urb·al
EUROPA – AMERICA LATINA

info

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IN THIS ISSUE

Phase two of the URB-AL programme is in full swing.

The new **PROGRAMME GUIDE** will soon be available.

Calls for proposals to set up the six new networks and the joint
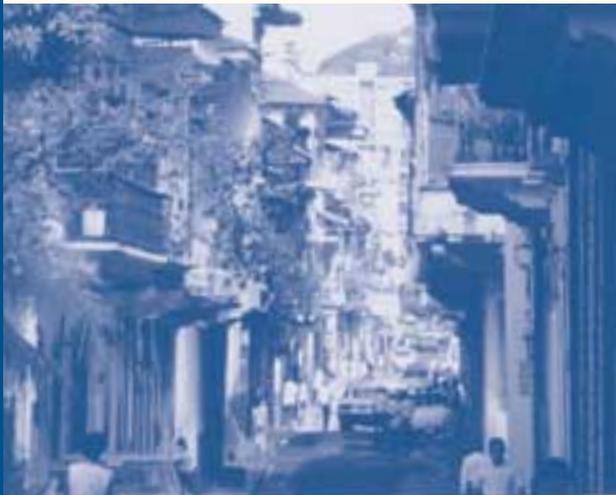
Panama, host city of the second biennial meeting of Network No 4, end of November 2001

projects are shortly to be published in the Official Journal of the European Communities. So URB-AL's continued activities are in no doubt, and the first outputs from phase two should start feeding through in 2002.

The **NETWORKS** section reports on recent activities by the various networks and includes some initial rather positive appraisals of networks 3 and 5 from grass roots level. The **EUROPE** section tells you how to participate in the debate on the future of Europe's institutions, organised by the European Commission.

In **OTHER CHANNELS** and **USEFUL INFORMATION** you will find the contact details of a number of multilateral cooperation programmes in the urban and local policy field, including: DelNet, Habitat, Cities Alliance and SEMA.

Their conceptual convergence and complementary activities are expected to lead to synergies and close cooperation between these programmes and URB-AL.

**All dates are subject to confirmation
by the organising city. For further information,
consult the websites of the networks concerned
or the programme's web page: www.urb-al.com**

Panama city

PROJECTS

49 cities given the go-ahead!

Between 1998 and 2000, the European Commission approved projects from 49 coordinating cities. Latin America and Europe have had equal shares in this success

NETWORK No. 1

Alcaldía de Medellin	Colombia
Consell Comarcal de l'Alt Empordà	Spain
Municipalidad de Concepción	Chile
Municipalidad de Lota	Chile
Municipalidad de La Florida	Chile
Prefeitura Municipal de Diadema	Brazil
Prefeitura Municipal de Santo André	Brazil

NETWORK No. 2

Ayuntamiento de Arucas	Spain
Ayuntamiento de Coria	Spain
Diputación Provincial de Jaén	Spain
Ajuntament de Vilafranca del Penedès	Spain
Prefeitura Municipal de Caxias do Sul	Brazil
Municipalidad de Arica	Chile
Municipalidad de Valparaiso	Chile
Ayuntamiento de Guadalajara	Mexico
Comune di Ragusa	Italy
Comunidad de Madrid	Spain
Provincia di Perugia	Italy

NETWORK No. 3

Municipalidad de Posadas	Argentina
Municipalidad de Cuenca	Ecuador

Municipalidad de Quetzaltenango	Guatemala
Prefeitura Municipal de Belo Horizonte	Brazil
Alcaldía de Manizales	Colombia
Municipalidad Distrital de Villa El Salvador	Peru
Ajuntament de Barcelona	Spain
Ville de Marseille	France

NETWORK No. 4

Alcaldía de Viña del Mar	Chile
Ayuntamiento de San Salvador de Jujuy	Argentina
Municipalidad de Trelew	Argentina
Ayuntamiento de Almuñecar	Spain
Ayuntamientode Cádiz	Spain
Ayuntamiento de Córdoba	Spain
Diputación Provincial de Huelva	Spain
Ayuntamiento de Irun	Spain
Ayuntamiento de Zaragoza	Spain
London Borough of Lewisham	United Kingdom

NETWORK No. 5

Municipalidad de General Pueyrredon, Mar del Plata	Argentina
Prefeitura Municipal de Rio Claro	Brazil
Ayuntamiento de Bilbao	Spain
Junta de Extremadura	Spain
Consell Comarcal del Gironès	Spain
Regione Emilia Romagna	Italy
Comune di Torino	Italy
Municipalidad Distrital de Ate	Peru
Odense Kommune	Denmark
Ajuntament de Cassà de la Selva	Spain
Ayuntamiento de Leganés	Spain
Ville de Lyon	France
Comune di Roma	Italy

URB-AL II

SOON TO BE PUBLISHED

Programme Guide for phase two

Drafted for new members as well as old, the Guide is divided into three sections: key elements of the programme; characteristics of phase two; and the new procedures for participating in networks and joint projects.
This guide will be sent at the end of this year. From November on, you may also consult the electronic version at the following web site: **www.urb-al.com**

All the information on calls for proposals for setting up new networks and joint projects will be published in the Official Journal of the European Communities and posted on the EuropeAid Cooperation Office's web page on the Europa web site: **http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/europeaid/index.htm**

It will also appear on the Programme's web site.

CLOSING SEMINAR – BASSANO DEL GRAPPA

Conservation of historic urban contexts

The Bassano del Grappa seminar of 28 and 29 June 2001 marked the end of network 2's activities, at least as an URB-AL network coordinated by the Province of Vicenza. The network's continued activities now depend on the participants themselves and whether they choose to get involved in phase two of the programme.

Eleven projects had been selected and cofunded as part of network 2's activities. One of the high points of the seminar was a speech by one of the network's experts, JEAN-PIERRE ERRATH, architect and curator of the Palace of Versailles.

Ponte dei Alpini, Bassano del Grappa

EXTRACTS FROM HIS SPEECH

"A quality living environment will safeguard cities by guaranteeing the social balance of the urban and architectural environment."

"(…) Historic districts are under threat. Legislation is not enough to make residents stay (…) with the result that far too much housing stands empty. Even more seriously, the cultural attractions of historic districts are bringing in services and jobs that could cause old cities to implode. These include incongruous shopping centres (…) or intense restaurant activity and nightlife that exploit the old city's appeal whilst ignoring the needs of residents. (…)

Plans for safeguarding historic districts, which all too often concentrate solely on conservation aspect, must also develop the values needed for using historic districts (…), what the Council of Europe refers to as 'integrated urban restoration'.

Historic districts are home to lone individuals, childless couples, the unattached and non-working people, giving rise to a very unusual property market that encourages the conversion of housing into small apartments. (…)

How is it possible to attract families, which are often forced to move to the suburbs? (…) It is up to local authorities, municipal councils and the central government to find ways to lure families to historic districts and convince them to settle. (…)

For such a venture to succeed, we will need to abandon all the usual methods conventional approaches (…) we must adopt a special policy for revitalising our old centres by launching a new challenge (…). Since any such policy will be costly, results need to be guaranteed through protection and revitalisation contracts between professionals, universities, cities, regions and the central government (…)."

Complete version:
www.urb-al.net/rete2

REPORT ON THE SECOND ANNUAL MEETING

Democracy in towns

The network's second and final annual meeting was held at Issy-les-Moulineaux on 29 and 30 June. There were 150 participants at the meeting, including a remarkable 60% of network members.

During the two days of meetings, the network succeeded in achieving its objectives: to review the work carried out over the past three years, to launch the final call for projects and to outline the network's prospects for the future. The town of Issy-les-Moulineaux amply demonstrated its mastery of new technology both locally and internationally, as well as its ability to build on the relations it has helped to develop between the communities of Latin America and Europe. Its experience as network coordinator is a fine example of a town's ability to play an international role, no matter how small.

The workshops focused on the following four themes:
- Youth and citizenship: the current situation
- Alternative municipal financing? Participative budgets: bold experiment or political project?
- Training for elected representatives and local officials: changing practices
- Women in the city: numbers aside, what is the current situation?

COMPULSORY READING!

Women in the city: their involvement in local politics

Workshop 4 used this text, drafted by Charlotte De Villeneuve and Céline Pauthier, students of the Paris Institut d'Etudes Politiques, as its reference document. The document received an enthusiastic response from the audience – chiefly women – and helped to develop two project ideas: "How can a proper women's policy be set up within a city council?" and "Discussion and proposal for creating special women's reception facilities".

Web site:
www.issy.com/urb-al

REPORT OF THE MONTEVIDEO COORDINATION UNIT

Urban social policies

The network started out with 50 members. Today it numbers 150 municipalities and regions, plus 22 associated organisations acting as external partners. What an achievement – and not the only one. The report summarises the key milestones of the network's three years of operation.

Montevideo: Mercosur's edifice. (© Carlos Contreras)

It is clear to the report's authors that this substantial membership increase reflects a keen interest in social policies, as well as local organisations' eagerness to participate in exchange and communication forums. Another reason for the steady rise in the number of participants is the dynamic created by the programme activities themselves, clearly indicating its sustainability.

An astonishing no fewer than thirteen projects have been approved to date! It is interesting to note that, whilst they differ in some respects, all the projects share a number of features, reflecting the participant's converging priorities and interests.

The authors go on to underline two major achievements:

• The network has created links and projects independent from the programme, to ensure continuity. They include joint projects to create a network of municipalities, develop new intervention models and even set up pilot experiments.

• More importantly, the participant municipalities have gone on to incorporate the lessons learned from their international cooperation and networking experiences into their other regional and international collaboration ventures.

There is of course still some way to go. The report's authors want the Commission to suggest solutions for reducing the time lag between project implementation and the span of the coordination mandate, to enable them to disseminate and evaluate the results of joint projects.

They would also like the Commission to reconsider the financial contribution required from partners' for cofunding projects, so as to encourage the participation of municipalities with few resources.

They will certainly get what they want when the EuropeAid Cooperation Office has completed its management rationalisation efforts, which are currently well under way. Under phase two of the Programme there will also be a substantially higher grant for each project of up to 250,000 euros (instead of €100,000), to cover up to 70% of total costs (instead of 50%).

Complete version:
www.urb-al.com

REPORT OF THE NETWORK 3'S ACTIVITIES

Democracy in towns

Jean-Gilles Berthommier, Mayor of Saint Erblon (France), an independent expert with many years' experience of decentralised cooperation and an in-depth knowledge of Latin America, is the author of this report, which he has based around three fundamental questions that he believes summarise all our existential doubts. They are: "Where do we come from? Who are we? Where are we heading?"

The author begins by outlining the background and actors involved. "(…) With a neighbour as important as the U.S.A., Latin American countries can only meet the demands of globalisation by reinforcing regional integration at every level.(…) With the European Union's long experience of decentralisation, its regional cooperation policy makes it a useful partner.(…)"

He explains the programme's creation and main principles before going on to discuss network 3: "(…) Up to now, much of the power has relied on receiving information ahead of everyone else. The new means of communication will help change the system of power sharing by encouraging a more participative democracy that is locally based whilst at the same time geared towards international cooperation. The network's thinking and activities are therefore particularly relevant. (…)"

According to Jean-Gilles Berthommier, network no. 3 is clearly one of the most effective and best-organised networks. He backs up his statement with facts about the network's means for action and achievements.

However, he goes on to add: "We must seek every possible improvement in order to set the Network on course for sustainable development".

He has done this by analysing network and Commission documents, as well as numerous first-hand accounts. His list of suggested improvements includes: cutting decision-making and payment times, increasing flexibility and decentralisation, enhancing the programme's visibility and expanding the network. This will call for greater involvement from civil society, as well as moves to target small and medium-sized towns and improve links between bilateral and multilateral cooperation.

By way of conclusion, he asks: "Is there life after URB-AL?". In his view, the answer is yes. Don't miss reading the full report.

Web site: www.issy.com/urb-al

Urban environment

There still remained one network to be launched under phase one of the programme. Now no longer.
The 6th Network was officially launched in Malaga, on 15 and 16 June 2001.
Extracts of Mayor FRANCISCO DE LA TORRE PRADOS's inaugural speech point to the city's decisive change of direction in the eighties in its urbanisation and environment policies.

"It is a matter of price for the city of Malaga to have been appointed to coordinate network 6 of the URB-AL programme given that during the sixties the city's model of territorial and economic development still failed to address the needs of residents and their environment. However, since the eighties, radical changes have been introduced, such as the policy to equip the city with new services and infrastructure, together with the adoption of new strategic planning proposals and Malaga's Green Charter, as well as the city's Agenda 21. Malaga has been awarded a number of European and international distinctions in recognition of such initiatives, including the United Nations Prize for Good Practices.

The results of these policies have confirmed that urban development must include economic, social and regional aspects and that the quality of life of city dwellers basically relies on implementing what is termed 'sustainable development'. (…)

One of the prerequisites for improving the urban environment is clearly our ability to put across, in a language everyone can understand, the policies needed to implement sustainable development. (…)

Furthermore, I believe we need to increase community participation in issues such as these, which are decisive to the community's future. We must also raise more public awareness, starting in schools. At the same time, rhetoric on environmental protection must be backed up by measures that have a noticeable impact on citizens' daily lives (…).

In our view, the urban environment concept is closely linked with planning and regional development, as the physical basis for developing human relations. This idea of sustainable urban development will doubtless call for a clearer definition of the territorial model of cities, if we wish to retain the characteristics of the conventional compact city, rather than adopting the dispersed development model (…)

Indeed, for the compact city to maintain and improve its quality of life, it must keep abreast of change, so that it is able to manage and use change productively. The compact city's real contribution is to imaginatively convert urban spaces that have outlived their former usefulness into model new public spaces (…)."

Complete version :
www.urbalmalaga.com

Coordinators and Managers of the Programme in Malaga.

MEETINGS BETWEEN PROGRAMME MANAGERS AND FIELD STAFF

Cards on the table

The coordinators of the various networks held a number of meetings alongside the launching seminar, both amongst themselves and with the Commission, to take stock of their respective experiences of routine network management. It was generally agreed that the task is far from easy. However, thanks to the commitment of coordination unit members and support from local authorities, they are managing to successfully negotiate the obstacles.

On 14 June, the coordination unit technical managers present in Malaga met the programme head, Juan Carlos Cañoto and Technical Secretariat members. A useful exchange of views followed, during which the coordinators explained what they expected from the launch of phase two of the Programme. The Commission in turn reported on the latest progress with the launch, as well as on changes relating to the EuropeAid Cooperation Office.

Workshops themes :

- Shaping the city
- Social cohesion
- Management of natural resources
- Governing the city

Results :

The participants' 64 project ideas resulted in 17 proposals, described in full on the network's site :
www.urbalmalaga.com

THE CITIES ALLIANCE
Uniting against poverty

The Cities Alliance, created by the World Bank and Habitat in 1999, is a world alliance to unite cities, their local partners and development agencies in improving living conditions for the urban poor.

Its activities focus on two areas: urban development strategies and the Cities Without Slums action plan, sponsored by Nelson Mandela.

According to Mark Hildebrand, Secretary of the Cities Alliance, the way forward is clear: "First we must meet the challenge of reducing poverty in cities and turn it into a world political issue.(…) Next we must capitalise on the trend towards decentralisation and democratisation by working more closely with local authorities to help them address the problems facing the urban poor.(…) Finally, in order to achieve our goal we must coordinate efforts to get the best out of combine forces to tap into existing networks of local authorities, private sector institutions and development agencies.(…)"

Even though it places more emphasis on local partnerships than on networking, the Alliance's philosophy and work methodology tie in closely with those of the URB-AL Programme.

Web site: www.citiesalliance.org

LATIN AMERICA / CARIBBEAN NETWORK
Information, a source of sustainable development

The aim of SEMA (Environmental Management Secretariat for Latin America and the Caribbean), created in 1997, is to improve relations between municipal governments and the research centres, which are involved in the study of studying communication and local decision-making processes. SEMA does this by coordinating a regional information network to encourage the circulation of scientific information and knowledge. SEMA's network includes local governments, community-based organisations, business firms, research centres and international agencies. SEMA is currently collaborating on 60 projects.

Access to information on experiments to promote sustainable urban development is proving to be increasingly decisive for enabling a comparison of problems, as well as the technical solutions and policies, adapted to local needs that can be applied locally. SEMA's main aim is to provide an initial response to demands expressed by local governments in the region.

SEMA receives financial support from a number of international agencies, as well Environment Canada.

E-mail: info@ems-sema.org
Web site: http://www.ems-sema.org

IMPROVING THE WAY EUROPE OPERATES
Opening up Europe to its citizens

The European Commission wants to get closer to its citizens and involve them in decision-making. In other words, it is determined to pay closer attention heed to their views. And it is developing the means for achieving this. They include two initiatives:

• The Commission is inviting its citizens to express their views during an Internet discussion forum. To access the forum, go to the Europa site www.europa.eu.int, select your language and click on 'The Future of Europe – Debate' in the News section. This will take you to the forum page where you make your own contribution to the current debate on building Europe.

• Also on the Europa site you will find the Commission's recently published 'White Paper on European Governance', in which it makes a number of proposals for opening up the Union policy-making process still further, in a bid to widen the involvement of citizens and organisations in policy planning and application.

The Commission proposals include making "greater use of the skills and practical experience of regional and local actors (…)."

Read the full text on: www.europa.eu.int/futurum/index_fr.htm

BEST PRACTICES AND LOCAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

Goal: sustainable development

The Best Practices and Local Leadership Programme (BLP) is a network of institutions whose task is to identify and exchange potential solutions for achieving sustainable development. Best practices may be defined as initiatives to improve quality of life and the environment, based on a partnership between two or more actors. Their sustainability relies on introducing social, economic, environmental and cultural measures and/or on changing decision-making policies, resource utilisation and management systems.

The network of BLP partners identifies existing initiatives in the fields of housing, urban development and management, the environment, economic development, social integration, crime prevention, reducing poverty, women, young people, infrastructure and social services.

The programme's database includes more than 1,150 proposed solutions, based on the experience of network members in some 125 countries.

For further information:
http://www.sustainabledevelopment.org/blp

All applications welcome!

You can now apply for the 2002 Dubai International Award for Best Practices (DIABP), organised jointly by Dubai city council and the UNCHS (Habitat). Applicants submitting their initiatives by January 2002 will receive suggestions from the project promoters for improving their presentation.
Deadline for submitting applications: **31 March 2002.**

For further information:
http://dubai-award.dm.gov.ae
or http://bestpractices.org/bp2002

INITIAL OUTCOMES OF A COOPERATION AGREEMENT

DelNet makes its workshop debut!

DelNet is the local development support programme of the International Labour Organisation Training Centre (see URB-AL/INFO no. 13)

The agreement concluded between and the URB-AL Programme resulted in DelNet participating in a workshop at the Issy-les-Moulineaux annual meeting in June. DelNet's director, Angel Vidal, participated live in the workshop on using new technology to train municipal officials, via a video-conferencing link from Turin. The workshop participants much appreciated this live demonstration of the potential of new technology, as testified by the thank you letter from network 3 coordinator, Marie Virapatirin, to Angel Vidal. In it she says: "(…) the DelNet programme's contribution (…) illustrated the debate on the role of training as an essential element in modernizing municipal public life."

Site: www.itcilo.it/delnet

SHADOW SHOWS IN LATIN AMERICA

ECLAC and local development

ECLAC has just published a report on the development of the Latin American economy in the nineties. The title *'Una decada de luces y sombras'* (a decade of light and shadows) aptly evokes this mixed decade of reforms and erratic growth. ECLAC has produced a report that combines a good overview of the issue for the uninitiated with some interesting insights for the more experienced. The final chapter takes a novel look at the cross-influence between the concepts of region, demography and development.

On 5 and 6 September, ECLAC held a discussion seminar on the results of the joint ECLAC/GTZ project on local economic development and decentralization in Latin America. This was the occasion for the official launch of the book *'Desarrollo económico local en América latina. Análisis comparativo'* (local economic development in Latin America. Comparative analysis), coordinated by Gabriel Aghon, Francisco Albuquerque and Patricia Cortés, which discusses these experiences. The Commission Delegation to Chile presented phase two of the URB-AL programme at the seminar.

ECLAC site: www.eclac.org

URB-AL NETWORKS

NETWORK No.2
*Conservation of historic
urban contexts*

Coordinator:	*Provincia di Vicenza*
Contact:	*Dott. Franco Pepe, Capo di Gabinetto*
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	Programma URB-AL - Rete n°2
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	I-36100 Vicenza - Italia
Tel.:	+39 0444 399208 / 326768
Fax:	+39 0444 327825 / 323574
e-mail:	urb-al.rete2@provincia.vicenza.it
Website:	www.urb-al.net/rete2

NETWORK No.3
Democracy in towns

Coordinator:	*Ville d'Issy-les-Moulineaux*
Contact:	*Mme. Marie Virapatirin*
Adress:	Programme URB-AL - Réseau n°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 / 40956532
e-mail:	urb-al@wanadoo.fr
Website:	www.issy.com/urb-al

NETWORK No.4
*The town as a promoter
of economic development*

Coordinator:	*Ayuntamiento de Madrid*
Contact:	*Sra. Mercedes de la Merced Monge, Primera Teniente de Alcalde*
Adress:	Programa URB-AL - Red n° 4
	Antiguo Laboratorio Municipal
	Calle Bailén n° 41- 2ª planta
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Tel.:	+34 91 588 47 60 / 90
Fax:	+34 91 588 47 88
e-mail:	fronn@munimadrid.es
	urbal4@munimadrid.es
Website:	www.munimadrid.es/urbal

NETWORK No.5
Urban social policies

Coordinator:	*Intendencia Municipal de Montevideo*
Contact:	*Sra. Marta Ponce de León, Directora de Cooperación y Relaciones Internacionales*
Adress:	Programa URB-AL - Red n° 5
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	413 66 25
e-mail:	red5@deir.imm.gub.uy
Website:	www.montevideo.gub.uy/urbal.htm

NETWORK No.6
Urban environment

Coordinator:	*Ayuntamiento de Málaga*
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e-mail:	red6@urbalmalaga.com
	pmarin@ayto-malaga.es
Website:	www.urbalmalaga.com

NETWORK No.7
Management and control of urbanisation

Coordinator:	*Intendencia Municipal de Rosario*
Contact:	*Ing. Roberto Miguel Lifschitz, Secretario General*
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e-mail:	urbal@rosario.gov.ar
Website:	www.rosario.gov.ar/urbal

NETWORK No.8
Control of urban mobility

Coordinator:	*Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart*
Contact:	*Ing. Wolfgang Forderer*
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Website:	www.stuttgart.de/europa/urb-al

INTERLOCUTORS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

EuropeAid Co-operation Office
Latin America Directorate
"Regional Integration.
Institutional Support" Unit
Programme URB-AL

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Goodbye and good luck !

At the end of the year, the URB-AL Technical Secretariat will be closed.

The programme will be administered completely and directly by the EuropeAid Cooperation Office.

URB-AL will continue: is your programme and will be what you make of it.

You will receive contact details around mid-December, through the programme's web site: www.urb-al.com, which will remain up and running. It is now more important than ever to consult the site regularly.

Many thanks to you all for your help and enthusiasm.

Jimena Bastidas, Chantal Jacquot, Heloisa Passareiro, Alejandra Roig and Marc Rimez

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