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URB-AL/INFO



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The URB-AL Programme in brief

Objective:

To develop a direct and lasting partnership between local participants in Europe and Latin America

Activities:

- *Eight thematic networks of mutual interest offering an ongoing framework for cooperation and giving rise to joint projects cofinanced by the European Commission*
- *Two biennial political and technical meetings between mayors and representatives of towns in Europe and Latin America*

Participants:

Towns, conurbations and regions in the European Union and Latin America

URB-AL thematic networks

Network No 1	Drugs and towns
Network No 2	Conservation of historic urban contexts
Network No 3	Democracy in towns
Network No 4	The town as a promoter of economic development
Network No 5	Urban social policies
Network No 6	Urban environment
Network No 7	Management and control of urbanisation
Network No 8	Control of urban mobility

Contents

EU-Latin America and Caribbean Summit, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Appointment of coordinators for Networks 6, 7 and 8

Second biennial meeting

Launch of Network No 5 "Urban social policies" coordinated by the Intendencia Municipal of Montevideo (Uruguay)

Network activities

Network No 1: Annual meeting in Santiago - 18 and 19 March 1999

Network No 2: Annual meeting in Vicenza - 25 and 26 June 1999

Network No 3: Drafting of proposals for joint projects

Network No 4: Preparations for the launch seminar (23-25 September 1999)

Dates of forthcoming URB-AL Programme activities

Readers' contributions

Follow-up to the "International meeting on housing renovation in historic urban contexts" held in Madrid on 9 and 10 April 1999

The Stockholm Challenge

Habitat et participation

Useful addresses

European Commission

URB-AL Technical Secretariat

Biennial meetings

Thematic networks 1 to 8

EU-Latin America and Caribbean Summit, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

The first "EU-ALCAR" Summit of Heads of State and Government from the European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean was held on 28 and 29 June 1999 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and chaired jointly by Mexico, Brazil and Germany. In all, 49 delegations attended the event: 17 from Latin America, 16 from the Caribbean and 15 from the European Union, plus the European Commission delegation.

The Summit concluded with a 60-point declaration aimed at strengthening historic, economic and cultural ties between the two regions with a view to a strategic partnership based on common goals such as strengthening democracy, freedom of the individual, the rule of law and international peace.

The Summit also agreed to step up political dialogue and economic and financial relations on the basis of far-reaching and balanced liberalisation of goods trade and capital flows, as well as cooperation in the fields of science, technology, culture, human relations, social affairs and education.

It set out priorities for action to implement these objectives.

***The political priority** was to work to modernise State apparatus (electoral, judicial, revenue, and budget systems, for example), calling on civil society to cooperate with the public sector in a number of initiatives.*

***On economic and financial issues,** the Summit envisaged the setting up of cooperation mechanisms to strengthen*

financial systems and invited business leaders to create a "business forum". It also proposed a study of current barriers to trade in the way of norms and certification procedures, and the conclusion of customs agreements.

The Heads of State also agreed to provide better protection for consumers and to improve the dialogue between the social partners, and promote cooperation programmes with regard to infrastructure.

***On culture,** education, science, technology, social and human relations, the Summit provided for programmes to combat marginalisation, social exclusion and poverty, with encouragement for cooperation at all levels of the education system.*

The Heads of State also agreed to promote programmes destined to increase the participation of indigenous people in social and economic development programmes and they undertook to foster cultural and linguistic identities.

*Article 47 of the Rio Declaration expressed **continuing support for URB-AL Programme activities.***

The next EU-ALCAR Summit will be held in the first half of 2002 and chaired by Spain.

*Taken from DGIB internal newsletter No 19
May/June 1999*

Appointment of coordinators for Networks 6, 7 and 8

The European Commission has appointed the following local authorities as coordinators for Networks 6, 7 and 8 of the URB-AL Programme.

Network No 6	Urban environment	Région de Bruxelles-Capitale (Belgium)
Network No 7	Management and control of urbanisation	Municipalidad de Rosario (Argentina)
Network No 8	Control of urban mobility	Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart (Germany)



Towns, conurbations and regions which have not yet joined Networks 6, 7 and 8 and are interested in taking part in their activities can contact the coordinating bodies (see Useful Addresses, p. 14).

With these three, the full complement of eight thematic networks provided for in the URB-AL Programme has now been set up.

The second biennial meeting

The second biennial meeting of the URB-AL Programme will be organised by the City of Rio de Janeiro (Brazil).

The theme of the meeting, to be held in June 2000, is urban social integration. All interested local authorities should contact the City of Rio de Janeiro (see Useful Addresses, p. 12).

**Launch of Network No 5, "Urban Social Policies"
coordinated by the Intendencia Municipal de Montevideo (Uruguay)**

Network No 5, "Urban social policies" launched its activities at a seminar held in Montevideo on 12 and 13 April 1999. Some 240 people from Latin America and Europe attended the seminar, representing numerous local bodies including 54 network members and various national and international organisations and NGOs.

The introductory speeches, made by Mr Mariano Arana, the mayor of Montevideo, and Mr Dieter Oldekop, representing the European Commission, were followed by a detailed presentation of the URB-AL Programme and a presentation of the Network, giving a basic framework for the seminar's work.

The three co-authors of the "basic document" ("Urban social policies at the dawn of the 21st century") in turn presented their findings and analysis of the theme of the network, and went on to chair the plenary debate which followed.

Mr Ruben Kaztman, the Director of CEPAL in Montevideo, spoke on the impact of spatial segregation on unequal societies, based on an exploratory study conducted in Montevideo.

Prior to splitting up into workshops, the coordination team explained how these would operate. The workshops were intended to pinpoint areas for cooperation and identify potential partners with a view to developing joint projects as part of the URB-AL Programme. Five workshops were proposed, on the subject of employment; insecure or irregular accommodation; municipal management and civic participation; health, education and culture, and childhood, youth and old age. The two half-day workshops were extremely productive, generating 20 ideas for projects. The results were presented and debated in the plenary session, before the official closing ceremony chaired jointly by Mr Arana and Mr Oldekop.

Network members must put forward their project proposals to the coordinator by 30 September 1999. The latter will send all the projects to the Commission for possible cofinancing.

All the Montevideo documents for the network (the basic document, membership list, project ideas, etc.) are available on the Network's website: <http://www.montevideo.gub.uy/urbal.htm>.

Activities of the other thematic networks

Annual meeting of Network No 1 "Drugs and towns"

The Municipality of Santiago de Chile welcomed some 70 participants to its annual meeting on 18 and 19 March 1999.

The main objective of the meeting was to review the network's various activities since its launch in November 1997. It also provided an opportunity to discuss how it was working, and for members to inform one another in more detail on the experience gained by the various municipalities and other organisations involved with regard to drugs problems in towns, and to develop new proposals for joint projects.

The Municipality of Santiago announced that the network now had 88 members among local authorities and 25 associated bodies. At the annual meeting, 35 of the Latin American local authorities were represented. It was unfortunate that only two European members attended.

The discussions were underpinned by a report on the subject drafted by Mr Ibán de Rementería, the expert who drafted the basic document for the network. It dealt with European thinking on how to manage the drug problem, the inadequacy of criminal law with regard to the supply of drugs and the objectives and potential of the "Drugs and towns" network. The report also included extracts from recent international agreements on preventing drug abuse. Copies can be obtained from the network coordinator (see Useful Addresses, p. 13).

The second deadline for sending project proposals to the coordinator of Network No 1 was 30 April 1999. Following this deadline, the European Commission received no proposals for joint projects.

Note that the third and final deadline for sending projects to Santiago de Chile, the network coordinator, is 30 April 2000.

Annual meeting of Network No 2 "Conservation of historic urban contexts"

The annual meeting of Network No 2, "Conservation of historic urban contexts", was held at Vicenza on 25 and 26 June 1999, and coordinated by Mr Franco Pepe, who is responsible for the network.

Ms Manuela Dal Lago, President of the Province of Vicenza, held the introductory speech. She welcomed an audience of over 70, including 37 members of the network from eight countries: Spain, France, Italy, Portugal, Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Mexico. The three experts, who drafted the basic document, Mr Puppi, Mr Errath and Mr Govela, also attended the meeting.

The cultural attaché of the Province of Vicenza, Mr Franzina, reviewed the network's work over the year, and discussed prospects for the future, including new members.

Mr Gabrici, representing the European Commission, spoke about cooperation between the European Union and Latin America, with particular emphasis on decentralised cooperation programmes and the opportunities which the URB-AL programme presented for local authorities. The URB-AL Technical Secretariat ran through the situation of the various thematic networks in the Programme, and gave supplied practical information on how to present new proposals for joint projects

Professor Silvio Castro then gave a talk on the development and current situation of Brazilian cities.

Various participants at the meeting proposed ideas for projects, and five working parties were set up to look at the following subjects: "Harbour towns", "Practical, conceptual and technical difficulties in defining areas of work", "Access to historic town centres", "Accommodation in old town centres" and "Heritage towns and the local area".

Each working party pinpointed new ideas for cooperation, which could result in fresh proposals for joint projects. The proposals must be sent to the Province of Vicenza by 31 October 1999.

The meeting closed with addresses by Mr Franzina and Mr Pepe. The next annual meeting will be held in the second quarter of 2000.

Network No 3 "Democracy in towns"

The deadline for members of Network No 3 and their partners to submit proposals for joint projects to the Ville d'Issy-les-Moulineaux, the network coordinator, was 31 July 1999. As usual, Issy-les-Moulineaux will forward the proposals to the European Commission, which will select projects for cofinancing, assisted by the High-Level Technical Committee.

Network No 4 "The town as a promoter of economic development "

The seminar to launch the network's activities will be held in Madrid on 23, 24 and 25 September 1999. Some 250 people are expected to attend.

Working parties are currently planned on the following themes:

- Strategic planning as a component of economic development.
- Town planning and infrastructure, heritage.
- Health and the environment as an engine of development.
- Tourism, culture and sport.
- Training and employment.
- Projects for economic development.
Management, financing and investment.
- Local authorities and their role in urban economic development. Complementarity of public and private initiatives.
- Promoting enterprise: small and medium-sized enterprises. New technologies.

For information on this event, contact the coordination team for Network No 4 or consult the website of the Ayuntamiento de Madrid (www.munimadrid.es/urbal/html/home.html).

Dates of forthcoming URB-AL Programme activities

Dates	Thematic network	Coordinator	Activity
31 July 1999	Network No 3 Democracy in towns	Ville d'Issy-les-Moulineaux	Submission of joint projects
23-25 September 1999	Network No 4 The town as a promoter of economic development	Ayuntamiento de Madrid	Launch seminar
30 September 1999	Network No 5 Urban social policies	Intendencia Mun. de Montevideo	Submission of joint projects
31 October 1999	Network No 2 Conservation of historic urban contexts	Provincia de Vicenza	Submission of joint projects

Readers' contributions

Follow-up to the "International meeting on housing renovation in historic urban contexts " held in Madrid on 9 and 10 April 1999

Article based on a text submitted by Amalia Castro-Rial Garrone, Directora General de Arquitectura y Vivienda, Consejería de Obras Públicas, Urbanismo y Transportes - Comunidad de Madrid (fax +34 91 580 43 96).

The Community of Madrid organised an International meeting on housing renovation in historic urban contexts in Madrid, on 9 and 10 April 1999. This meeting was attended by some 30 technical experts and politicians, including the person in charge of the URB-AL Programme at the European Commission and representatives of UNESCO and the World Bank.

The discussions focused on three subjects:

- Renovation and housing schemes.
- Financial planning for housing.
- Public and private consultation on public investment in housing.

The theme of the meeting was also illustrated by technical visits to the historic city centre and the Lavapiés quarter, where major regeneration schemes are planned.

The conclusions of the presentations and debates are summarised below.

Since the 1970s, Europe has experienced population drift from city centres, which need to be rehabilitated as indispensable cultural items that provide a link with the historic identity of the city.

All towns have witnessed the main consequences of the abandonment of old town centres: the architectural and residential heritage of the town seriously deteriorates physically; minimum living conditions are often lacking; housing tends to be occupied by economically weak and marginalised population groups; the population ages and the town centre loses its social life, and some housing and neighbourhoods are partially or totally abandoned, which gradually makes them derelict and may encourage a rise in petty crime.

Hence urban renovation schemes can no longer be geared to physically renovating the buildings but must integrate all the town planning, social and economic issues at stake to ensure that such areas are regenerated and revitalised.

Public administrations must acquire the means to familiarise themselves with the situation of the existing population, as well as the causes of the decay of city centres and historic urban contexts.

Collaboration between all the sectors involved is therefore indispensable. One must promote balanced consultation between the public authorities on one side, furnished with normative instruments for the provision of incentives, development and direct action on infrastructure and facilities, and the private sector on the other. This will enable them to put forward solutions with a view to integrated revitalisation of the town.

Public administrations must develop a policy with clear objectives, in a flexible framework coordinating the various competent bodies. They must also encourage civic participation, by creating facilities and granting economic aid to the disadvantaged.

Priority should be given to short-term objectives likely to attract the private sector in. This will enable the objectives of longer-term strategic plans to be tackled with greater creativity, with a view to successful urban renewal and revitalisation.



The Stockholm Challenge: an extra opportunity for towns that are members of the URB-AL Programme

Article by Valérie Robert – Coordination unit for Network No 3. For further information, consult the Issy-les-Moulineaux (<http://www.issy.com>) or Stockholm Challenge (<http://www.challenge.stockholm.se>) websites.

The Stockholm Challenge is an annual prize for bringing information and communication technologies within reach of citizens and communities, seeing these technologies not as an end in themselves but as a means.

The four objectives of the prize are:

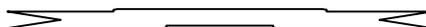
- to highlight the best IT projects conducted by towns;
- to reach at least 100 towns all over the world, with 500 projects divided into 11 categories;
- to build new networks between towns via projects, while reinforcing those already in existence;
- to create social and technological synergies between towns and their populations.

All projects are examined in terms of their impact on the population, society and the environment in the widest sense. The key criterion is therefore what the project brings to citizens and to the various communities. Projects that combat discrimination, promote sexual equality or provide access to information technology for older people and the disabled are particularly welcome.

Projects from the town of Issy-les-Moulineaux were shortlisted in four of the 11 categories, as follows:

- information technology for small and medium-sized businesses;
- information technology in all forms of education;
- public services and democracy;
- ease of access to the Internet.

At the award ceremony on 10 June, Issy-les-Moulineaux was represented, enabling it to promote its activities in Network No 3 of the URB-AL Programme. Projects to be considered for the Stockholm Challenge prize in 2000 must be submitted by October 1999.



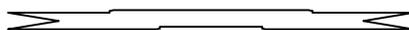
Habitat et Participation

Article by Pascale Thys and Patrick S en elart - Habitat et Participation, asbl, 1 place des Peintres, B- 1348 Louvain-la-Neuve - Belgium Tel.: +32-10-45.06.04 Fax: +32-10-45.65.64 E-mail: Pascale.Thys@euronetbe

This Belgian association, founded in 1982, aims to make public authorities aware of participative practices and to promote the commitment and participation of residents in the decision-making process by means of the following tools:

- studies (for example on rural development and combating social exclusion);
- training – particularly training workers in *quartiers d’initiatives* (who are deprived socially and in town planning terms); updating training notes for elected politicians drafted by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements;
- working through networks – the association is an active member of the Habitat International Coalition and *Dialogue pour le Progr es de l’Humanit e* (the HIC, a non-governmental organisation, is in direct touch with grassroots organisations working for the right to housing in over 70 countries, while the DPH is an international contact network represented in over 30 countries);
- running the *Maison de la Participation* for the City of Brussels, a service designed to organise popular participation in the commune (public meetings, and raising awareness of the commune’s projects).

The association was represented at the launch seminar of Network No 3, “Democracy and towns”, and is open to proposals for collaboration. It has submitted several project ideas to the town coordinating the network, such as publishing the participative budget for Belgian elected politicians, and arranging exchanges of experience between elected politicians from Europe and Latin America; conducting trainer-training exercises among elected politicians; carrying out a study of actions to combat social exclusion, and organising an exhibition of housing conducive to fostering intergenerational encounters.



Useful addresses

General information

European Commission
Directorate General IB: External Relations
Latin America Directorate - Unit IB/B/4
URB-AL Programme
Rue de la Loi, 200 (Office CHAR 4/235)
B-1049 Brussels - Belgium
Tel.: +32 2 295 12 29
Fax: +32 2 299 39 41

URB-AL Technical Secretariat
Avenue de Broqueville, 116 - Bte 9
B-1200 Brussels - Belgium
Tel.: +32 2 775 93 00
Fax: +32 2 775 93 09
secretariat@urb-al.com

WEBSITE

<http://www.urb-al.com>

Biennial meetings

First Biennial Meeting **Coordinator: Lisbon City Hall**

Ms Cristina Rocha
Directora do Gabinete de Relações Internacionais
Departamento de Apoio à Gestão
e Actividade Institucional
Câmara Municipal de Lisboa
Rua do Ouro 49 - 4º Piso
P-1100 Lisboa (Portugal)
Tel.: +351 1 3227366
Fax: +351 1 3227009
griii@mail.cm-lisboa.pt
<http://www.cm-lisboa.pt>

Second Biennial Meeting **Coordinator: City of Rio de Janeiro**

Sr. Cláudio García de Souza
Coordenador
Prefeitura da Cidade do Rio de Janeiro
Relações Internacionais e Cerimonial
Palacio da Cidade
Rua São Clemente, 360 - Botafoga
22260-000 Rio de Janeiro, RJ (Brasil)
Tel.: +55 21 2862239/2861045
Fax: +55 21 2869246
cgsouza@pcrj.rj.gov.br

Thematic networks 1 to 8

Network No 1 "Drugs and towns"

Coordinator: Municipalidad de Santiago de Chile

Sr. Carlos Varas
Director para las Relaciones Internacionales
Alcaldía de Santiago de Chile
Programa URB-AL - Red n° 1
Plaza de Armas s/n, Casilla 52-D
Santiago / Chile
Tel.: +56 2 6392691
Fax: +56 2 6321962
stgoint@reuna.cl
<http://www.urb-al.cl>

Network No 2 "Conservation of historic urban contexts"

Coordinator: Provincia de Vicenza

Dott. Franco Pepe
Capo di Gabinetto
Amministrazione Provinciale di Vicenza
Programma URB-AL - Rete n° 2
Contrà Gazzolle, 1
I-36100 Vicenza (Italia)
Tel.: +39 0444 399208
Fax: +39 0444 327825
urb-al.rete2@provincia.vicenza.it
<http://www.urb-al.net/rete2>

Network No 3 "Democracy in towns"

Coordinator: Ville d'Issy-Les-Moulineaux

Mme Marie Virapatirin
URB-AL Programme - Network No 3
Hôtel de Ville - Bureau de la Coordination
62, rue du Général Leclerc
F-92130 Issy-les-Moulineaux (France)
Tel.: +33 1 40957920 & 40956772
Fax: +33 1 40959725
urb-al@wanadoo.fr
<http://www.issy.com/urb-al>

Network No 4 "The town as a promoter of economic development"

Coordinator: Ayuntamiento de Madrid

Sra. Mercedes de la Merced Monge
Tercer Teniente de Alcalde
Ayuntamiento de Madrid
Programa URB-AL - Red n° 4
Calle Mayor n° 72 - 1°
E-28005 Madrid (España)
Tel.: +34 91 588 13 82
Fax: +34 91 588 17 52
merced@munimadrid.es
<http://www.munimadrid.es/urbal/html/home.html>

Network No 5 "Urban social policies"**Coordinator: Intendencia Municipal de Montevideo**

Sra Belela Herrera
Directora de Cooperación y Relaciones Internacionales
Oficina de coordinación de la red n° 5
Programme URB-AL
Intendencia Municipal de Montevideo
18 de Julio 1360 - Piso 25
11200 Montevideo (Uruguay)
Tel.: +598 2 901 40 80 or 908 64 22
Fax: +598 2 908 23 08
red5@piso9.imm.gub.uy
<http://montevideo.gub.uy/urbal.htm>

Network No 6 "Urban environment"**Coordinator: Région de Bruxelles-Capitale**

M. Pierre Reniers
Attaché
Programme URB-AL - Network No 6
rue du Prétoire, 30
B-1070 Bruxelles (Belgique)
Tel.: +32 2 517 12 00
Fax: +32 2 511 94 42

Network No 7 "Management and control of urbanisation"**Coordinator: Intendencia Municipal de Rosario**

Ing. Roberto Miguel Lifschitz
Secretario General
Programa URB-AL - Red n° 7
Buenos Aires 711
2000 Rosario (Argentina)
Tel: +54 341 4802442 / 4802317 / 4802318
Fax: +54 341 4802360 / 4802320
sec_gral@rosario.gov.ar

Network No 8 "Control of urban mobility"**Coordinator: City of Stuttgart**

Ing. Wolfgang Forderer
URB-AL Programm - Netz Nr. 8
Rathaus, Markplatz 1
D-70173 Stuttgart (Deutschland)
Tel: +49 711 216 2675
Fax: +49 711 216 3088
wolfgang.forderer@stuttgart.de

New address from September 1999

Nadlerstraße, 4
D-70173 Stuttgart (Deutschland)
Tel: +49 711 216 87 99 or 216 87 98
Fax: +49 711 216 87 97
wolfgang.forderer@stuttgart.de