



Stadtwerke
Köln GmbH



The Cologne Network of Services of General Interest

CIRIEC CONGRESS – BUENOS AIRES –
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Part 1:

The place of municipal SGI providers in Europe and in particular in Germany

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1.1 - Municipalities as a Safeguard for Services of General Interest



- Municipalities and their providers are a safeguard for basic services provided to citizens
- They are active as providers of
 - Energy and water
 - Telecommunication
 - Public transport
 - Waste collection and management
 - Social housing and other social services
 - Education, sports and culture
 - Financial services
 - Etc.

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1.2 - Welfare for the citizens under the responsibility of the Municipality



- Major influence of SGIs on
 - Citizens' life standards
 - Infrastructures
 - Regional economy
 - Social stability of the city, region, cohesion, etc.
- High responsibility of Municipalities in the provision of SGIs
 - SGIs should be provided in a sustainable way
 - Tackling problems locally assures better (adapted) solutions
 - Regional growth should stay in focus

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1.3 - Guarantee of high quality services for the community



- As representatives of the Municipality they act democratically and in a legitimated way
- Their services are characterized by sustainability, security and quality
- Municipal providers of SGIs are a warrant for regional stability and growth and are part of the European social pattern

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1.4 - Situation of SGIs and Municipalities in the European multi-level governance



- The levels: Europe, Member States, Regions, counties/municipalities
- Overarching European goal: the internal market
- Concerning SGIs: the level Europe frames, the other levels are framed
- No good communication between the legislator (the EU) and those covered by this legislation
- Mainly top-down policy/legislation

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Part 2:

The Cologne network of Services of General Interest

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2.1 - Legal framework for SGIs in Europe (1)



- Newly introduced constitutional points in the Lisbon Treaty (2009)
 - Charter of Fundamental Rights
 - Concept of social market economy
 - More respect concerning sub-state authorities
- More over:
 - Placement of SGIs in the European primary law
 - Role of SGI providers

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2.1 - Legal framework for SGIs in Europe (2)



- Acknowledgement of the right to self-governance for municipalities including the right to self-organization
- Art. 14 and Prot. No. 26

But: European Institutions still act ignoring the particularities of SGIs providers. A “New Thinking” is necessary in the context of the European policies.

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2.2 - The Cologne network of Services of General Interest (1)



- This “New Thinking” process is the “mission” of the Cologne network of Services of General Interest
- Founded in June 2012 by high representatives of the City of Cologne, the municipal SGI providers of Cologne, the University as well as the welfare and charity institutions of the City and completed by the regional Association Region Köln/Bonn and the regional trade unions

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2.2 - The Cologne network of Services of General Interest (2)



- The Charter of the “Excellence Label” for SGIs signed up in January 2013
- Commitment of the members to work in a concrete and cooperative way in order to further guarantee the attractiveness of the City of Cologne and its metropolitan area - with focus on the services for the citizens and aiming at taking influence in the European legal decision making process



On 21 June 2012 high-level representatives of the City of Cologne, the municipal group of companies - Stadtwerke Köln Konzern, the University of Cologne, the colleges of higher education of Cologne, the City charities and the association for the Region Cologne/Bonn launched a Network of Services of General Interest, based on the principles stated in the following Charter:

Charter of the Excellence Label “Services of General Interest of the metropolitan area of Cologne”

- In the interest of citizens and the regional economy, providers of Services of General Interest of the City and the metropolitan area of Cologne have started a partnership in order to optimize their collaboration on the basis of an integrative approach, implying the exchange of knowledge and experience, the use of available synergies or the sharing of competences.
- The signers of this Charter are willing to build their collaboration on a solid basis - consisting in the identification of concrete courses of action - , to extend this collaboration to further major stakeholders and to intervene conjointly and in the common interest of the Metropolitan area, in order to gain influence, particularly at European Level..
- The sustainable development of metropolitan areas requires a close interconnection between their political, economic, scientific and cultural functions. The attractiveness and the future expansion of a metropolitan area rely to a large extent on the interplay of these functions.
- Providers of Services of General Interest play an essential role in delivering high quality services to the citizens and the users, not only in the field of network services and infrastructures - such as energy, water, local transport, waste management, telecommunications, ports, housing, bathing and sports facilities, etc - but also in the framework of social, cultural, health care and education as well as administrative services.
- The constitution of the partnership aims at achieving collaboration for the benefit of all and to increase the attractiveness and the weight of the metropolitan area within the European multi-level system through an Excellence Label “Services of General Interest of the metropolitan area of Cologne”.

Cologne, January 18th, 2013

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2.2 - The Cologne network of Services of General Interest (3)



- The Network works in cooperation with all relevant actors of the City
- Big events once a year, gathering over 100 people - all of them important representatives of the political, economic and social floor of the City of Cologne
- Three workshops (Utilities, Social environment and Finances)
- The results of the workshops are publicly communicated

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2.3 - Requirements to the European Institutions (1)



In February 2014 the network agreed on a list of requirements towards the European Institutions:

- The Municipalities should play an active role in the European decision making. They should be consulted. A national action addressed to the Government will also take place.

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2.3 - Requirements to the European Institutions (2)



- The quality and the social added value of services provided by municipal companies should be appreciated. Special attention should be paid to market access measures: tendering processes should not only be cost-oriented but also integrate a commitment to quality and social responsibility in the provision of services to the citizens.
- Special focus should be laid on regional and local needs, meaning no “one fits all” ruling, but rules allowing tailor-made decisions

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2.4 - To be done concerning the situation of SGI and municipalities in the European multi-level governance



- Establishment of a communication system between all levels
- Municipalities should define their needs towards Europe
- Municipalities should start bottom-up action to raise EU's awareness of their needs
- Municipalities/counties should act together as metropolitan areas
- Co-operation between metropolitan areas from various Member-States
- Buildup of mutual trust between the European and the local levels

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2.5 - Next steps for The Cologne network of SGIs



- Tackling Items such as
 - Schools of thought influencing worldwide and European economic policies
 - SGIs in a context of globalization (free trade and investor protection)
 - The democratic dimension of locally provided SGIs
- Working on an enlargement of the network (in the region / in Europe)
- Developing of a strategic communication with the European institutions

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~~VIRÖESTÜBUNG~~ ~~Stadtag~~

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Thank you for your attention!