INTRODUCTION: WHY A VIRTUAL ROUND TABLE ON SMART CITIES?

Paola Clerici Maestosi,
Coordinator for Scientific and Editorial Board of European Energy Research Alliance Joint Programme on Smart Cities, ENEA - Italian National Agency for New Technologies, Energy and Sustainable Economic Development

Regardless the source, energy is a major factor for development. It is needed for transport, industrial and commercial activities, buildings and infrastructures, water distribution and food production - to quote a few. As a matter of fact, most of these activities take place in or around cities, which are responsible - on average - for more than 75% of a country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and can therefore be considered as the main engines of global economic growth. To run their activities, cities require an uninterrupted supply of energy. A sustainable urban energy system needs low carbon technologies on the supply side and an efficient distribution infrastructure as well as lower consumption on the end-user side.

The aim of this Virtual Round Table¹ is to present the perspectives of representatives of selected stakeholder groups we consider as key actors for urban development.

According to the above scheme, the Virtual Round Table Editorial Board² have identified four main stakeholder groups: Governmental Stakeholders; Research Stakeholder; Design/Construction and Real Estate Stakeholders; Social/Civil Society Stakeholders. For each group the Editorial Board elaborated a set of questions; each stakeholder group is introduced by a member of the Editorial Board, who - at the end of the contribution - identify the main findings.

Highlights on the topic are provided in the Foreword by Magdalena Andreea Strachinescu Olteanu - Head of Unit, New Energy Technologies, Innovation and Clean Coal, Directorate General for Energy, European Commission - and by Eddy Hartog - Head of Unit Smart Mobility and Living, Directorate General Communications Networks, Content and Technology, European Commission.

I would like to thank them and express my sincere appreciation for their contribution.

NOTES

¹ The Virtual Round Table on Smart Cities is more than a collection of points of view. A Round Table asks for selected speakers to present in depth - and discuss - at their best, a set of given questions. Our Virtual Round Table is a Round Table in the sense that a set of questions have been given, then the answer - among the same Stakeholder Group - have been circulated for fine tuning. Then it is Virtual as the most of our key note speakers didn’t have the opportunity to meet.

² Paola Clerici Maestosi, Paolo Civiero, Elena Guarneri.