

# L'esperienza delle città metropolitane in Germania

**Prof. Dr. iur. Veith Mehde, Mag.rer.publ.**

# Outline

- Local Government in Germany
- Metropolitan areas – challenges
- Metropolitan cities – topics of regulation
- Metropolitan areas – Governance
- Options for co-operation
- Conclusion

# Local Government in Germany (1)

- Appr. 80 cities with more than 100.000 inhabitants
- Four cities with more than one million
- More than 10 with more than 500.000
- Two biggest cities are city states
- Biggest city that is not a state: Munich (1,5 Mill.)
- One more city with appr. 1 Mill.: Cologne

## Local Government in Germany (2)

- Generally two levels of local government
- Both levels have the right to self-government (guaranteed by the federal and by state constitutions)
- Cities/towns generally belong to a district
- Bigger cities might be “free” of district
- Details of legal framework/structure/size: state law
- Many differences between states

# Metropolitan areas – challenges

- Dominating city in the centre
- Services provided by central city for whole area (jobs, culture, leisure, education, infrastructure, etc.)
- Competition with smaller local entities in area:
  - Businesses
  - Taxes (especially business tax)
  - Inhabitants with high income

# Metropolitan areas – topics of regulation

- Finances
- Powers
- Planning
- Governance of the area
  - Especially integration of metropolitan city
  - Relationship between city and surrounding towns/villages
  - Institutional structures

# Metropolitan cities – finances (1)

## Problems:

- Much higher costs because of services provided for area
- Different infrastructure needed in cities
- People with high income living in surrounding area
- Often more social problems in cities

# Metropolitan cities – finances (2)

## Consequences:

- Payments from state to city higher
- Compensation for tasks fulfilled on behalf of the state
- Often higher taxes in cities
  - Business taxes
  - Property (houses, flats)



# Metropolitan cities – powers

- System of different powers according to legal status
- Possible legal status: “free” of district:  
powers of both levels exercised by city
- More powers for some cities also within district

# Metropolitan cities – planning

- Planning of local community (housing, roads, recreational areas etc.): central element of self-government

Federal Planning law:

- Establish social infrastructure in central cities
- Establish housing in cities/existing settlements

# Metropolitan areas – Governance (1)

- No nationwide/statewide regulatory concept
- “Tailor-made” solutions for specific areas established by law (Aachen, Hannover, Saarbrücken, Stuttgart)
- Integrating dominating city in the region
- Institutions/powers of districts as starting-point
- Distributing powers according to needs of specific regions

## Metropolitan areas – Governance (2)

- Region fulfils tasks also for city
- Regional planning
- Directly elected assemblies
- Directly elected heads of administration (not in Stuttgart)

## Metropolitan cities – options for co-operation

- Informal, non-binding (e.g. regarding planning matters)
- Legal entities (public law):
  - Created by local governments for
  - Specific, limited purposes (e.g. transport)
  - Legitimacy indirect
- Private Enterprises owned by local communities in the area

## Conclusion

- Different options for solving problems of metropolitan areas
- Privileges for dominating cities
- Coherent solution for areas difficult to find
- Approaches: Finances, powers, planning, governance
- Specific solutions rare