Creating our futures

ECTP-CEU

European Council of Spatial Planners
Conseil européen des Urbanistes

RE-START- EUROPE

ECTP-CEU 2020 declaration for an *inclusive* and *just* post-covid future for all communities

OCTOBER 2020

PREAMBLE

1. **This *Re-START- Europe* Declaration seeks to harness the creative power and technical expertise of spatial planners in tackling the social and economic crisis created by the Covid-19 pandemic**. Covid-19 has brought about non-linear, abrupt, and irreversible shocks. It has amplified inequalities and exposed the fragilities in societies across Europe, impacting the short term, but threatening the medium and long-term wellbeing of communities across Europe. This Declaration sets out the principles that must be applied in the Recovery plans for Europe.

2. **Even though the full impacts of Covid-19 will take time to emerge**, the nations, regions and cities of Europe must plan as a matter of urgency for the recovery of the economic and social well-being of Europe. Policy responses to Covid-19 must not be driven by short-term fiscal responses and corporate interests. They must be driven by ethical values that seek to create liveable communities for future generations that are robust, equitable and climate friendly.

3. **Covid-19 is accelerating past trends and creating new trajectories that are re-shaping the patterns of economic activity and social behaviour.** Even with the hope offered by a vaccine, new specific mega-trends will reshape Europe's urban networks, structures and densities, and create new pressures on its natural ecosystems (see Annex «Post-Covid-19 Mega-Trends»). It could also fundamentally change the demography and household structures. Left to market forces alone, these uncertainties will drive short-term unsustainable and inequitable outcomes. Strengthened planning systems are required at all levels - national, regional and local - which draw upon the experience and expertise of the planning professions in every country.

4. **Covid-19 pandemic is the short-term threat that humanity is facing, but global warming is the biggest one in the medium and long term.** A return to "B*usiness as usual*" trends and policies will threaten the foundations of society. Covid-19 has created an opportunity for a just transition to a decarbonised economy, and for strengthening weaker economies and communities that have been made even more vulnerable to unfettered globalisation. The Covid-19 health crisis must not deflect Europe from these goals**.** Both can be tackled in an integrated and holistic way, (the green, the healthy, the economic, the social and the political), transforming global economies into green ones and creating new jobs. Covid-19 is an opportunity to **Re-Start Europe**, resetting the goals and practices for a healthy and planned Europe, creating jobs and mobilising investment.

5. **The changes created by the Covid-19 Pandemic have created a global economic and social crisis with a risk of sustained economic recession**. Worldwide economies and markets have shut down simultaneously. Supply chains have been broken; and demand has

fallen on an unprecedented scale. Real unemployment is enormous. The problems are global. The future for Europe is one of radical uncertainty. This however must not paralyse action. The solutions must be international. Individual initiatives all over Europe need to be given confidence from a common purpose that matches the post-war leadership, vision and scale of action.

6. **The shared long-term European goal for more inclusive, just and sustainable development has been put at risk**. It is vital that post-Covid Recovery plans are not based on short term, fiscal and nationalistic interventions. The lessons of past global shocks are that such approaches reinstate and reinforce inequalities in social conditions and economic performance, and create political instability. The Covid-19 economic, social and health crisis requires a renewed multilateralism, moving to greater cooperation and initiatives, focused on international solutions, in which the European Union and the Council of Europe have key roles. The Recovery plans for Europe must be of a sufficient scale to rebalance and localise economies, and avoid even greater longer-term problems of low growth, high levels of unemployment and escalating and unsustainable sovereign debts.

7. **This Re-Start Declaration builds the European Charter of European Planning and the European Charter on Participative Democracy**, which are critical to finding a sustainable path out of the current crisis and to ensuring that the voices of communities are heard and are made central to recovery. This common declaration is central to the delivery of SDG17 promoting partnership and shared goals. It draws upon the collective strength of the ECTP-CEU. Its members represent the countries and regions across Europe who are at the heart of the local and national plans for its recovery. In doing so it draws on the collective experience in rebuilding damaged economies and communities that have suffered from conflict, terrorism and financial crashes in the post-war era.

8. *Re-START-Europe* **must become a restart of the** *European Spirit***,** across the whole of Europe. It must be based on cultural resilience against the air-brushing out of local cultural identity and heritage. The European spirit has evolved over centuries rising above the horrors of war and oppression. It has flowered through economic success and through facing up to all crises of whatever shape. Europe is part of the global family, made up of younger members whose potential has yet to be unlocked, of members with great strength and of older members whose institutional memories anchor us in the belief and hope that will support and guide Europe into an age of humanity, peace and calm.

9. *Re-START-Europe* **faces up to the challenge for Europe posed by international migration**. The free movement of free persons is essential for a healthy and robust economy. The unequal economic impacts of Covid-19 will reinforce the impact of climate change (e.g. desertification), and create even greater pressure on Europe as a magnet of better life-chances, higher incomes and welfare benefits. Migration needs to be managed by balancing the demands of a democratic and fair society with the genuine prospect of
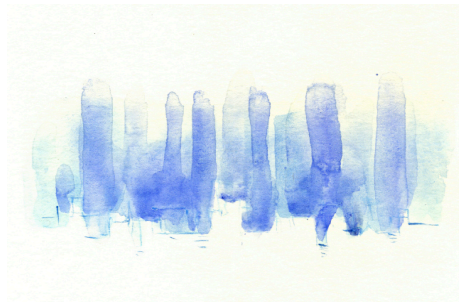
work, decent income and social respect, including for second-third generations. Spatial planning is critical to managing the impacts of migration. It seeks to maximise the added-value of migration for society through inclusive planning frameworks related to the willingness and capacity of local communities. The ECTP-CEU also supports spatial planners in regions of emigration to Europe, working to create conditions that maximise local life opportunities, and thereby avoid migration being driven by the desolation in communities and nations that have become devastated, blighted or isolated.

10. *Re-START-Europe* **seeks greater equity** not just in terms of income but also in the distribution of wealth. The impact of the pandemic has reinforced existing patterns of inequality in terms of ethnicity, gender and place. The 'winners' in the pre-pandemic era must not be the winners of the post-pandemic era of recovery. In the longer-term no-one wins. The social resilience needs to build on the equitable sharing of resources between the rich and the poor. Unless we do, wealthier and apparently stronger communities will be blighted by undue levels of growth, impacting on their quality of life, travel and housing costs, and will have to carry an ever-increasing burden of supporting those communities that have been put at risk by the pandemic.

11. **Recovery must be underpinned by a wider agenda for Renewal and Growth.** The challenges to the wellbeing of Europe and its future generations remain and have been made more urgent by the Covid-19 impacts. These include tackling climate change, regional inequalities in living standards, access to universal basic services and the challenge of supporting healthy-aging in society. Collective responses to these challenges are essential as reflected, for example, in the EU Recovery Fund. It is critical that such initiatives are subject to Territorial Impact Assessment to ensure that they do not reinforce spatial inequalities unintendedly.

12. **The Plan for Renewal & Growth must have resilience as a priority** in shaping the future of Europe**.** The Pandemic was anticipated but not planned for. The COVID-shock has highlighted the fundamental limitation of the short-term policy making. It was only one of the man-made and natural global threats that Europe still faces, especially from growing inequality and climate change. Europe must become more resilient to the full range of potential future global shocks that pose genuine risks to current and future generations.

13. **Revitalised Spatial Planning is needed to reflect the new economic geography of Europe being created by the impacts of Covid-19.** This will be shaped by new parameters, in terms of:
    - New business behaviours with more localised and diversified supply chains;
    - New trajectories and vulnerabilities for different economic sectors; and
    - Changed perspectives on home working and travel.

Basic assumptions that have been used in framing policy urban development must be reviewed in the light of new external relationships (export markets and supply chains) and patterns of urbanisation associated with building more resilient and balanced polycentric urban networks. Spatial planning is the key tool for intervention in the geographical distribution of employment, population, culture, income, opportunities, affordable housing and ecosystem services.

14. **Through the collective voice of the Council of Spatial Planners across Europe,** the planning profession is committed to promoting solidarity to counteract the increasing gaps between the rich and the poor, through multilateral international action on the pressing social, economic and environmental matters. Particular focus is needed on climate issues, including sustainable ecosystems, green transition, resilient infrastructures and zero-carbon energy. This will increasingly rely on the power of spatial planning in orchestrating a multidisciplined approach to problems. In our role, planners are committed to using their voice in policy formulation and practice. In addition, the academic and professional expertise it brings to bear, can and must be called upon to inform, understand issues and to formulate solutions, to ensure policy is evidence-based, and not ideologically led.

15. *Re-START- Europe* **therefore seeks to translate the longstanding ambition to reset the development trajectory of Europe on a more sustainable path.** Covid-19 has disrupted the inertia that has held back progress in Europe in delivering sustainable development through:

   • Catalytic interventions at a scale of action that matches the scale of the problem;
   • A new balance between Europe, the states, regions and municipalities;
   • Clear linked European and national Visions which set out of the speed, direction and geography of economic and social uplift.

Historically, the inertia in the current systems and the reluctance to change has meant that action has not met policy rhetoric, The Covid-19 crisis has disrupted established systems, silos, processes and alliances. This moment for change must be seized.

PRINCIPLES OF RESTART-EUROPE

16. ***Re-START-Europe* requires European nations to re-commit to the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the internationally agreed global targets and indicators.** The following SDGs have direct relevance to shaping the new economic geography of Europe in any plan for recovery at a European, national, regional or local level and in which planning has an important role to play in creating an environment to encourage better health in the population:

    • SDG 3:   Ensures good health and well-being for all at all ages;
    • SDG 8:   Promotes sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all;
    • SDG 9:   Builds resilient infrastructure, promotes inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation;
    • SDG10:   Reduces inequalities within and among countries;
    • SDG11:   Makes cities and human settlements inclusive safe, resilient and sustainable;
    • SDG12:   Ensures sustainable consumption and production patterns.

17. ***Re-START-Europe* requires the implementation of the principles in the UNHABITAT New Urban Agenda.** These principles are consistent with the **New Leipzig Charter** which embodies the concept of general welfare, providing reliable public services of general interest and aims to:

    • Prevent risks leading to new forms of social, economic, environmental and territorial inequalities;
    • Safeguard the liveability of all European towns and cities and their functional areas where no-one should be left behind;
    • Good leadership, urban governance and resources through support at all governmental levels and all key actors, both governmental and non-governmental; and
    • Transform through integrated urban development, and place-based, multi-level and participatory approaches.

18. ***Re-START-Europe* should apply the ECTP-CEU Charter of European Planning.** The Charter of European Planning sets out and presents a Vision for the future of European cities and regions (territoires) in response to the challenges that Europe faces. This is a Vision of a network of cities and regions (territoires) which will:

    • Contribute to the well-being and quality of life of all their inhabitants and other stakeholders;
    • Have particular regard to neighbourhood level impacts, to enhance the ability of local people to take responsibility for future actions, and contribute to encouraging healthier life-styles;

- Retain the cultural richness and diversity, inherited from long histories;
- Become more closely connected through a wide range of functional, social and cultural linkages;
- Be increasingly competitive whilst striving for complementarity and co-operation; and
- Integrate the man-made environment with the natural ecosystems, while preserving biodiversity, and taking into account the need to tackle climate change.

19. ***Re-START-Europe* seizes the opportunity to reset Europe on a more sustainable and just trajectory.** This should be built around Territorial Impact Assessments (TIA) and must embrace practices at all levels of territorial and sectoral governance in order to:

- Create sustainability in Europe's urban geography by localising activity, and containing urban densities to sustainable levels;
- Create resilience in Europe's economic base by re-industrialising Europe's economy with shortening and diversifying supply chains and capitalising on its R&D strengths;
- Develop the foundational economy and SME economic ecosystems and the active involvement and empowerment of communities;
- Decarbonise with energy efficient strategies, particularly through enhanced connectivity between and within regions, and beyond to remote and marginalised communities;
- Value ecosystems, especially public space, food and timber production, water resources and reversing losses in biodiversity and cultural heritage.

20. ***Re-START-Europe* requires explicit National Outcomes Frameworks.** Much action can be achieved within existing EU and non-EU funding regimes, although these should be reviewed in terms of their scale and scope. This can be achieved by ensuring that funding of projects is not only measured against their strategic fit with the principles of *Re-START-Europe* but dependent upon being consistent with and supportive of its objectives in their territorial impact. In order to ensure this, they must be translated into measurable outcomes. This is in line with the principle of the 10-Year Outcomes Frameworks, embodied in the international agreements of European countries to the UNHABITAT New Urban Agenda. To do this all the nations of Europe must be more explicit about the spatial implications of their policies in terms of economic impacts and social conditions, at a local, national and European level. Setting universal standards of services is critical to sustaining an equitable and healthy quality of life for all, especially where there is a dependency on private sector service providers.

21. *Re-START-Europe* **must be shaped by values not econometric algorithms.** The future after the pandemic is still unclear and will remain uncertain. The future should be shaped by policy and not the market place. Past experience has shown the great social and publicly-borne cost of trend-based free-market policies - a weakened international economy, or a recession, with associated businesses closures, structural unemployment, increased socio-economic inequality and polarisation between regions. The personal costs would also be great in terms of reduced welfare at home and pressure on mortgage foreclosures, private bankruptcies and social polarisation, and external pressures from increased international migration.

22. *Re-START-Europe* **must re-empower communities:** Effective responses to a pandemic have required emergency powers, deregulation and centralising bureaucracy. This centralisation needs to be rebalanced to avoid unrest and an erosion of respect for governments, be it local, regional or national. The recent past has shown that in several countries democratic institutions have come under pressure. The division of power between the executive and the courts is being undermined in more than one country. Government interventions must not finance the editorial direction of the media. History has shown that if these issues are not addressed, they will leave scars on the social fabric, and can easily contribute to a further erosion of confidence in governing institutions and in democracy itself.

23. *Re-START-Europe* **must make Europe better prepared for future shocks:** Natural and man-made disasters are no longer once-in-a-generation events, whether from storms, invasive pests, geological events. Socio-demographic and political factors amplify their impact, for example in terms of drought, water shortages or political conflicts. The nations and communities of Europe must establish better means by which progress is measured and action taken, and to respond to different existing strengths and intensity of threats. Poorer countries and regions must not be left to struggle and wealthier countries and regions must not export their problems. Europe must support the creation of the professional capability be more vigilant in risk assessment.

24. *Re-START-Europe* **requires Europe to make urgent change in the scale and direction of policy.** All governments of Europe have demonstrated by power of purposeful governance, by their rapid responses to the pandemic. *Re-START-Europe* calls for change on three levels, and the time is now right to do so:

    • **Renewing and strengthening existing commitments** (e.g. in terms of developing an integrated sustainable zero-carbon transport and energy networks);
    • **Scaling up existing programmes** (e.g. in rebalancing the economies of Europe which are still characterised by great inequality despite successive regional development programmes); and
    • **Creating new initiatives** for sectors that have been particularly affected by the COVID-shock (e.g. tourism, sport, heritage and culture).

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POST-COVID-19 MEGA-TRENDS

An Age of Uncertainty: Before Covid-19, Europe already faced an uncertain future that limited the ability to act with confidence. The COVID-19 shock has added another layer of uncertainty in terms of political and consumer behaviour, even with the hope of a vaccine. In the face of these uncertainties, the need for resilience is key and the concept of 'evidence-based policy' has to be re-written. Policy cannot be driven by trends and short term thinking but must be based on core values, encourage initiative and experimentation, and tolerate failure.

Greater Safety and Security: Covid-19 was not a one-off event. Major hazards, from pandemics, influenza, national blackout or severe flooding can be expected every five-year period. Issues of safety and security have been raised to the top of the personal and political agenda. Core systems must ensure that the failure of any part does not jeopardise the whole. This requires a rethink of security strategies with the focus on the safety and wellbeing as well as security of nations, communities and nature.
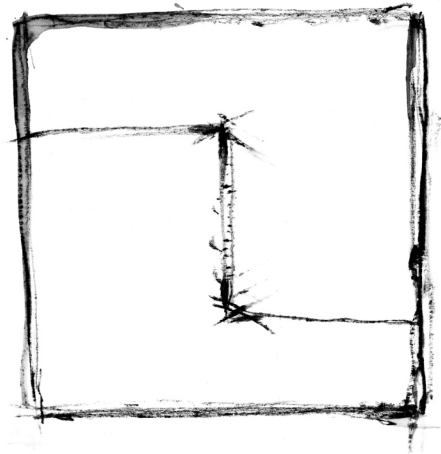
Local Empowerment – Supported Devolution: Covid-19 has highlighted the importance of devolution to the lowest practical level of local government, based on a new parity of esteem between central, regional and municipal government. This needs a fundamental change in the current culture of centralised controls with imposed local responsibilities, and respect for the public. In order to recover from Covid-19, much of the initiative must be led by local councils and supported centrally – the presumption in favour of local empowered devolution.

Renewed Nations: The Covid-19 crisis has demanded a strong state. However, the current centralising of administration has created overload. Activities wherever possible are better undertaken locally or on a regional basis. As corollary, chauvinistic tendencies must not emerge to undermine required trans-national action. There is a need for greater clarity about what are the genuinely international and national, regional or local scale decision areas and a more effective means for planning and delivering them through more proactive policies. This includes, for example, international competitiveness, core infrastructure, universal basic standards of wellbeing and natural ecosystems.

Growing Inequality: The impact of Covid-19 has been more keenly felt in some parts of Europe than others, and gender, race and disability issues that have come to the fore in the pandemic. There is a real danger of this reinforcing the spatial inequalities across Europe whereby some regions and nations of Europe could continue in recession whilst others start to thrive again. The priority must be to translate the rhetoric of levelling-up into a 25-year operational strategy with clear spatial priorities for investment and renewed local institutional capacity in accord with SDG10.

Beyond Austerity, Towards Frugality: The foundations of the European economy have not just been shaken but have been disrupted by the Covid-19 shock. There has been a combined collapse of demand, supply and fiscal systems. The next global shock will enforce frugality. Fiscal stimuli alone will no longer be sufficient. We need do more with less to address the unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, through a 10-year Framework Plan (10FYP) which meets the needs of society with lower consumption of resources, in accord with SDG12.

Source: Adapted from 'Six Propositions: The New Norms, Values and Politics after Covid-19': Kerslake, Wray & Goodstadt: 2020

SUMMARY

1.   **This *Re-START-Europe* declaration sets out the principles to deliver Europe from the crisis created by Covid-19**, by harnessing the power of spatial planning for a Just Recovery across Europe underpinned by a wider agenda for Resilience, Renewal and Growth.

2.   **Covid-19 is accelerating trends and creating new trajectories that are re-shaping our towns and cities**. Revitalised Spatial Planning is needed to manage the new economic geography of Europe being created by new business practices, home working and more localised and diversified supply chains. A return to "Business as Usual" trends and policies will threaten the foundations of economies and societies all across Europe.

3.   **The future for Europe must not be paralysed by the radical uncertainty it faces**. Covid- 19 has created the risk of sustained economic recession. Europe must act with urgency, resetting the goals and practices for a healthy and planned Europe, creating jobs and mobilising investment. We need to restart the European Spirit that has flowered over the last 70 years by facing up to the crises created by human conflict and natural disasters.

4.   ***Re-START-Europe* will help deliver on its long-standing ambition for a more sustainable future with the commitment of the planning profession** to ensuring policy is evidence-based, and not ideologically driven. In doing so, it builds on the Charter of European Planning and the European Charter on Participatory Democracy.

5.   ***Re-START-Europe* requires all nations to seize the opportunity to reset Europe on a more sustainable trajectory shaped by our shared values, and not by unfettered markets**, by:
- Re-committing to the principles of the UNHABITAT New Urban Agenda for the well-being of its citizens, sustaining vital ecosystems, and tackling climate change;
- Setting explicit sustainability targets in line with the principle of the 10-Year Outcomes Frameworks, embodied in the 2030 UN Sustainable Development Goals and with the New Leipzig Charter;
- Rebalancing power and wealth to avoid unrest and the erosion of respect for governments, be it local, regional or national, in order to create a just and equitable Europe;
- Creating more resilient urban systems and more vigilant in risk assessments by strengthened spatial planning, so European communities are better prepared for future economic shocks.

6.   *Re-START-Europe* is built around Territorial Impact Assessments (TIA) and embeds spatial planning practices at all levels of territorial and sectoral governance in order to:
- Create resilience in Europe's economic base by re-building Europe's manufacturing economy;
- Contain urban densities to sustainable levels;
- Shorten and diversify supply chains and capitalise on its R&D strengths;
- Develop the foundational economy and the greater empowerment of communities;
- Decarbonise energy and industrial systems;
- Enhance connectivity within regions and beyond to marginalised communities; and
- Value ecosystems, especially public space, and reverse losses in biodiversity.

7.   *Re-START-Europe* requires all the nations of Europe to make urgent change in the scale and direction of policy:
- Renewing existing commitments to zero-carbon transport and energy networks;
- Scaling up existing programmes to rebalance the economies of Europe; and
- Creating new initiatives for sectors and communities particularly affected by the Covid-19 crisis.

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Approved by General Assembly October 2020

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illustrations Yves FAUVEL