

Time Academy 2025: A Time Policies' Toolbox for Local Authorities

Session 3: Designing Cross-Government Time Policies

Barcelona, 2nd July 2025

Introduction: Why Time Policies Matter

“Time policies represent one of the most innovative frontiers in public policy today”. UNDP,

2025 (Istanbul Innovation Days 2025)

To be effective, time policies are guided by several key principles:

- **They prioritize time equity**, ensuring that the distribution of time-related resources—such as access to services, work flexibility, and public infrastructure—accounts for diverse needs across gender, age, and socioeconomic groups.
- **They embrace systemic coordination**, breaking institutional silos by integrating time into urban planning, labor policies, and public service design.
- **They leverage data-driven adaptation**, using real-time assessments of how people allocate their time to inform policy decisions, from school and work schedules to transport and healthcare access.
- **They promote participatory governance**, engaging businesses, civil society, and local communities in co-designing time policies that reflect lived realities.
- **They recognize time as a public good**, embedding the right to time in policy frameworks that go beyond efficiency to enhance well-being, sustainability, and social cohesion.



Source: <https://istanbulinnovationdays.org/time-use-policies-rethinking-institutional-fabric-around-transversal-issues/>

The Need for Transversal Coordination

Time policies are inherently transversal

Traditional municipal structures often operate in silos, making it difficult to address complex issues like time poverty or to optimize the social organization of time. Let's see some examples:

Reducing urban congestion through staggered work hours

Coordinating start and end times across sectors can significantly reduce peak-hour traffic and improve quality of life for commuters.

Supporting care work and gender equality

Time policies can help redistribute unpaid care responsibilities and promote more equitable time use between genders.

Enhancing well-being by promoting rest and recovery

Policies that protect personal time contribute to better mental health outcomes and work-life balance.

The Role of the Time Chief Officer

Definition and Rationale

The **Time Chief Officer (TCO)** is a dedicated role responsible for the transversal coordination, development, and evaluation of municipal time policies.

This role is **essential for breaking institutional silos and ensuring that time is governed as a public resource**, with a focus on equity, well-being, and sustainability.

Core Functions and Expectations

The Time Chief Officer must balance regulatory and awareness-raising functions:



Transversal impulse

Promote time policies across all municipal areas



Policy cycle management

Develop, implement, and evaluate time policies, individually or throughout an integrated plan.



Interdepartmental coordination

Work with all relevant municipal areas to ensure consistency and integration



Data collection and analysis

Coordinate time-use surveys and collaborate with statistical offices



Stakeholder mediation

Facilitate consensus among municipal actors, businesses, and civil society



Profile and Requirements

Academic background

University degree, preferably in public policy, urban planning, or related fields

Experience

Proven track record in policy design, implementation, and analysis

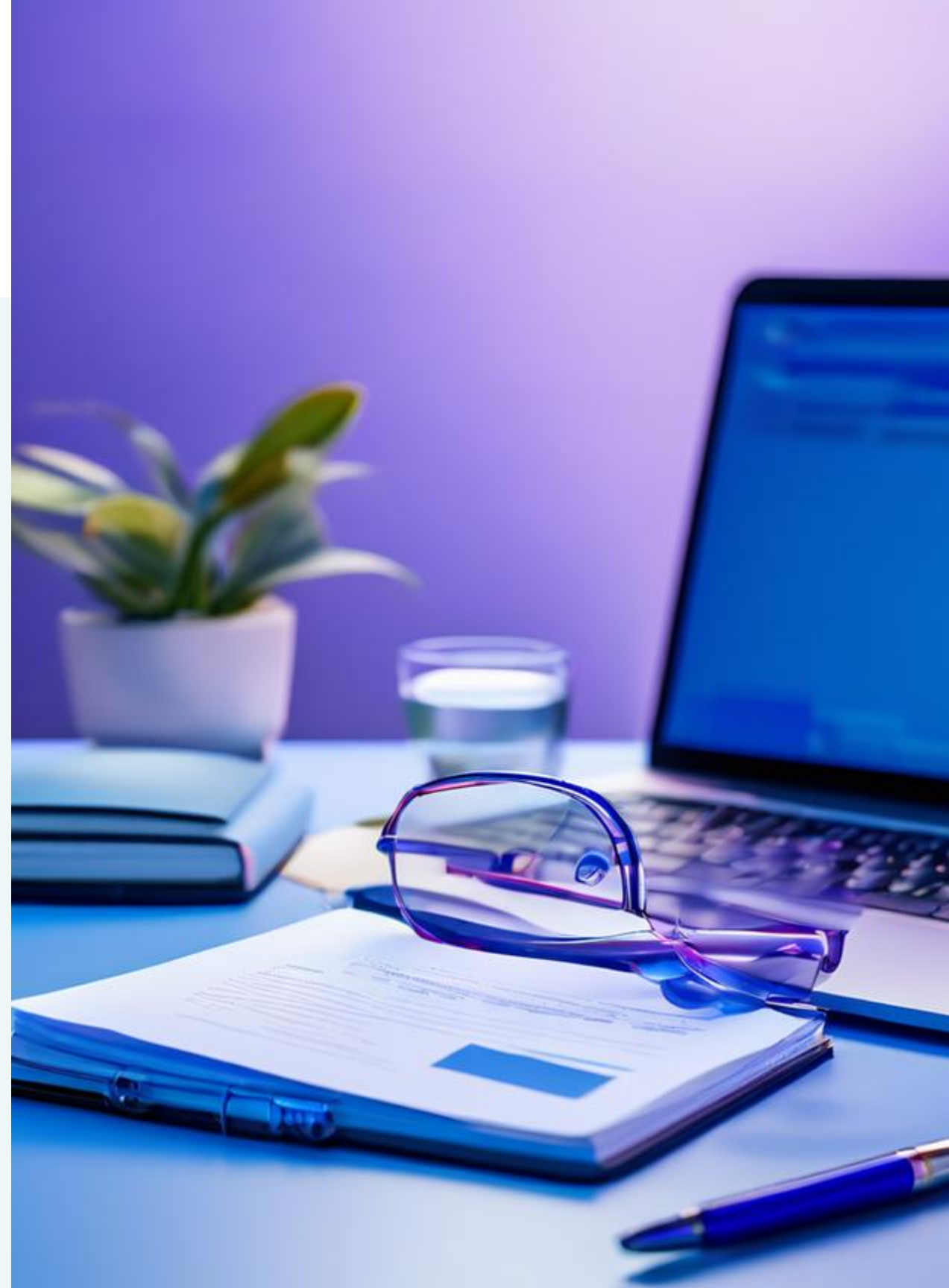
Skills

Technical expertise, transversal coordination, communication, and negotiation

Other

Certifications as required by municipal standards

The ideal candidate will combine theoretical knowledge with practical experience in navigating complex municipal structures and facilitating cross-departmental collaboration.



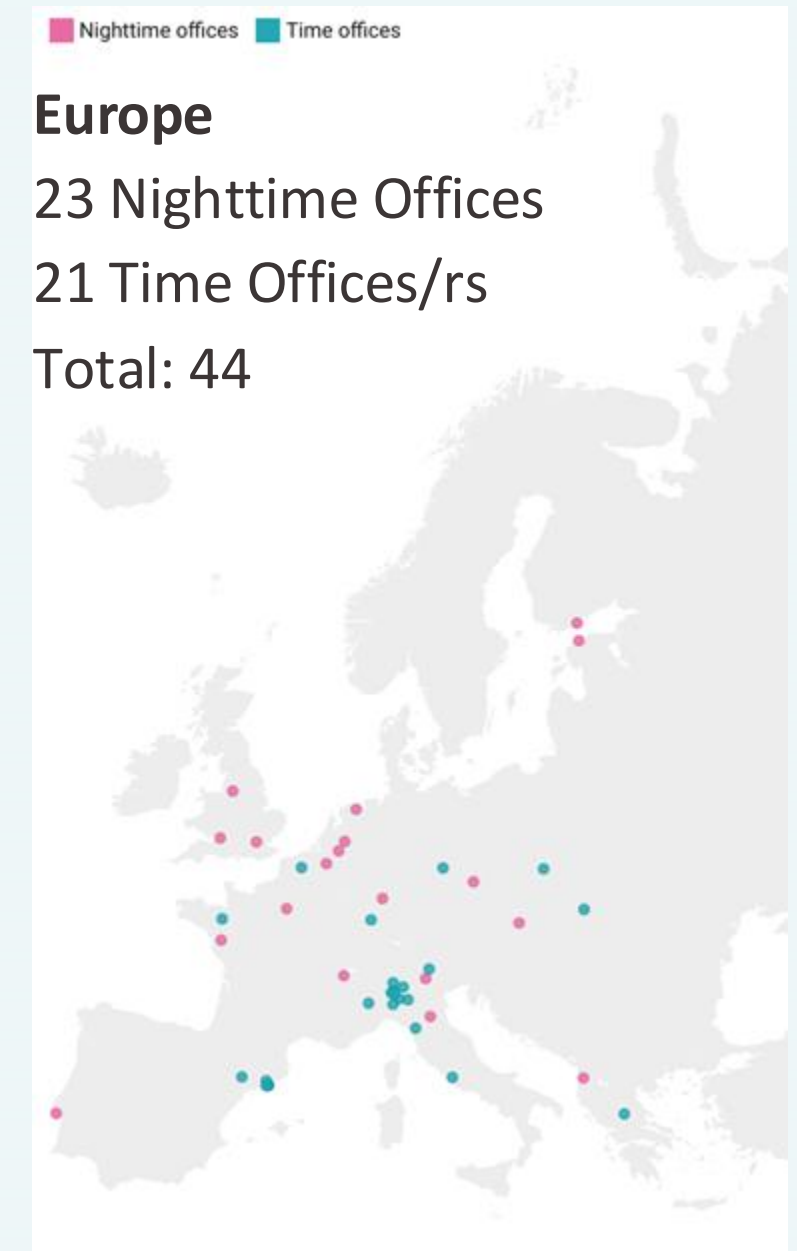
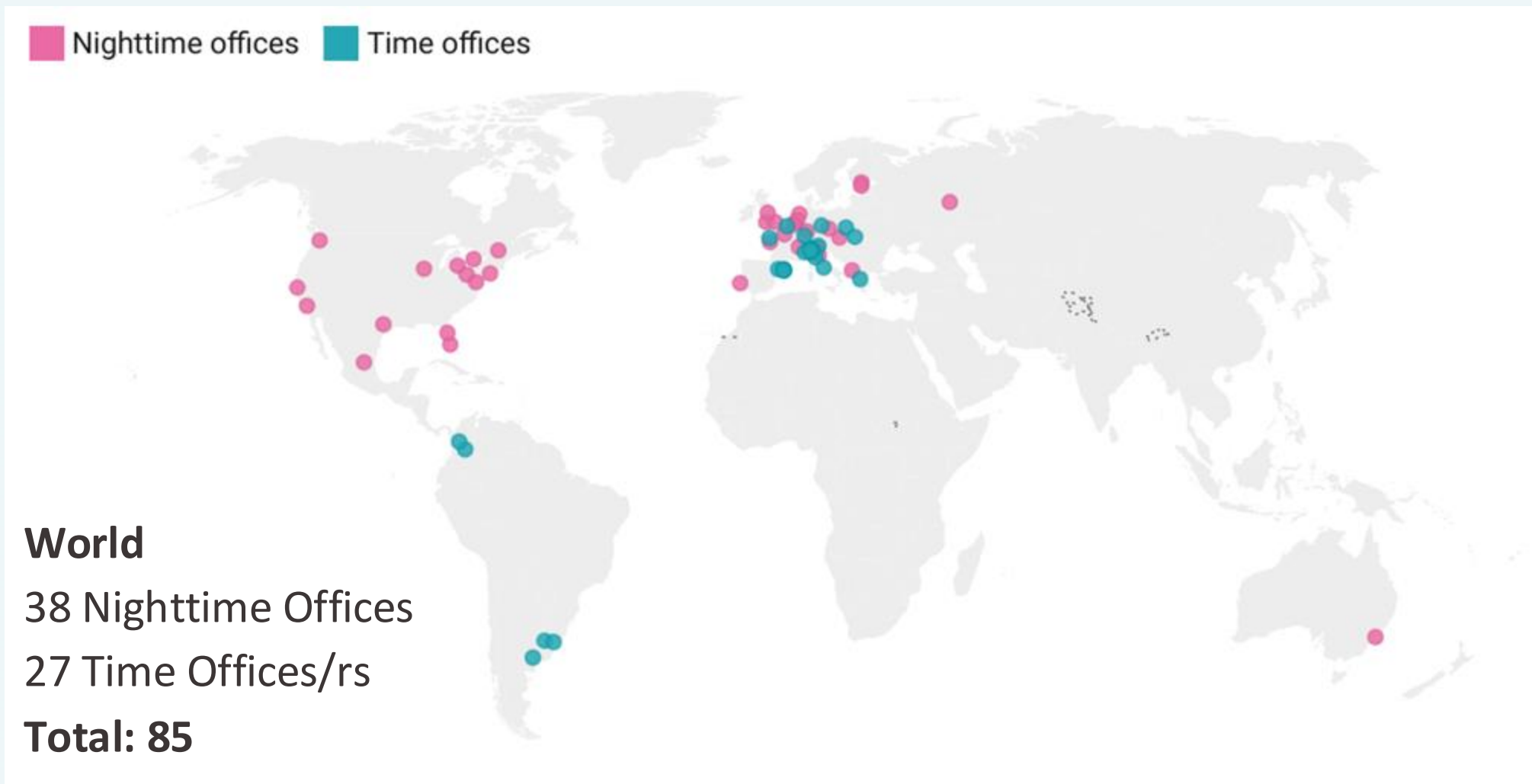
Conclusion

The Time Chief Officer is a strategic, transversal role essential for modern municipalities seeking to address time poverty, promote equity, and enhance urban well-being.

By embedding this function within the municipal structure and balancing regulatory and awareness-raising tasks, cities can lead the way in innovative, inclusive, and sustainable time governance.

Will your organisation be the next having a Time Chief Officer?

Time Chief Offices in the world



Thank you!

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