The concepts of metabolism, ecosystem, and circular economy are currently challenging the discipline of urbanism. As the shift from linear to circular production-consumption patterns seems to be ultimate for reducing the externalities of our urban environments and to meet stricter environmental targets, the search for sustainable territorial metabolism has become imperative for our metropolitan areas.

This publication questions the discipline of urbanism in relation to the challenge of territorial metabolism and combines theoretical contributions with cutting edge design proposals for European metropolitan regions. It synthesizes two years of intensive research by design on Barcelona, Brussels, and Venice Metropolitan areas conducted jointly by the Laboratory on Urbanism, Infrastructure and Ecologies of the Faculty of Architecture of Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB), the Università IUAV di Venezia and the Laboratori d’Urbanisme de Barcelona (ETSAB–UPC) in the framework of an Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership.