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Chapter II

Metropolisation and globalisation process in Europe

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Today 85% of Europe's population is urban. The major nerve centres of the worldwide economy are global cities like Paris or London, and other aglomerations with regional influence.

Leson plan.

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1. Global cities and European urban hierarchy.
　　Key question : *how does a city become a metropolis ? how does it get involved in the process of globalisation ?*

2. Metropolisation and urban policy.
　　Key question : *What kind of urban planning is necessary for a city to become a metropolis ?*

3. Opening up European communication networks to the world.
　　Key question : *how do population, property and information flows show that Europe is polarised and open to worldwide networks ?*

Case studies.
　　Exercise n°1 : Euralille, a European crossroads (photography and map of the major European metropolises).
　　Exercise n°2 : Copenhagen : a northern metropolis.
　　Exercise n° 3 : London and the 2012 summer Olympics.
　　Exercise n°4 : Transport networks and spatial organization in Western Europe.
　　Exercise n°5 : Dourges and the revolution of intermodality.

Useful vocabulary.
A metropolis (pl. metropolis<u>e</u>s) ; a global city ; a conurbation ; a capital ; an agglomeration ; an urban network (un réseau urbain) ; a head office (un siège social) ; urban planning ; polarisation ; a flow ; territorial impact ; development strategy ; centrality ; urban hierarchy ; globalisation ;

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Today 85% of Europe's population is urban. The major nerve centres of the worldwide economy are global cities like Paris or London, and other aglomerations with regional influence.

1. Global cities and European urban hierarchy.

Key question : *how does a city become a metropolis ? how does it get involved in the process of globalisation ?*

Exercise n°1 : Euralille, a European crossroads

Metropolisation is a process which increases the concentration of population, investment and culture in big cities. It is a complex process which strengthens the urban networks' biggest cities. It contributes to the concentration of population and strategic activities in urban centres. Urbanisation is still a work in progress in Europe ; the Old Continent is the most urbanised in the world, with 64 % of its population living in urban areas of 10,000 inhabitants or more.

> **Metropolis.** A city at the top of a national or international urban network, with worldwide polarisation power.

Mother-cities like London and Paris hold a worldwide power of **polarisation** : they are crossroads of international migration flows as well as centres for trade. They attract financial investment and cultural events of international importance.

Metropolisation is closely linked to the **globalisation** process, promoting cultural exchange and trade. Metropolises such as Berlin, Barcelona or Moscow are the hubs of the European area, whose organisation follows the centre/periphery model. The "*global cities*" have been constructed over time ; usually they are at the same time a State capital, an urban regional centre (like Copenhagen and the Øresund region) and an international centre.

> **Polarisation**. In geography, the power of urban centres to attract people, information, trade, investments and all relationships connecting a centre and its periphery.
> **Globalisation.** The process of making sth such as business operate in many different countries all around the world.

(Recent dynamic) The current European urban hierarchy is going to be altered by rising cities like the capitals of the Eastern European countries or by the former industrial cities going through redevelopment (Glasgow for example). The European urban and spatial model is becoming more and more **polycentric**.

> **A hub.** A centre in an urban, transport or computer network. Hubs are connected together through several infrastructures called **spokes**. A hub airport is a big international interface with worldwide connections.

2. Metropolisation and urban policy.

Key question : *What kind of urban planning is necessary for a city to become a metropolis ?*

Exercise n°2 : Copenhagen : a northern metropolis.

(Crossborders urban areas) Co-operation between big European cities plays a key role in a process of metropolisation which transcends national boundaries. The Øresund bridge connects two countries and two cities, creating a vast metropolitan area ; as for the Eurostar-Thalys railway network, it connects the largest European capitals. Transport policies are a crucial part of urban planning.

(Architectural symbols) To become a metropolis, cities have to pursue an urban policy to improve their image and their appeal. The use of modern architecture symbolises a city council's wish to upgrade a city into a metropolis. In London, the hosting the 2012 Olympic Games represents the same political will as the building of the Agbar Tower in Barcelona. The moumentality of metropolitan business centres is one of the criteria to define a metropolis. An almost universal metropolitan landscape does exist, be it in London, Paris of Berlin. Metropolisation incldes urban marketing.

(Urban planning) Urban planning consists in taking up the challenge of metropolisation. Planners are confronted with a double task :
        - reinforcing the centrality of cities (creating a new business centre – Euralille for instance – a hub airport or railway station)
        - and developing inner-cities.

(Limitations) In fact, the metropolisation process ultimately emphasizes the **inequalities** already apparent on the local level. Metropolises or cities on their way to metropolisation have to reconcile policies pertaining to their international or national influence with the local issues at stake.

3. Opening up European communication networks to the world.

Key question : *how do population, property and information flows show that Europe is polarised and opened up to worldwide networks ?*

(General idea) With the globalisation process, all kinds of flows have been increasing and diversifying. The opening of borders within Europe and the enlargement of the European Union in 2004 have promoted mobility. Urban hubs and European metropolises are highly attractive to people from developing countries.

See exercise on transports

(Examples) Western Europe's communication networks are densely developed. An efficient transport system knits together the core of Europe (London, Brussels, Frankfurt, Zurich, Milan), thanks to such high-speed trains as the Eurostar, Thalys and the TGV, but also motorways and large airports. Europe's main sea route, the Northern Range include ports in the English Channel and in the North Sea

(Rotterdam). Intermodal transportation speeds things up <u>dramatically</u> and is a top priority in the European transport policy. Time and space shrink as a consequence of the transport and communication revolution.

(Territorial impact) The main networks include the large metropolises as well as hubs, trunk roads and spokes. They determine the organisation of space, the direction of flows and they reinforce the metropolisation process which depends entirely on the communication networks in place.

On a European scale, there is a west-east gradient in terms of transports networks. Since the EU's expansion to 27 countries, its policies have aimed to serve Eastern Europe, which is more isolated.