

## NEWS



## METROPOLIS attends the Smart City Expo in Montreal

The Smart City Expo took place in Montreal from 25 to 27 March 2015. Bringing together experts, businesspeople, city representatives and other stakeholders, the event addressed the future of so-called “smart cities” from different perspectives such as mobility, sustainable energy, open data and resilient communities, among others.

The smart cities agenda is particularly relevant for major cities and metropolitan areas against the global

context of burgeoning urban development. METROPOLIS therefore took part in this event, held for the first time in Montreal, represented by Mexico City, an active member of our organisation and the seat of METROPOLIS' Regional Secretariat for North America.

In the first dialogue entitled "The Crucial Role of Cities in Climate Change and Green Energy Policies", Roberto Ascencio, Mobility Projects Coordinator at Laboratorio para la Ciudad (Laboratory for the City, an experimental innovation think tank within the Government of Mexico City) discussed the challenges faced by major cities in implementing technologies. Moreover, he pointed out that local governments can fulfil different roles in this process, whether as catalysts, partners, facilitators or funders of smart strategies.

Over the three-day event, various ideas on how to think and design smart cities were laid on the table. The following ideas were noteworthy:

- There must be political willingness, an appropriate legal framework, as well as mechanisms for cooperation between governments, society and businesses.
- Smart cities must place citizens centre stage.
- The use of technologies is a means whereby more inclusive and sustainable cities can be brought to fruition.
- Local governments perform different roles in the process of building smart cities, i.e. catalysts, partners or facilitators.
- To create smart cities/societies, local governments need recognition, commitment and empowerment from national governments.
- Cities should give precedence to the use of non-motorised transport and guarantee safe and functional pedestrian walkways and bike lanes.

Further details regarding the Smart City Expo in Montreal at <http://www.smartcityexpomtl.com/>

Note: News by Mariana Flores, Mexico City, representing METROPOLIS