas.

At the metropolitan scale there is the AMP (Área Metropolitana do Porto), a platform for the sixteen mayors of the metropolitan area that allows for discussion about metropolitan policy issues. It does not have any formal powers. Portugal is divided into eighteen districts, of which Porto District is one. These districts however lack formal powers except in the field of public security. The state has also appointed a North Regional Coordination and Development Commission (CCDRN), aimed at adding a regional focus on national planning and development. However, this body has no official policy making competencies, although they are responsible for the management of Regional Operational Programmes. Rather, it acts as a regional think-tank, carrying out studies on a wide range of spatial development issues. At the local level Portugal counts over 300 municipalities. Their local tax base is limited. Direct fiscal transfers from the central state account for 85-90% of local revenues. The central state thus has a strong influence in local policy making, while a strong regional layer is absent.

## 1.2 Regional challenges and integration

The region of Porto needs to modernize its economy. The current industries mentioned above are focused on serial industrial production, while there is a need to base the local economy more on knowledge, research and R&D. Moreover, the accession to the EU and the arrival of the euro have not had overly clear benefits for the northern part of Portugal. European funds have led to investments in infrastructure and the airport, but these have not intrinsically changed the nature of the regional economy. Growth in the service economy is mainly thanks to the rise of tourism. Moreover, the transition of Portugal to a democratic republic in 1974 led to the nationalization of many institutions, causing many of them to be located in and around Lisbon. Porto used to have a strong banking sector, but because of nationalization policies these were relocated to Lisbon. This process of politically

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<sup>1</sup> Van den Berg *et al* (2006) Empowering metropolitan regions through new forms of cooperation, pp.202-223

steered centralization fueled the distrust of many people from Porto towards Lisbon. But besides these politically steered processes of centralization, there is also an increasing market force that steers towards further clustering of services (e.g. financial institutions) at a higher spatial scale. Not only Lisbon is a competitor for Porto, but Madrid and Barcelona are competitors too. Despite these negative processes, strengthened by the current Euro crisis, there are positive aspects as well. As said, the Porto metropolitan area is growing, and has a large supply of young labour. With its good entrepreneurial spirit it offers opportunities for people with new and innovative ideas.

Another challenge is posed by the continuing process of suburbanization away from Porto's city centre. Both inhabitants and businesses leave the inner city and relocate to the surrounding municipalities. There are several reasons for this. Firstly, several decades ago the harbor together with other industries started to move out of Porto, more towards the sea. This caused a serious decline in employment in the city center. Secondly, Portugal has a peculiar housing policy that leads to rather low rents. In large municipalities as Lisbon and Oporto, rents were "frozen" since 1948. In 1974, rent controls were extended to the whole country. Later on (in 1981 and 1985, but also in 1990 and 2006), new legislation softened these controls. Now, in the case of new contracts, rents can be freely established; there is the possibility of an annual increase of rents, based on an indicator published by Statistics Portugal; and there are specific measures directed to "old rents". Problematic is that the successive legislative changes did not have a significant impact on the "old rents sector". Low renting prices mean that house owners have no incentive to improve their housing stock, nor money to spend on maintenance, and hence the quality is downgrading. The result is that anyone able to pay for higher quality housing is moving out, and by now the inner city is inhabited mostly by vulnerable social groups, while there are also many abandoned buildings, particularly in the UNESCO-world heritage neighbourhood Ribeira. In many other places in the world, this district would probably be gentrified. A new proposal is now in discussion, aiming to develop the private rented market. And thirdly, the surrounding municipalities have benefited from a local building tax, which sometimes accounted for 80% or more of the municipal revenues. Hence, the easy supply of suburban housing led to strong suburbanization in economically good times, but it has also led to a huge oversupply of housing: by now 12.7% of all houses in the Greater Porto area is vacant, and in the Porto municipality it is even as high as 18.8% (figures for 2011).

This moving away from the city center leads to negative developments that require policy attention. A metropolitan area needs a healthy center to function smoothly and to perform the gateway functions of a central city for its neighbouring municipalities. Yet, the importance of Porto as a gateway is not recognized by the surrounding municipalities who prefer to follow their own agenda of development and fail to coordinate large scale developments, leading to suboptimal outcomes at the metropolitan scale. However, Porto certainly is no Detroit: the Porto University is very much rooted in Porto and its health and cultural facilities (hospital São João, the Casa da Música and Serralves Foundation), together with the integrative function of the Porto Metro, make sure Porto remains the most central

city within the region. But businesses and retail are moving more and more to large shopping malls in the suburbs. Each municipality is developing its own mall and increasingly they are competing. Due to the economic crisis, the malls are not faring well, because of their oversupply of retail space and the malls also being rather non-descript and lacking character and atmosphere. It would be most beneficial for the whole region if these matters were to be coordinated through shared policies on the housing and real estate markets and for instance a metropolitan development plan.

However, the process of suburbanization has a paradoxical impact on regional integration. On the one hand, as described above, the region lacks integration on the political and planning side. Local politicians don't seem to be aware of the strength of a coherent metropolitan area. But on the other hand, suburbanization has led to a metropolitan area with a relatively similar cultural background (many people that originally come from Porto). Many people live and work throughout the region and to the outside world, inhabitants from the region refer to themselves as being from Porto. So from a functional and cultural perspective, the Porto metropolitan area already functions as quite a well-integrated metropolitan area.

### **1.3 The Porto region as case study**

This interesting paradox is an important reason to further study the integration of the Porto metropolitan area. This mismatch between local politics and local realities seems to lead to the conclusion that regional integration does not necessarily have to be followed by, or be preceded by political integration, even if the region's problems clearly state the need for integrated regional governance. Porto seems to have it all: good road infrastructure and a growing airport, a downgraded but potentially highly attractive inner city, an integrated metropolitan labour market, a regional hinterland (the Douro region) that is distinctive as a brand, strong human capital... but yet it fails to reap the benefits due to its weak regional organizing capacity.

## 2.Strategies for regional cooperation

This of course doesn't mean that there are no regional policies involved. Below we highlight some of the platforms and policies that are being or have been implemented to strengthen regional coherence and regional governance.

- The Área Metropolitana do Porto (AMP) is the backbone of the metropolitan region and consists of sixteen municipalities. It acts as a platform on which various regional topics are discussed between the mayors. With its (limited) annual budget of € 2 million (the municipalities contributing half of the amount per year) it performs studies for regional integration, such as a study for different management models for the Porto Airport, and the municipalities involved cooperate for EU funded projects. But since the platform does not have any formal responsibilities, it acts more as a political forum rather than a decisive administrative body. There are no clear criteria for municipalities to become a member of the AMP.
- There are some examples of cooperation and coordination in the field of metropolitan services. The Porto metro system became operational in 2002 and operates multiple metro lines throughout the metropolitan area. With these lines there is an increase visible in commuting between Porto and the suburbs, thus contributing to regional integration. When the opportunity arose to build the metro, there was a sense of unity within the AMP. Also the extension of the airport and development of a cruise terminal were supported by all municipalities in the metropolitan region. However, the main key to success within these three regionally supported projects was that the investments were not subjected to political debate. The airport and cruise terminal were only feasible at one location, and the Porto Metro was mainly financed by EU funds. Furthermore, all sixteen municipalities have decided to use the same companies for waste management and water supply.
- As mentioned, the CCDRN is a long-standing effort to regionally coordinate spatial planning and development. It is the only initiative thus far that acts on a regional scale within these fields, but it is no independent regional authority but rather a local agency representing the central state. The Commission does however produce valuable studies that contain starting points for common regional policies and have a role in the management of the Regional Operational Programmes.
- Recently another body has been erected that is not so much a platform for cooperation, but could rather promotes regional integration. The Autoridade Metropolitana de Transportes Porto (AMTP) or Metropolitan Authority of Transportes Porto has the task to harmonize the public transport system of the Porto region. The following paragraph will detail on this a bit more.

### 3. State of the art of integration in the polycentric metropolitan areas

#### 3.1 Spatial-functional integration

The current state of metropolitan integration is largely steered by the suburbanization patterns that have developed. The movement of businesses and people out of Porto has led to a very integrated criss-cross pattern of commuting patterns. Hence, people and businesses operate very 'polycentric' (undertaking activities at multiple places) and you can easily speak of one integrated labour market. However, this is supported foremost by car mobility. The role of public transport is not very significant: the Porto Metro is relatively recent and does not have a fully developed network, and the national train network mainly provides connections with towns located further away. Bus connections are fragmented: state-owned companies compete with private companies and often have a concession for individual lines instead of coherent areas. The result is that a multitude of operators operate within the region, often operating lines that overlap, with different tariff systems. The recently erected Metropolitan Authority of Transports (AMTP), an agency established by the central state, has the task to harmonize public transport in the Porto urban area. A first step is being set by harmonizing the tariff system for the whole region. This could help the region to integrate, but a more coherent public transport network is needed. An extension is however costly.

The metropolitan area as covered by the Área Metropolitana do Porto (AMP) does not function as one coherent urban area. The urban ring as defined on page 2 (surrounding municipalities that are part of the same built-up area as Porto) is very well integrated in terms of commuting patterns, but the outer ring of more rural municipalities has less strong ties with Porto. The need for regional coordination appears to be stronger with the 'first urban ring', where the high degree of functional integration has evolved more or less *unplanned*. The task is now to coordinate this process better: new services should complement each other and the municipalities should specialize in attracting certain businesses and services. Between the urban core and the more rural outer layer there is instead much less functional integration. The urban core is more focused on services and industries, while the rural layer around (Douro region) boasts attractive landscapes and traditional industries. The urban core can profit more from these rural characteristics by integrating both territories better, through better infrastructural connections or coherent (tourist) promotion. At the moment this is done for northern Portugal as a whole, but promotion at the metropolitan scale might be better for regional integration. For instance, visits to the Douro river valley could be promoted in combination with a trip to Porto.

From a larger regional perspective it is possible to enlarge the functional region by incorporating the cities of Braga and Guimarães in the north and Aveiro in the south. Taken together this is the economic powerhouse of Portugal in research and exports. The three universities from Braga (with a campus in Guimarães), Porto and Aveiro have started a collaboration in which they make use of each other's strengths: Porto's university is strong in engineering, architecture, telecommunications and health and life sciences, Aveiro's university in aeronautics and telecommunications and Braga's/Guimarães' university in software. This cooperation of universities can be linked with the region's (traditional) industries to make them more competitive. At an even higher scale, Porto envisions to be the centre of part of the northwestern part of the Iberian peninsula, within the Galicia-North Euregio.

### **3.2 Culture and identity**

Portugal is a country in which regional identities do not play a large role. This is reflected in the absence of regional layers of government, which are common in other Mediterranean countries like France, Spain and Italy. The Porto region is likewise not hampered by intermunicipal cultural rivalries. Due to suburbanization and the criss-cross patterns of businesses and commuters, there is a large cultural equality throughout the metropolitan area, strengthened by the fact that the region offsets itself mainly against Lisbon (a unifying force), and the central role of the strong and successful local soccer team FC Porto within the metropolitan area. To highlight this integration, inhabitants from the Porto metropolitan region mostly refer to themselves as being from Porto when introducing themselves to 'outsiders'.

'Porto' is quite a strong brand name for a city that in reality is not very large. Porto has a strong image that is distinctive from other cities, with its distinctive inner city that is on the Unesco World Heritage list and the Douro region around the corner. Tourist promotion, combined with a regional perspective from the Douro region, is considered to be very useful for the region. Tourists can revitalize the inner city and tourism is growing, thanks to the new airport and connections by Ryanair and other low cost carriers. Besides being a city of soccer and port wine, the city wants to promote itself as science city too. As said, this is now done for northern Portugal as a whole, but would fit the metropolitan area very well.

### **3.3 Governance**

#### **Culture of governance**

The fact that political cooperation within the metropolitan area is not very well developed can largely be explained by two factors. First, there is a strong individualistic culture. Cooperation is not something that people, and hence policy makers, have grown up with; also within municipalities there

is a strong separation between the activities of each policy sector. There have been some experiments with public private partnerships (PPP), but to the public these left a negative taste. These projects (construction of highways and hospitals) were associated with higher prices that flowed into the pockets of the private operators.

Second, local political leaders often have national political ambitions. Politicians with national ambitions are nominated in Lisbon, and once elected often adapt themselves to the 'Lisbon way'. Without the presence of a strong 'mediating' regional layer, these dualistic attitudes (local vs. national) become even more pronounced. All in all, this does not benefit the development of co-operation in the region. Politicians are focused at their electorate either at the local level or the national level, and regional integration is not something that has a strong impact on people's everyday lives. It means that local politicians, although in words supporting regionally coordinated policies, in practice prioritize the daily problems within their own municipalities. These factors largely explain why unity for regional projects within the metropolitan area of Porto is only present when it doesn't affect a municipality in a negative way or when the nature of the project doesn't allow for geopolitics, as described in paragraph 2.

### **Role of the central state and municipalities**

The constitution of 1975 defines three levels for the organisation of the government (central, regional and local), in which the districts are supposed to be replaced by regions. However, the regional level of administration was never enacted. Instead there is a regional agency representing the central state, in the north in the form of the CCDRN. A referendum that was held in the 1990s about the creation of a regional body with formal powers was voted against. Therefore, the Portuguese state in practice is shaped by the central state and the 300+ municipalities. These municipalities are relatively large from the European perspective. There have been some discussions about merging municipalities, but the general feeling among the population is that merging would lead to municipal services being located too far away.

The state's strong competences can directly limit possibilities for regionally coordinated policies. An example illustrates this best. The government in Lisbon has put forward a proposal to merge the two authorities that manage the Lisbon and Porto harbor separately. By locating the new office in Lisbon, the Porto harbor would be controlled from Lisbon. But the Porto harbor is an asset that is of regional importance for the Porto area, and the proposal would make it very hard to formulate a harbour development strategy that is beneficial for Porto and its surroundings. Many aspects that together define the competitiveness of the regions in Porto are a national competence, such as the tax system and education policies.

### **Future possibilities for metropolitan governance**

It is generally perceived that the Área Metropolitana do Porto (AMP) should have more competences in order to better fulfill a central role within the Porto metropolitan area. At the moment, there is a

national debate, fuelled by the “rescue agreement” with EC-ECB-IMF, on the organization of local authorities. The AMP commissioned a study involving the University of Porto and a university in Madrid to contribute to this debate, and it suggests to transfer responsibilities in the field of education, economic development and tourism from the central government to the level of the AMP.

All in all, this would entail both that the state and municipalities would transfer some responsibilities to the metropolitan level. Within two years there are local elections, and a new national law states that mayors are not to be appointed for longer than three terms. As a result, many mayors need to leave and a new generation should get an opportunity. This could be a decisive moment to discuss new responsibilities of the AMP.

## 4. SWOT analysis

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Good infrastructure (highways), growing airport with good (cheap) connections</li> <li>- Porto and the region are well-known, positive brands</li> <li>- Growing metropolitan population, high percentage of young people and high human skills and high entrepreneurial spirit</li> <li>- The metropolitan area already operates as one functional region (particularly the city and its first 'sub'urban rin, the urban core), partly thanks to the development of the Porto metro system</li> <li>- Shared cultural identity within the metropolitan area, thanks to many people suburbanizing from Porto and the local FC Porto football club</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Individualistic culture has led to few experiences in cooperation</li> <li>- Fragmented public transport system (tariffs; operations) and management limit regional integration</li> <li>- The region's economy is heavily based on industries (but see also <i>opportunities</i>)</li> <li>- Porto politicians seem unable to influence decision making at the national level, which is often favouring Lisbon</li> <li>- Housing and building policies promote uncoordinated suburbanization of businesses and people and hamper redevelopment of inner city. The organising capacity to tackle this is missing.</li> <li>- AMP and CCDRN due to lack of competences cannot promote regional integration and cooperation (but see also <i>opportunities</i>)</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Economic crisis as combined with entrepreneurial spirit poses opportunities for innovation and could create sense of urgency among municipalities to cooperate</li> <li>- Large research capacity, also on a larger scale: Improve regional economy by linking up northern Portugal and three important universities (in Porto, Braga's/Guimarães and Aveiro)</li> <li>- Tourism can be a vehicle that promotes regional integration, especially between urban core and more rural outer layer (linked with the Douro region)</li> <li>- Platforms like the AMP, CCDRN and the public transport agency AMTP provide opportunities for future integration, when granted more competences</li> <li>- Next local elections will see the depart of many mayors. New mayors can bring a fresh new breeze in regional cooperation.</li> <li>- The traditional industries form a logical basis for future strategies of <i>smart specialization</i>, in which the traditional industries are to be modernized</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Domination of the central state that centralizes services. Especially in these times of cutbacks.</li> <li>- Businesses that continue to leave (to suburbs, Lisbon and Madrid) may in term lead to depart of human skill too, because an attractive central city is vital element for competitiveness</li> <li>- Neglect of the core city (Porto), whose fortunes are decisive for surrounding municipalities also.</li> <li>- Governance culture and institutional structure doesn't allow reasoning from a metropolitan perspective, while this will be increasingly necessary</li> </ul>

## 5. Conclusions

1. Functionally, the metropolitan area of Porto is quite well integrated. Due to suburbanization processes the towns directly around Porto have merged, together with Porto, into one coherent urban area. People move in criss-cross patterns across the region, which may be fostered by and continues to foster a shared regional identity. To the outside world, people from all over the region refer to themselves as being from Porto. However, building and housing policies promoted suburbanization but at the same time impeded renewal of the central city of Porto. Both businesses and inhabitants have moved out and continue to do so. Although the city of Porto remains the most important centre for services (hospitals), education (the University) and culture (Serralves, Casa da Musica), this position is steadily being undermined. A competitive metropolitan area needs a strong urban centre, but the rise of offices and shopping malls in the suburbs at the cost of businesses in central Porto and the outmigration of people will lead to the opposite. Regionally coherent policies are needed to balance these developments, but the metropolitan area doesn't have a fitting institutional platform to do so. This partly reflects the lack of recognition of the role Porto plays as a gateway to the world for the whole metropolitan areas.
  
2. Besides the internal process mentioned above, external pressures also force the region towards more cooperation, coordination and integration on various levels. The economic crisis has led to a huge problem on the housing market (about 12% of the houses in the region are vacant) and shopping malls that have recently been constructed are facing difficulties. The transition towards a service, tourism and research based economy seems to ask for integration from multiple perspectives. At the level of the built-up area, cooperation should focus on better balancing the development of suburbs and the Porto city centre. From a touristic point of view, integrated and coordinated promotion of both urban amenities and rural attractions (Douro valley, traditional industries) will benefit the whole metropolitan area. Finally, for economic competitiveness cooperation is needed on an even larger scale. Porto needs to hook up with its neighbouring cities of Aveiro in the south and Braga in the north. The cooperation between the three universities in the region offer a promising start. Linking the activities of these universities to the entrepreneurial spirit in the region (through business-to-research platforms) with a specific regional focus could help the region to diversify and renew its economy. Porto can profit from Guimarães as the current capital of culture.
  
3. A culture of governance is lacking in Porto to stimulate regional cooperation and coordination. Although entrepreneurial, the prevailing culture is also quite individualistic. Therefore, cooperation is not in the 'genes' of Portuguese people. The dualistic relationship with the national government in Lisbon adds to that. As said, politicians are either focused on the national or local (municipal) level, and the regional perspective loses out because this has no strong

impact on people's everyday lives. Although officially supporting regionally coordinated policies, local politicians in practice prioritize the daily problems within their own municipalities. This makes it difficult to create a clear intermediate layer of government or governance in between.

4. All in all, it seems that the cooperation efforts within the metropolitan area of Porto are coming to a decision point. The current economic crisis that severely hits Portugal can be a blessing in that respect, because it can create a sense of urgency as never before experienced throughout the region. A joint investment of sixteen municipalities that together form the Área Metropolitana do Porto (AMP) in the development of a balanced metropolitan area (and maybe beyond), fuelled by the entrepreneurial spirit that always prevailed in the Porto region and upcoming local elections for mayors two years' time could offer a road towards reforms and eventually economic growth. But the crisis may also lead to further entrenchment of the various stakeholders, leading to an ever more splintered metropolitan governance.

## 6. Best practices

### Metro do Porto: the Porto metro system



The fact that many people in the Porto metropolitan area move around in criss-cross patterns is to a large extent helped by the good infrastructure that connects the city of Porto with its surrounding settlements. Regarding the Porto Metro, in 2002 the first line became operational and since then has been gradually expanding. Currently, it consists of 67 km of rail, 80 stations and runs through seven municipalities<sup>2</sup>. It is being operated by a consortium consisting of the municipalities in the Porto region, the transport company of Porto, the Portuguese state and the national railways. Although the company is not making a profit (mainly due

to significant investment costs), it proved to be a platform on which various stakeholders, within the area and outside, have managed to cooperate and set up a completely new transport system. Its effects also led to an increase in commuting between Porto and the surrounding municipalities, thus helping to further integrate the region.

### Serralves Foundation<sup>3</sup>



The Serralves Foundation is owner and manager of the Serralves Museum of Contemporary Art in Porto. The ownership structure is considered to be one of the first experiences in Portugal with public-private partnerships. A change in tax laws in the 1980's, following an increased awareness of the state that privatization was necessary, made it attractive for private entities to invest in the ownership structure of cultural foundations. At the start in 1989, the foundation had 59 founders (or owners), which over time has grown to about 170 institutions from both public and private sector. Its diverse ownership structure and means of finance has given the foundation possibility to invest strongly in

globally renowned exhibitions, but the strong regional roots of the owners make Serralves an important institute for education and community involvement too. Serralves invests in creative clusters as well, providing links between artistic institutes (dance, painting, movies); media, museum and communication institutes; and local art galleries, restaurants, entertainment and other focal points for cultural tourism. The foundation succeeds to reach a broad audience. Besides managing the museum,

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.metrodoporto.pt/en/PageGen.aspx?WMCM\\_PaginaId=16290](http://www.metrodoporto.pt/en/PageGen.aspx?WMCM_PaginaId=16290)

<sup>3</sup> Based on Van den Berg et al (2006) Empowering metropolitan regions through new forms of governance: Porto's experience with the Serralves Foundation, pp.205-223

it also maintains an attractive 18 ha park that acts as a green oasis amidst the urban hectic. The Serralves Foundation provides an excellent example of how regional actors can utilize their joint critical mass to develop a top-level cultural facility not often found in a relatively small city as Porto.

**Branding of Porto**



Recently, Porto is working hard to establish a good brand for the city. In 2001 Porto was European capital of culture, which has led to big improvements in the touristic infrastructure. The expansion of the airport (and arrival of low cost airlines) and development of the cruise terminal in Matosinhos also added to this. To allow tourists to stay over, a range of hotels have been opened up in Porto lately. The nightlife is also improving, and cultural focal points like the Casa da Musica and Serralves

Museum attract many tourists. The inner city that is suffering from neglect and empty houses is being restored by an association called Porto Vivo. This is a partnership between the central state and the Porto municipality and it aims to facilitate urban rehabilitation. It is chaired by the president of the local chamber of commerce. Last but certainly not least, Porto and the surrounding Douro region are famous for their exclusive port wine. This leads to a point for improvement, since there is not very much integration and coordination in promoting the city and the Douro region. The fact that some municipalities in the Douro region are member of the AMP can help to improve this. The excellent external branding of Porto has made the city highly visible and recognizable, lending the metropolitan a voice in Europe as it 'is on the map' and increasingly preventing the metropolitan region from being overlooked by the Portuguese capital. At the same time, the positive connotation of the 'brand' Porto allows for cultural integration in the metro area, as people in the wider metropolitan area who are not living in Porto still identify with the city. In turn, this is likely to enhance functional integration in the metro area.

**Regional platforms for cooperation: CCDRN and AMP**



As mentioned above, both the North Regional Coordination and Development Commission (CCDRN) and Área Metropolitana do Porto (AMP) don't have much formal competences to exert influence on the municipalities. However, in the light of the Portuguese individualistic culture they should be regarded as an important first step in a process that will take a long time and that is likely to lead to a strongly anchored platform for regional coordination and co-operation. Both the state and the

municipalities have apparently recognized the need for local coordination and cooperation. Although not having formal decision powers, they do provide territorial studies that enhances collective understanding of the territory. This can hence lead to increased awareness about the extent of regional

integration and its associated benefits and could further regional cooperation. At the moment, a study is being carried out on the possible future competences of the AMP. It will be interesting to see what the impact of this advice will be, both on the national governments and local municipalities.

## 7. List of interviewees

- Ana Paula Abreu, Director of Department, Área Metropolitana do Porto
- Luis Braga da Cruz, Chairman Board of Directors, Serralves Foundation; former national Minister of Economy; former president of the CCDRN
- Isabel Breda-Vazquez, Professor urban planning and researcher at CITTA, Faculty of Engineering, University of Porto
- Paulo Conceicao, Auxiliar Professor urban planning and researcher at CITTA , Faculty of Engineering, University of Porto
- Vladimiro Feliz, Councillor, Municipality of Porto
- Lino Ferreira, CEO, Área Metropolitana do Porto
- Emídio Gomes, Dean of the Faculty of Biotechnology, Catholic University of Portugal; former Head of Executive Commission of the Área Metropolitana do Porto)
- Alcibíades Guedes, Vice President, INEGI
- António José Lacerda, Director strategic planning and research, Municipality of Porto
- Joao Marrana, Executive Board, Autoridade Metropolitana de Transportes do Porto
- Isabel Martins, Department of strategic planning and research, Municipality of Porto
- Rui Moreira, President, Porto Chamber of Commerce
- Carlos Oliviera, Researcher at CITTA, Faculty of Engineering, University of Porto
- Diana Silva, junior researcher at CITTA, Faculty of Engineering, University of Porto