

Welcome

On behalf of the Board and City Council of Amsterdam I welcome the SAUL partners and all responsible politicians, political and public officers related to the work of SAUL.

Amsterdam is part of a cityregion that counts more than two million inhabitants spread over 38 cities, towns and villages. Fantastic situated between the shores of the sea and a former sea, now a large lake and wide open landscapes to the north and the south. And many patches of landscape and urbanised areas between the cities. And that is what SAUL is about.

SAUL is about transformation of space. It is about structures that lost their former function and are given a new meaning to society. This place for representation, the Zuiderkerk, is an example of such transformation. It was build to worship god, and now it is used to expose or maybe even worship urban planning.

The permanent and regular updated exhibition in this church shows that Amsterdam has a sophisticated way of planning, also promoting the regional approach in which the New Urban Landscapes play their important role to reach for a high quality of life in this region. A quality of life that is even more necessary for a population that has to compete on a European and global level.

Lets be glad that European Union supports cooperation in order to be stronger in this worldwide competition. Amsterdam as a international oriented cityregion is proud to host this week a global oriented conference in the making of filmdocumentaries and three important European conferences of which the Final Conference of SAUL will be opened on Thursday by our Mayor Job Cohen. I hope that the messages to Europe echo widely through Europe and even will be heard in other comparable parts of the world.

I wish you al a good conference and a nice stay here in Amsterdam.